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Bacchus and Bellum: The Anglo-Gascon Wine Trade and the Hundred Years War (987 to 1453 A.D)

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BACCHUS AND BELLUM:
THE ANGLO-GASCON WINE TRADE AND THE HUNDRED YEARS WAR
(987 TO 1453 A.D.)

A Thesis

Presented to

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Of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

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Christopher D. Turgeon

Accepted for Christopher D. Turgeon

Director

Williamsburg, Virginia
A.D. March 31, 2000

To my parents

You have given me an appreciation for history and for wine
that has inspired my life and this work

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to argue, among the myriad of other reasons for the cause and continuation of the Hundred Years War, that the wine trade between England and Gascony was significant enough to incite an armed conflict. This is not to say that the author intends to imply that the wine trade was the exclusive instigator of the war but that the commodity exchange between England and southwestern France was organized developed, and profitable enough to motivate the English monarchy to protect its investment.

Before any intelligent discussion of the factors that led to the Hundred Years War, it is imperative to understand the background of both the English and French monarchies, to comprehend their mutual and divisive history that led to this prolonged conflict. In addition, it is equally important to grasp the impact wine had on both cultures. Therefore, the first part of this work is directed toward fusing together English and French medieval history and society with the wine culture of the period.

Another portion of this manuscript is dedicated to the region that England and France fought over throughout the war. This area, called many things, but predominantly Gascony, and its capital, Bordeaux, were a centerpiece of wine production due to its awesome and unique location. One cannot understand the Hundred Years War without being a student of Gascony. One must be able to appreciate Gascony's Anglo-French history and the economic significance the Gascon wine trade acquired in the medieval period.

Finally, all these elements will be brought together to see how they were effected and changed by the Hundred Years War. It is clear that despite the devastating impact the conflict had on England and France, the Anglo-Gascon wine trade continued. Moreover, the available evidence shows that the wine trade between England and southwestern France was economically and culturally important enough to warrant regal protection and support. The results of the research do not try to prove that the Anglo-Gascon wine trade was the sole instigator of the war, but rather that it was significant enough to incite and perpetuate the violence. This work seemed necessary because where the current primary and secondary evidence provide a virtually infinite list of causes of the war, including the Anglo-Gascon wine trade, the subject had been heretofore hardly considered and under examined.

BACCHUS AND BELLUM:
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INTRODUCTION

Most people, if they think of it at all, tend to underestimate the impact of wine on the course of history. As historian and vintner, P.T.H. Unwin has noted, however: "Viticulture and wine have played fundamental economic, social, political, and ideological roles in different parts of the world throughout history."[1]

Hugh Johnson, perhaps today's foremost wine writer, makes the same point, asserting that wine, "weaves in with human history from the beginning as few, if any, other products do. Textiles, pottery, bread . . . are other objects of daily use that we can also trace back to the Stone Age. Yet wine alone is charged with sacramental meaning, with healing, indeed with a life of its own."[2]

According to recent chemical analysis of the contents of a ceramic jar excavated by Dr. Mary M. Voight, an anthropologist at the College of William and Mary, Neolithic farmers in what is now Iran were fermenting wine from grapes as long ago as the period 5,400 to 5,000 B.C.[3] Furthermore, this same analysis showed that these ancient vintners used evergreen resin as a preservative, suggesting that they had already developed considerable experience with wine production and marketing.

Why has wine been so important to mankind for so long? Again, Hugh Johnson provides an answer: "Because for most of its history, and mankind's, it has been his . . . source of comfort and courage, his only medicine and antiseptic, his one recourse to renew his tired spirits and lift him above his weary, saddened self. Wine was the foremost of luxuries to millennia of mankind."[4] And, while successful cultivation of wine grapes is limited to certain favored geographic areas, the determination of peoples living outside

these regions to enjoy this luxury laid the foundation for one of the oldest and most important elements of world commerce: the wine trade.

These fundamentals of human consumption and economic activity were fully established in the eras when Greece and Rome dominated the Mediterranean World; and they were just as vigorously at work in the period and region with which this paper is concerned: Europe's One Hundred Years War (1337-1453 A.D.) between France and England. Indeed, it is the purpose of this thesis to demonstrate that England's demand for wine from a territory we now recognize as French, was among the key factors which precipitated and perpetuated that disastrous conflict.

* * * * *

To understand why wine has exerted such a powerful influence in human affairs, one must first come to grips with the most basic reason for its appeal to the peoples of earlier times in many parts of the globe. Johnson responds that it is wine's "power to banish care" that was so compelling to ancient societies and explains this power in the following terms:

> It was not the subtle bouquet of wine, or a lingering aftertaste of violets and raspberries, that first caught the attention of our ancestors. It was, I am afraid, its effect. In a life that was nasty, brutish and short, those who first felt the effects of alcohol believed they were being given a preview of paradise. Their anxieties disappeared, their fears receded, ideas came more easily, lovers became more loving when they drank the magic juice. For a while, they felt all powerful, even felt themselves to be gods.[5]

Surely this was the principal attraction for the French and Englishmen of the High Middle Ages who, whatever their rank in society, lived often short and dangerous lives under conditions which most of us today would consider intolerable. But there are at least two other major reasons which made wine precious to the consumers of this era: first, wine was an essential element of the celebration of the central sacrament of the Christian faith, the Holy Eucharist; and second, though medieval man had no conception of

antisepsis, he had enough experience with polluted water -- particularly in the emerging urban areas -- to know that drinking water frequently made him sick and wine, taken in moderation, did not.

Some of the attributes of wine that people of the modern era find so attractive -- the careful pairing of wines with specific foods, the development of complex flavors through extended maturation, and the building of great personal wine collections -- were utterly unknown to the Europeans of the medieval era. This is so because the wines they drank had no capacity for aging. The cork and bottle were inventions of the seventeenth century and so wine, like bread, spoiled when it became exposed to air. Thus, the medieval wine trade was preoccupied with rushing its products to market and its customers were equally driven to consume them before they turned to vinegar.

Moreover, this compunction to consume was confined largely to the upper echelons of medieval society, as it had been for the many societies that had gone before because wine was too expensive for the masses. As Johnson notes:

> Wine provided the first experience of alcohol only for a privileged minority of the human race. For the great majority it was ale. Most of the earliest cities were in the grain -- rather than grape-growing lands . . . But wine was always the choice of the privileged . . . Wine, they found, had a power and value far greater than ale and . . . its history pivots around its value.[6]

It was the same in medieval Europe where the beverages derived from grape and grain were divided in their consumption almost entirely along class lines and, to a lesser degree, between the cities and poorer countryside.

Given wine's minority role in the total quantity of alcoholic beverages consumed, one might question whether it could have been as influential in cultural and economic terms as has been asserted above. But it is precisely because wine was the daily drink of the upper classes -- the only persons in a feudal society with the power to make choices about activities as consequential as foreign trade and wars -- that it figured so prominently in the calculations of kings, nobles, clergy, and the growing merchant class of thirteenth and fourteenth century Europe. It was *their* drink, not that of the man in the street or the field

and, in a society with far fewer choices about consumption for pleasure than we enjoy today, ensuring an adequate supply of drinkable wine was a matter of major concern among the elites of France and England. Indeed, under certain circumstances, it was important enough to be a cause for initiating or perpetuating armed conflict.

* * * * *

In support of the argument that wine mattered to the English nobility of this period to a degree we can hardly comprehend today, several pieces of evidence can be advanced. First, however, it is necessary to identify the source from which most of this coveted beverage came. France, as a whole, had been England's primary supplier of wine for many centuries before the Hundred Years War, but, in the decades preceding that conflict England's sources had narrowed to just one favored supplier: Gascony.

Located in southwestern France, Gascony's chief attractions for Britain were not only the good wines it produced but its easy shipping access from the Atlantic Ocean through the great riverport city of Bordeaux. And, as Hugh Johnson attests, "by the middle of the thirteenth century, three quarters of England's royal (wine) supplies were coming from Bordeaux -- and by 'royal' we should understand not just the king's table, but for his household's, the civil service, his gifts and favours, and indeed the supplies for his entire army. In 1282, Edward I (1272-1307) ordered 600 *tonneaux* (over 150,000 U.S. gallons) just for his campaign against the Welsh."[7]

During the first half of the fourteenth century, England's annual imports of wine from Bordeaux alone averaged about 80,000 *tonneaux*, the equivalent of about 20,000,000 U.S. gallons. Had this been distributed throughout England's population of around 5,000,000, it would have amounted to about six bottles for every man, woman, and child.[8] As we already know, however, the great majority of this wine was consumed only by members of the upper classes. One measure of their gargantuan appetite for this wine is documented by Asa Briggs in his book on Chateau Haut-Brion in which he notes that: "For

his wedding feast in 1307, Edward II (1307-1327) . . . ordered 1,000 *tonneaux* of wine from Bordeaux, the equivalent of over 1,000,000 modern bottles.[9]

But royal wedding orders, however grand, are sporadic and therefore do not provide an adequate picture of the scope and meaning of this commerce to England and its crown. Far more persuasive is that Edward II and his successors during the Hundred Years War were extraordinarily dependent on Gascony not only for their wine but for the contribution the wine trade made to the royal coffers. For example, in 1324 when Edward II's income from domestic taxation was on the order of only about £15,000 annually. In addition, as will be explained in Chapter III, he was receiving an additional £13,000 per year in tolls and duties on the river traffic in and around the port of Bordeaux -- nearly all of which was concerned with the shipment of wine.[10] At its height during the first third of the fourteenth century, wine from Gascony comprised about one third of the value of all goods being imported to England and thus was second only to the wool trade in providing revenue for the support of the monarchy.[11]

For those of us who think of wine more as a luxury than a necessity, it is hard to comprehend the economic importance and physical scope of the wine shipments between Gascony and England during the reigns of the first three Edwards (1272-1377). It can be helpful therefore to compare the wine output of Bordeaux in this period with that of modern times. In its peak year of 1308, Gascony exported, according to English tax records, the amazing figure of 104,895 *tonneaux* or 26,433,540 U.S. gallons.[12] For a variety of reasons, some of which will be detailed later in this paper, Gascony never equaled this output again until the twentieth century and did not exceed it until after the Second World War.[13] What is more amazing is that better than three-fourths of this total went to early fourteenth century England while today roughly that same total meets the needs of the entire world. More astonishing still is that the flood of Gascon wine that reached England in 1308-1309 was consumed by only a fraction of its population of around five million. Today, England is still the largest importer of Bordeaux wines, taking about 17% of the

annual production; but even that healthy slice of Bordeaux's output is very small compared to what it was importing in the reign of Edward II. Moreover, today's imports are spread broadly throughout a national population of over 56 million.[14]

These figures help to explain what an enormous -- one might say disproportionate -- role that Gascon wine played in the cultural, economic, and political life of England in the years leading to and continuing throughout the Hundred Years War. For France, neither the land in this southwestern corner of the country nor the wines it produced were of comparable importance. The Capetian kings and their successors had plenty of other good sources of wine within their realm, and had no access to the revenues from Gascony's trade with England. Their motives were at once more negative and more political: they wanted to deny Gascony to England and to extend their sovereignty over all the territory within what we regard today as France's natural boundaries.

* * * * *

These, of course, were not the only bones of contention which led to more than a century of fighting between France and England starting in 1337; not will it be argued here that they were the most important. Sovereignty, feudal rights and relationships, lines of royal succession, the interests of the Church, the Black Death, the Flemish wool trade, Italian bankers, economic expansion, protection of maritime trade routes, territorial ambitions, border conflicts, military technology, the effects of climate, personal vendettas, loves gained and lost, unsettled scores, a girlish saint in shining armor -- all of these and more have their part in the rich tapestry of reasons that prompted, influenced, and perpetuated this conflict. Some are dominant, some subdued, but all contribute to the mix and none should be ignored. Surely, the roles of Gascony and its wine trade with England have not been totally ignored but it will be the effort of this paper to demonstrate that they may not have received all the attention they deserve.

Before one can take the measure of this proposition, however, it is important to review some basic information about the nature of the French and English societies and governments in the centuries immediately preceding the war. For most of the key mitigating factors for each side were rooted in the similar but divergent paths the French and English monarchies took on their way to 1337. For example, one cannot grasp why Paris wanted sovereignty over Gascony without knowing how it had lost it previously and how the recovery of Gascony figured into the overall effort of the Capetian kings to expand and consolidate their realm. Neither can one fathom England's centuries-long struggle with the question of whether to submit to, ally itself with, or dominate France without understanding the circumstances of its creation and the complex web of master and vassal relationships that governed feudal societies. Therefore, the first two chapters of this paper will be devoted to exploring those circumstances and institutions which, roughly between 1000 and 1300 A.D., set France and England on a collision course.

Considering the breadth of the issues which eventually rose between these two powers in this period, it would be naive to contend that any one or two alone caused the conflict. Still, it is fair to argue that some factors may not have gotten all the attention they deserve because, for example, sufficient original source material has not been available or because available-data have not been adequately researched. Admittedly, these possibilities may seem unlikely, given the depth and breadth of scholarship already expended on the Hundred Years War. But, as has already been suggested, under-examination of the roles played by Gascony and its wine trade does seem to have occurred and possibly because, from the perspective of the twentieth century, something as inconsequential as wine has, at least at first glance, had so little credence as a cause for combat. A paper of this scope cannot do full justice to a study of this proposition. It can make a start, however, and therefore Chapters III and IV are devoted to what is known today about the province of Gascony and the extraordinary wine trade it carried on with England in the high Middle Ages.

Finally, there will be a chapter devoted not to retelling the story of the war as a whole but to illuminate those parts which particularly involved or ultimately affected the fate of Gascony and its commerce in wines. Such an analytical approach runs the risk of assigning too much importance to these factors. Again, there is no intent here to challenge the accepted conclusions of the most respected scholars about the several causes of this grotesquely extended and destructive war. The goal is only to suggest that more fruitful research and analysis may still be accomplished on these two subjects.

In support of this contention, it is helpful to recall that the conflict began with France's invasion of English Gascony in a dispute over feudal rights and, moreover, that the last ditch for which England fought -- after 116 years of military triumphs but, in the end, political disaster -- was again in Gascony. It did so, despite fiscal exhaustion, a deep weariness with foreign adventures and the immediate threat of civil war at home, because Gascony was a place where its economic and cultural interests in wine combined with its political and historic determination to maintain a foothold on French soil. The desperation of this final effort, despite what proved to be impossible odds, demonstrates just how much this place and this product mattered to the English monarchy.

CHAPTER I

THE FRENCH MONARCHY: FROM THE CAPETIAN ACCESSION TO THE EVE OF THE HUNDRED YEARS WAR (987-1328 A.D.)

France approached the second millennium as a tired and broken land, taking longer than many other European states to recover from the seemingly endless invasions mounted by the predatory raiders of Scandinavia and the continental steppe. Favored with a mild climate and fertile soil, its main economic activity was farming and, while subsistence agriculture predominated, France was producing sufficient surpluses in grain, wine, and salt to begin a revival of its industry and commerce.[1]

Wine making had been going on in what we now call France for at least a thousand years before the Capetian dynasty was begun by Hugh Capet in 987 A.D. Most experts believe that the French wine industry dates back to around 600 B.C. with the plantings of vines by the Greeks in and around the Mediterranean port of Massilia (today's Marseilles). Marseilles was taken over by the Romans in 49 B.C. and the propagation of grapes for winemaking was dramatically extended beyond this base when Rome began its land expeditions and subsequent settlements in what they called Gaul. This process of exploration, conflict with native peoples, establishment of fortified towns, and the spread of vineyards continued broadly throughout France for the next 500 years.[2]

The main axis of this expansion was northward through the Rhone Valley and, subsequently, on through what we know today as Burgundy and Champagne. There is

good evidence that the Romans also moved westward from Marseilles to propagate vineyards in what remains France's most abundant viticultural region -- at least in terms of raw output -- Languedoc and Roussillon. By the fourth century A.D., and possibly much earlier, Roman vineyards were flourishing in Bordeaux and soon thereafter in the Loire Valley and the north-central region centered on Paris.[3]

With the fall of Rome in 476, Paris replaced Marseilles both as the political and winemaking capital of France. As Jancis Robinson, in her remarkable new Oxford Companion To Wine puts it:

> The Franks had come from the north, and Clovis, the first of (France's) Merovingian kings (481-511), established Paris as the capital city of a kingdom that hardly extended further than the Ile-de-France. Under Charlemagne (768-814), and his heirs, the royal court's principal seats were Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle) and Paris. Hence political power and the wealth that went with it, were concentrated in the north. In the Mediterranean, wine was a part of everyday life; but in Paris and Aachen, on the northernmost limits of viticulture, wine was a luxury item, and from a luxury item it became a status symbol. Also, because Gaul was largely Christian by the sixth century, the Church's requirements added impetus to northern viticulture. Monasteries and churches needed wine; local magnates, both lay and spiritual, wanted good wine.[4]

A secondary factor in the broad propagation of vineyards throughout France -- though the historical evidence for this is less explicit than it is for the role of the Romans -- is the immigration of Caucasian peoples from Central and Eastern Europe. The Caucusus region is believed to be the domain in which the best species of grapes for making wine (*vitis vinifera*) originated and it is apparent that large groups of people were forced to move westward from this area by the exhaustion of their livestock grazing lands and increases in population. With their sheep and goats before them, some of these people came into France and also brought the vines which were a central aspect of their culture. Both the livestock and the vines flourished in France's land and climate.[5]

Clearly, the first great political promoter of the French wine industry was Charlemagne, first king of the Holy Roman Empire. As Einhard, his secretary and biographer, has reported, Charlemagne was personally temperate and detested drunkenness, never drinking more than three cups of wine at dinner. Nevertheless, he was

a vigorous advocate for the spread of vineyards and for increased wine production. Thus, his promotion of the wine trade helped to root it early as a staple of French commerce and national life. As Pierre Anglade testified in his introduction to Wines and Vineyards of France: "viticulture is an integral part of French culture; it is of incontestable symbolic richness; and wine soon came to play a privileged role in French society."[6]

New wine districts grew throughout the early Middle Ages as individual churches and monastic orders perfected their viticultural techniques and began increasing their production for sale to the general population. When the Roman Church's leaders saw the profits that could be made from this trade, first on a local basis and then for export, it began to take over the more successful winemaking estates. It was not long before the monasteries became the chief innovators, largest land holders and most important wine producers in medieval Europe -- especially in the Rhone Valley, Burgundy, and Champagne.[7] Among the advantages these church-supported estates had over private vintners were the continuity of cultivation in church-protected lands; a system of communication between monasteries that allowed for the exchange of information about vine-growing and winemaking techniques; and that virtually all the monks were literate to some degree, making them among the most educated people of the age.[8]

Throughout this formative period of French viticulture, the common people had almost no role as producers or consumers of wine. Particularly in the northern provinces, the primary involvement of peasants was in furnishing labor in the vineyards. These people were not land owners, for the most part, and the costs of wine production were simply too high for the average man. Some peasants may have received wine in return for their labor and, doubtless, some made small quantities for household consumption. Generally, however, wine remained a luxury product enjoyed primarily by members of the nobility and the Church. Thus, from the beginning, one's use of alcoholic beverages was determined by class; the working people drank ale and those of the higher estates enjoyed wine.[9]

With the approach of the new millennium, wine had become France's chief export product with good markets growing in England, Scotland, Flanders, and the Netherlands. Much of this new growth was possible not only because of the productivity of France's vineyards but because the abatement of the invasions by the Goths, Huns, and Celts, to name but a few of the earlier marauders of French lands, was nearly complete by the year 1000. From this point forward, a key aspect of France's national identity was its role as the primary supplier of high quality wines to the rest of the world.

* * * * *

Politically, France's chief asset was a stable monarchy. From the outset of their dynasty in 987 A.D., the Capetian kings pursued policies which encouraged the country's economic development and territorial expansion. Even though the natural boundaries of what was to become France were largely on the sea, its economy remained essentially continental and agricultural during this period of recovery with surprisingly little attention given to the development of maritime industries. As a result, it was not until the middle of the twelfth century that ports like Marseilles and Bordeaux would become major features of France's economic landscape.[10]

While the nation's economic revival was slowed by periodic natural disasters and public health crises, from the millennium onward it was sufficient to permit a general population increase that continued well into the fourteenth century. Indeed, by the second half of the thirteenth century, the countryside had reached entirely new levels of population density and economic prosperity. The chief medieval chronicler, Sir Jean Froissart, described France as "gorged, contented, and strong, its people rich and prospering and not one of them knew the word war." Moreover, Froissart believed that foreign lands should marvel at what he called this "noble realm" and went on to describe France as being "full of large villages, fine country, sweet rivers, good ponds, fair meadows, mellow and full-bodied wines, and of a temperate climate."[11]

Froissart failed to note, however, that the growth in population was out-pacing the capacity of the nation's agriculture to support it. The expansion of areas cultivated for farming had drawn to a halt by the end of the thirteenth century as the fields needed for grazing animals and the woodlands used for hunting and growing timber had reached a critical minimum level. As France's population continued to grow, the dearth of new farmland led to a decline in real wages and a rise in inflation. An economic depression set in by the fourteenth century and, to make matters worse, famine struck the countryside between 1315-1317.[12]

Under these circumstances, the life expectancy of individuals in rural communities, which had never been very high, fell to less than twenty years. The only class which seemed to prosper during this period was the land proprietors whose income came from the rents paid by tenant farmers according to the number of people on their properties. There were simply too many people for this agriculturally-based economy to support and, while the crisis varied from region to region, as Sumption noted, "the denser the population, the greater the distress."[13]

Reliable numbers on France's population during this time are lacking. Two major historians of this period, Perroy and Sumption, have reported on the royal census taken in 1328 but came up with different results. Perroy stated that the royal treasury counted approximately 3,300,000 households in 32,000 parishes with a minimum population of about 10 to 12,000,000 people.[14] Sumption, presumably working with the same data, concluded that France had only 24,000 parishes consisting of 2,469,987 households. This accounting, however, only included the head of the household and not all those who lived within it. Moreover, Sumption's tally did not include the nobility who were not counted because they were exempt from taxation. Such omissions notwithstanding, Sumption estimated that at that time France could not have had less than 16,000,000 people.[15]

Despite the marked disparity in these estimates, it seems safe to assume that France's population during the first half of the fourteenth century was on the order of

14,000,000. In any case, Perroy and Sumption are in agreement that France had a remarkably dense population for this period of European history, one far exceeding that of its neighbors including Spain, Germany, and the British Isles.[16]

Possibly the best example of this population density in France can be seen in the Ile-de-France and its capital city, Paris. Half way through the twelfth century, this political and cultural center of the kingdom had relatively little commercial or industrial activity, but was, nonetheless, a magnet to neighboring and outlying provinces. Paris' drawing power made it a center for the growing court, its associated administrative bureaucracy, and the intellectual community of the Sorbonne university.[17]

Paris was crowded in comparison with other French towns, as was the entire Ile-de-France; in addition, it was not only the most densely populated city in northern Europe, it was the richest. At a time when England's largest city, London, supported about 40,000 inhabitants, Paris, including its northern suburbs, contained a population of more than 100,000. And, in a time when the living conditions else- where in France were so deplorable, Paris was relatively comfortable and attracted many visitors because of its wealth and the cultural freedom associated with life in the capital.[18]

By modern sanitary standards, of course, Paris was no rose garden. The city was divided by the river Seine and almost completely dependent on it for its drinking water, transportation and sewage removal. Butchers slaughtered and cleaned their meat in the streets and it was common for pigs, dogs and rats to feed on the waste piled in the front of every home and shop. Paris was, in a word, filthy and as a result disease was rampant. For all but the nobility and the emerging merchant class, survival in the city was tough and creature comforts rare.[19] Consequently, one of the industries of key interest to the monarchy was the wine trade. Throughout the Ile-de-France, viticulture, along with grain production and other agricultural activity, was heavily subsidized by the crown. As has already been noted, wine's importance stemmed in part from the understanding that water supplies, particularly in the cities, were contaminated. Ale was a cheaper alternative but

royalty, the clergy, and the mercantile class had both the means and the desire to have something more to their taste. Thus, unlike today, the areas immediately surrounding Paris became a bountiful source of wine production and offered virtually any variety the king and his court required.[20]

* * * * *

It is important to realize that fourteenth century France was not the large, unified, international power that it eventually became under, for example, Louis XIV. The land holdings of the French crown were much smaller and subject to predations from other princes, great and small. The kings of the Middle Ages, particularly in France, spent a majority of their time dealing with neighboring principalities, each trying through alliances and other means to consolidate as much property as possible within their domains. In feudal times, a king's worth was measured simply by the quantity and quality of the land under his authority. Each king had his own method of acquiring property, some more violent than others, but their common goal was to secure the loyalty and service of the still independent landholders on their borders. In doing so, a king also sought to gain the allegiance of the residents of that area and thus their support for the economic policies and martial adventures of the monarchy.

The success of France's Capetian kings in expanding their realm stemmed in large part from the continuity of their leadership. Their dynasty, begun under Hugh Capet (987-996) extended through fourteen kings until the death of Charles IV (1322-1328). Because each of these kings left a viable male heir, France's monarchy became unique among the great medieval dynasties of Europe. Some had special abilities and, unlike most such royal families, none were manifestly incompetent.[21]

This combination of natural ability, an unbroken family line and the apparent favor of the Almighty all assisted the Capetians' effort to expand and consolidate the French kingdom and to stimulate economic prosperity within its borders.[22] There was, it should

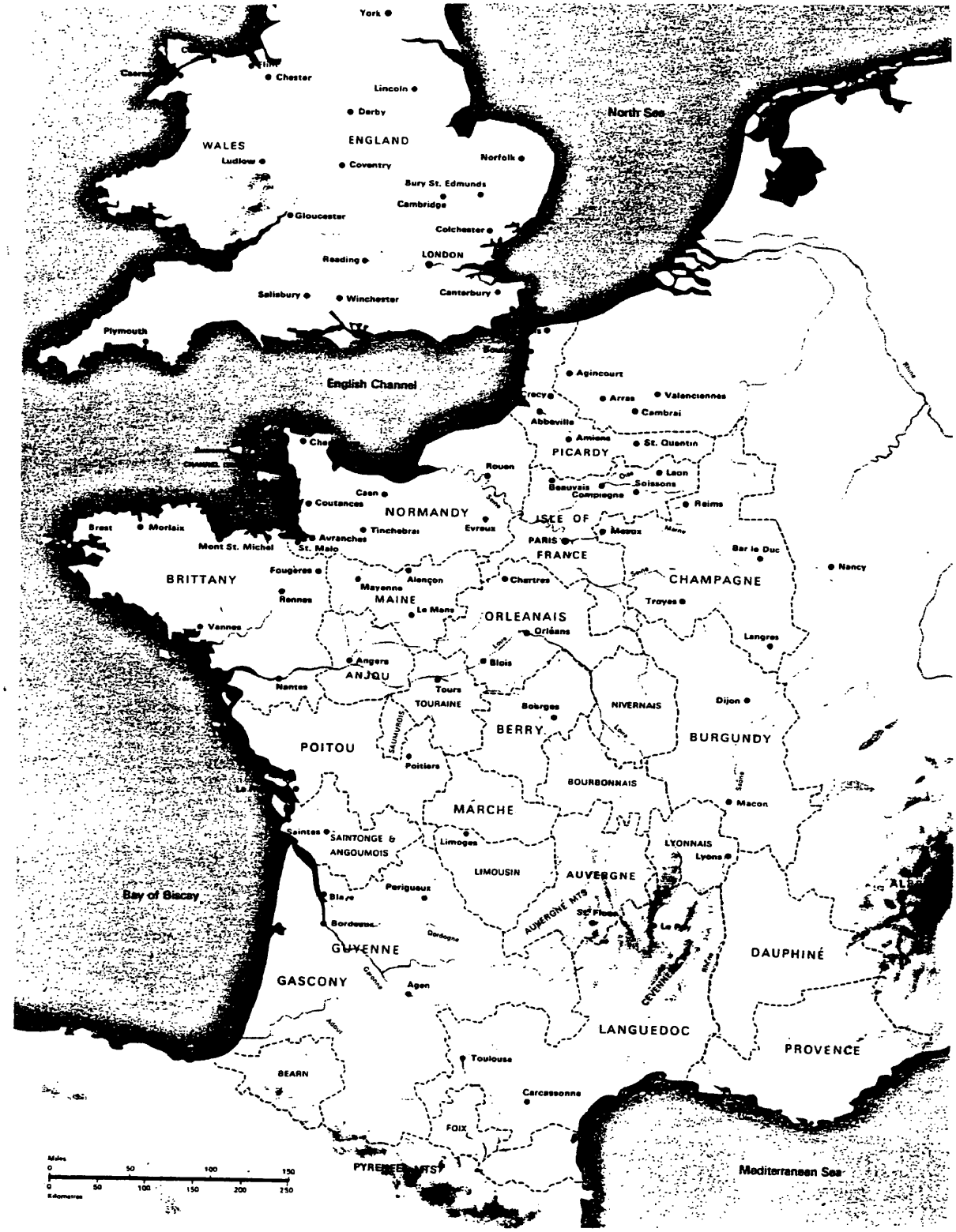
be noted, a general economic improvement across Europe at the close of the tenth century and this trend was highly evident in France. According to Perroy, "when it attained its climax, round about 1300, it might be said that France had a lead over the rest of western Christendom which put her in a position to exert a political and cultural hegemony and indeed made it inevitable that she should."[23]

This achievement was all the more remarkable because at its outset and up until the end of the eleventh century the Capetian domain had been small and insecure, barely extending beyond the cities of Paris and Orléans in a compact realm known as the Ile-de-France. But, by the beginning of the fourteenth century, its territory to the east included the entire country of Flanders and the western half of what is now Belgium. To the north it included Brittany, Normandy, and all the lesser provinces facing the English Channel. To the west, it encompassed the more fertile lands of Maine, Anjou, Touraine, and Poitou. In the southwest, the Capetian kings regained most of Aquitaine including, after 1324, the last English bastion in France: Gascony. The success of the Capetian monarchy can be attributed, in part, to their feats of arms but in larger measure to their grasp of the forces at work in medieval society and their skill in exploiting the shifting loyalties within it.[24]

* * * * *

Basically, medieval society was disorganized and chaotic. Invading armies, failing crops and rampant disease made most people's lives short and unpredictable.
The common people as well as their rulers longed for some degree of order and were willing to make substantial sacrifices to achieve it. Beneath the ruling class the population was divided functionally into three groups: those who *worked*, i.e. the great majority of farmers, tradesmen, and their families; those who *prayed*, i.e. those who ran the church and its associated monasteries, convents, and alms houses; and those who *fought*, i.e. a professional class of warriors who battled for their own gain or in temporary alliances with regional or national rulers. It was this small but elite group of cavalrymen on

FRANCE IN THE LATTER MIDDLE AGES[25]



whom many of our romantic notions about the Middle Ages are based. And it was this group to whom the Capetian kings turned to achieve the expansion and stability of their realm.

These professional fighters, or knights, constituted only about 1-2% of the households in France but were the most distinctive and influential figures in their society. These were the men who, if they survived the rigors of frequent combat, became elevated to the nobility as their martial exploits earned them property rights from thankful sovereigns and other influential landowners. Once these knights became property holders and nobles, however, they also became vassals in service to the lord who had granted them the land. And it was this bargain that was the basis for the political system that dominated the feudal period. In this regard, the realm led by the Capetian kings was no different than any other medieval monarchy. Since kings were typically the greatest landholders within their region, they obviously were in the best position to offer property in return for service, but these land-for-service relationships also demanded ongoing attention from the monarch to ensure that he would be able to count on the loyalty of the knight and his heirs when the king's needs arose.[26]

The services that kings, like the Capetians, required depended in part upon the size of the land grant. Most typically, however, the duty demanded by the king was military service. For centuries, this was how a medieval king raised an army to fight his wars and such a system was required because monarchs simply did not have the means to maintain standing armies and relied, instead, upon their knight-landholders to supply the necessary forces when a crisis loomed. These forces consisted of the knights themselves, heavily armed and supported by large masses of largely untrained infantry recruited from the knight's own region. All the expenses needed to transport, supply, and arm the noble and his men -- including their equipment, horses, armor, weapons, administrators, attendants, servants, travel and entertainment -- fell upon the knight who often had to levy special taxes on his tenants to pay for the operation.[27]

It was accepted that every vassal, from the highest noble to the lowest subject, owed his superior such acts of homage. By the thirteenth century, however, these obligations were becoming increasingly difficult to fulfill. As noted above, the French population and the agricultural activity necessary to support it were increasing. This, in turn, drove down the supply of desirable land -- even for the nobility. Under these conditions, the more established nobles who had received their land grants centuries earlier had to raise the money to meet their obligations to the monarchy either by selling off portions of their property or by giving them to lesser nobles in return for secondary service relationships. These lesser nobles, in turn, further partitioned their new land among the local peasantry for money or service.[28]

This practice, called subinfeudation, so reduced what were once huge properties that by the dawn of the fourteenth century some monarchies were nothing but a jigsaw puzzle of sub-divided land grants extending from king to peasant in a complex chain of obligations. While this system had been initiated, in part, to provide more order in society, it was by this time breeding chaos because not many knew to whom they were obligated or to what extent. In addition, the fragmentation of the countryside into smaller properties meant that the lesser nobility had fewer resources on which they could depend to provide the military forces the king required for his campaigns.[29]

This scenario played itself out in Capetian France until many nobles were unable or unwilling to fulfill their military obligations to their overlord and, ultimately, to the king. Their failure to live up to these land-for-service bargains was caused by factors in addition to the problem of land ownership fragmentation. For example, noble families were exposed to higher mortality rates due to their frequent involvement in wars. Moreover, the nobility was not exempt from the high frequency of death for infants and women in childbirth that plagued medieval society. There is statistical evidence to show that breaks in the male line of succession typically caused noble families to die out in less than a century. They were then replaced by others whose value to the monarchy brought them noble status

but usually lesser land-holdings; these newly-minted 'nobles' were sometimes referred to as *parvenus*. There were also families who, having accumulated a substantial fief-like estate through purchase, marriage, or inheritance, were more gradually recognized as members of the nobility.[30]

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Loyalty, obligation, and a sense of community were difficult enough to maintain under these circumstances, even among vassals who lived within the general vicinity of their king; but it grew weaker still as the physical distance from the royal court increased. Neighboring princes, despite their formal obligations, family ties or seemingly common interests, were frequently slow to respond to the demands of their nominal superiors. This tendency was fostered by the slow pace of transportation and communications which made regional authorities isolated and therefore largely independent, at least in their conduct of day-to-day affairs. Mounted messengers could travel only thirty miles on a good day and thus the orders passed between kings and their vassals were often out paced by events or garbled.[31]

Another problem complicating monarchical rule was that outlying nobles, having become accustomed to self-reliance in the political administration of their regions, began thinking of themselves as independent principalities. This tendency became increasingly strong in provinces which employed local rather than royal judicial or monetary systems; or where there were substantial differences between the local cultural or linguistic practices and those of the court.[32]

A striking example of a province unwilling to maintain its obligations to the French crown was Anjou. Occupying a key position in what is now west-central France, this principality was a rich assembly of lands brought together over time through conquest, inheritance, and marriage. In the mid-twelfth century, Geoffrey Plantagenet was Count of Anjou (including Maine and Tourraine) and, after a series of hard fought campaigns

between 1141 and 1144, took over as the Duke of Normandy and Lord of Brittany. This made Geoffrey sufficiently powerful not just to ignore his obligations as a vassal of France's Louis VII (1137-1180) but to confront him.[33] In 1150 Geoffrey passed the titles of Duke of Normandy and Count of Anjou to his young son Henry, a succession recognized by Louis VII in return for a long-contested but small piece of land, the Vexin, lying between Normandy and the Ile-de-France. Its possession was regarded as critical by both sides because of its proximity to Paris; in English hands it was a dagger at the throat of the French court since Vexin was only one day's hard march from the capital.[34]

In 1151, however, Henry saw an opportunity to further increase his authority at Louis' expense and in terms of territory the stakes were far higher than the Vexin. As the noted wine historian Hugh Johnson relates:

> In Paris in 1151 the court received a visit of homage from the . . . 18-year old Henry Plantagenet. Alienor (France's 29-year-old Queen) compared the fiery youth with her religious husband and decided on a change. . . . Astonishingly, after 15 years of marriage (and two daughters) the King and Queen of France returned to Bordeaux (where they married in 1137) to be ceremonially de-wed on the grounds that they were cousins who never should have been married in the first place. Eight weeks later Alienor (Eleanor) married Henry Plantagenet, Duke of Normandy and Count of Anjou. Two years after that, in 1154, he became King Henry II and she Queen Eleanor of England. The famous link was made.[35]

The reason this marriage is so famous a part of both French and English history is that Henry's bride was Eleanor *of Aquitaine* and for her marriage dowry she brought with her, first to Louis and then to Henry, that vast stretch of French territory that extended southward from the Loire River to the Pyranees Mountains. By this union, Henry had added the provinces of Poitou and Gascony to his prior holdings in Anjou, Touraine, Maine, Brittany, and Normandy and thus gained control over half the territory of France. And when, just two years later, he was elevated to the English throne, the Capetian monarchy was confronted with a political disaster.[36] As Winston Churchill put it in his The Birth of Britain:

> Henry II's accession to the Island throne in 1154 threatened France with far graver dangers. Hitherto there had always been political relief in playing off over-mighty subjects one against another. . . But when in one hour Henry II was King of England, Duke of Normandy, Lord of Aquitaine, Brittany, Poitou, Anjou, Maine, and Guienne(Gascony), ruler from the Somme to the Pyranees of more than half France, all balance of power among the feudal lords was destroyed. Louis VII found instead of a dozen principalities, divided and jealous, one single imperial power, whose resources far surpassed his own.[37]

Theoretically speaking, Henry II remained subservient to the French monarch but, with these enormous land holdings -- the ultimate yardstick of power in medieval societies, he was not about to cooperate with, much less render service to, Louis of France. Throughout his reign (1154-1196), Henry used his territorial advantage in France to harass the Capetian kings and to further consolidate and extend his French domains. Pressing eastward from Aquitaine, he advanced his borders through La Marche, the Auvergne, Limousin, and into Toulouse. At his zenith, Henry II owned six times as much French territory as his rivals in Paris; though, technically, he was still their vassal. This tremendous shift in the balance of power and the French monarchy's subsequent efforts to restore hegemony over all of western France set the stage for some of the most important developments in European history over the next several centuries.

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By the beginning of the thirteenth century, the Capetian monarchy had reached a plateau both economically and politically. It had enjoyed a century of growing prosperity and had made significant strides in expanding and consolidating the provinces immediately around the Ile-de-France. But, the agricultural economy was beginning to falter as the demands of an expanding population for additional food and living space began to outstrip what a fixed supply of arable land could afford. Moreover, the increasing complexity of monarch-to-vassal relationships was making the king's war-fighting capacity less dependable. And, finally, there was the problem of huge amounts of territory within

France's natural boundaries remaining in the hands of princes who refused to acknowledge their feudal obligations to the French throne.

The Capetians knew that they must expand their territory and exert tighter control over all the subsidiary principalities within their domain. They were in a quandary, however, over how to achieve those goals. As Edouard Perroy has described:

> Still thoroughly imbued with the feudal spirit, . . . the French monarchy . . . tended perhaps unconsciously, but surely, to transform the kingdom into a modern state, in which the will of the sovereign, as the supreme law of the nation, must be obeyed without a murmur. But, the French monarchy, like all the other kingdoms of Europe, lacked two essential implements for the consummation of its ambitions: a regular army and stable finances.[38]

Without these tools it was not clear how the monarchy could impose its will on the semi-autonomous provinces within its domain, much less expand its control over those adjoining territories whose rulers refused to acknowledge French authority.[39] One thing it could do, however, was to lay the foundation for gaining greater military and financial power by establishing a more effective central government, one capable of more efficiently executing the king's policies and collecting his taxes. The major concern, though, was to create a stable bureaucracy that was small and loyal. This was a difficult task, at the very least, but which was best achieved under kings like Philip II (1179-1223), Louis IX (1226-1270), and Philip IV, also known as Philip the Fair (1285-1314). Each of these monarchs had a significant amount of time on the throne which leads one to believe that their central authority was to some degree sound and effective.[40]

At the heart of the bureaucracy for each of these kings was a Council made up of friends and family, some noble and some ecclesiastical, that were to provide advice and delegate the king's authority.[41] From there, the monarch's will was passed on to a corps of civil servants and other royal authorities who were sent out to the surrounding provinces to instruct the king's subjects of his policies and collect revenue. The extension of the Paris-based, royal bureaucracy out into the provinces was not easily accomplished. It was antithetical to the feudal principle of administration by the local nobility and it required more

efficient transportation and communication. Not surprisingly, it was resented at the local level but it went forward, nonetheless, because the monarchy had to collect the revenues vital to achieving its twin goals of fiscal and military self-sufficiency.[42]

* * * * *

The Capetians knew that the strength of their monarchy ultimately depended not only upon a competent bureaucracy but also an effective army. In a sense, the improved administrative structure was only a means to this end and by the opening of the fourteenth century their military capabilities were still in a sorry state. Fewer and fewer among the nobility were able or willing to put themselves or their infantry at risk for the king despite their formal obligation to do so whenever summoned. The later Capetians realized that under these circumstances they could field only ridiculously small forces. The number of knights had fallen as low as 600 from a high of about 2,500. The more lightly armed cavalry, often referred to as sergeants, could not even muster 5,000. The infantry, whose lack of formal training never made them highly regarded, were comparably reduced.[43]

All in all, the monarchy had trouble producing an army of 10-15,000 men from its traditional sources and thus committed itself to taking radical steps to increasing its military strength to a new level that later French kings would feel obliged to continue and other European monarchies had to attempt to duplicate. Since the Capetians could no longer count upon their vassals to volunteer such forces, the monarchy turned -- despite the growing weakness in its agriculturally-based economy -- to increased taxation. In effect, the monarchy altered the historic bargain between the king and his subjects from one of land in return for on-call, largely amateur forces to a new arrangement in which the king gave improved, professional protection of his subjects' land in return for taxes. Such forces would, of course, not only defend the realm but provide the means to expand it.[44]

Thus, the monarchy imposed a new, general tax to expand its armed forces but, so as to avoid any meaningful opposition, excluded the nobility from those who had to pay.

In imposing this levy, the French monarchy argued that it was only following the lead of the Iberian kingdom, Sicily, portions of the Holy Roman Empire, and even England which had imposed national taxation to build up their royal treasuries. But what was possible in these smaller, more homogeneous countries proved, at least initially, far more difficult in a country as large and diverse as France.[45]

An authoritarian approach was needed to make the new tax system work and the monarchy did not shrink from this imperative. It is perhaps no accident, therefore, that France was the most important European country where representative assemblies were established last and developed least. Consent to the tax from the peasantry would have been convenient but the king knew he needed the revenue and was not about to let this scruple stand in his way. Moreover, the decision once taken was strictly enforced; those who could or would not pay their taxes were faced with confiscation of their land. The monarchy defended its behavior by declaring taxation a duty which the peasantry owed to the king not only on the basis of natural law but as their just contribution to the larger community's common good -- a concept well beyond the comprehension of most members of this locally-focused, largely agrarian populace.[46]

And the peasants were not the only ones to feel the sting of this new levy. By the early fourteenth century, the largest and richest landowner in the realm -- the Catholic Church -- became subject to taxation. One might have expected that high church officials or even the Pope himself would have protested this challenge to the church's sovereignty. At this time, however, the Pope had fled from Rome and taken refuge in the southeastern French city of Avignon. Thus under the protection of the French crown, His Holiness was in no position to protest the new tax.[47]

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The funds gathered by these means financed the monarchy's recapture of the provinces of France held by the English crown. This achievement consisted of a long

series of military and diplomatic advances and reversals, separated by periods of truce, that extended throughout the thirteenth century and into the early part of the fourteenth. These events will be reviewed in more detail in Chapter III but, briefly, the high points for France were: 1200 -- the reacquisition of the Vexin; 1203 -- regaining Normandy, Maine, Anjou, Touraine, and most of Poitou; 1214 -- the successful defense of Poitou; 1224 -- seizure of the port of La Rochelle; 1242 -- another successful defense of Poitou; 1259 -- the Treaty of Paris whereby England's Henry III surrendered his claims to all English lands in France except Gascony; and 1324 -- the seizure of Gascony by Charles IV (1322-1328).

The Capetian dynasty, after nearly 350 years of challenged but uninterrupted rule came to a close with Charles' death in 1328. Its efforts to rebuild the country's agriculturally-based economy; to consolidate and enlarge its realm; to establish an effective central government; and to build military forces more responsive to the king had been highly successful and had set a standard admired and emulated by nearly all future French kings. So, despite its many political, economic, and military defects -- ones shared in varying degrees by all its European neighbors -- France was a powerful and dynamic kingdom with many important resources at its disposal as it entered the decade just preceding the Hundred Years War. Its immediate concerns were how to maintain its dominance over its closely-related but ever-threatening royal rival across the Channel and how to deal with an elder, non-Capetian noble who sought to ascend the French throne in 1328.

CHAPTER II

THE ENGLISH MONARCHY: FROM THE NORMAN CONQUEST TO THE EVE OF THE HUNDRED YEARS WAR (1066-1327 A.D.)

In many important respects, particularly in terms of her social and political structure, England's history during this period parallels that of France. Just as France had begun a new era with the advent of the Capetian regime in 987, England began to take a new form in 1066 with the successful invasion of its territory by the Norman noble, William the Conqueror. There is still a debate over when the birth of the English nation actually occurred. Some believe that the foundations of the country were laid by its earlier inhabitants, the Anglo-Saxons; others insist that there was no truly organized society and credible government until the Norman takeover in the mid-eleventh century.[1] For the purposes of this study, we will embrace the latter hypothesis.

Long burdened by seaborne invasions and primitive agricultural practices, England, was slower than some regions on the European continent to achieve economic stability and agricultural progress. It's development was further delayed by the Anglo-Norman conflict and the periodic lapses into political anarchy that followed. Moreover, England's geography and her reputation as a country popu- lated by barbarians, i.e. the native Anglo-Saxons, also had much to do with her tardy evolution.[2]

The arrival of a substantial segment of the northern French nobility after William's successful invasion helped spur England's advancement but it continued to trail France because of its less temperate climate, its lack of significant urban centers, and its smaller population. Precise numbers about England's population at this time are lacking and, just

as for France, the data we have today vary substantially by source. While there is agreement among several authorities as to the number of parishes, i.e. about 8,600, there is no such common estimate for the number of people country-wide. For instance, Edouard Perroy estimates about 3,500,000 while Kenneth Fowler claims a higher total of 4,500,000 and then Jonathan Sumption offers still a higher range of between 5-6,000,000. Each of these authors conducted his research in the same general period, i.e. the early to mid-fourteenth century and thus a closer pattern of results might be expected. For the purposes of this study, however, it is sufficient to approximate England's population at between 4-5,000,000 or roughly one-third that of France.[3]

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England was like France in that most of its able-bodied men were farmers. There was far less arable land, however, and its location determined where the country's population was concentrated. The most fertile regions were the eastern and southern lowlands, today's East Anglia, Hampshire, and Kent. The lack of good land elsewhere meant that these regions had to be intensively farmed while other uses had to be found for the grasslands at higher elevations like those in the chalk hills of Kent, Sussex, and the great heaths of the Pennine Chain. These soon became locations for raising sheep as the English learned that the wool yielded by these animals could become the country's first great economic asset and a key commodity for export. As Perroy wrote, "On the Cistercian Estates in Yorkshire sheep-farming achieved such a degree of perfection that the English wool was rightly regarded in the continental markets as the finest in Europe."[4]

The demand from Europe for English wool grew rapidly and helped to diversify the country's economy. England's best customers were the Low Countries, the home of the most extensive cloth-making industry on the continent. Their looms soon became largely dependent on English wool and it was not long before England became the main producer of high-grade wool for all of Europe. Also sought after by the cloth industries of Italy,

France, and Germany, this highly-prized raw material began to grow in political influence as well as economic value.[5]

The English monarchy found that it could use wool as a tool of its foreign policy by withholding this key commodity from the king's enemies and authorizing its export to his friends. This manipulation of the wool trade was made easier because wool is a bulky raw material and its movement could be easily monitored, especially if its export was authorized only through a small number of ports. Domestically, it also became an important source of income for the king who sold licenses for wool exports which could be bought for money or for services to the crown. Eventually, the English monarchy raised a good portion of its revenue through the taxation of this increasingly valued commodity.[6]

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Winemaking occupied no comparably important place in England's early economic landscape. Wine production was never successful because England's climate was too cool and damp for wine grapes to ripen. While wine-abundant France is only a few miles away, even today the English Channel appears to mark the northern limit of winemaking -- at least in commercial terms.[7]

The early Britons were drinkers of mead or ale but when their land was conquered by Rome in the first century A.D. they were exposed to wines imported from the Mediterranean region. The Anglo-Saxon chieftains prized it greatly, and, as in other countries, wine became a drink for the wealthy and the powerful because it was an expensive commodity to import. Before long, the nobility, the higher clergy, and the wealthier merchants were consuming wine in large quantities while the common folk were left to enjoy wine only on special occasions.[8]

As Europe moved into the era of Charlemagne, the Anglo-Saxons were getting most of their wine from France but were still trying to establish a native wine industry. Wine was necessary for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist and strenuous efforts were

being made by the English monasteries and others to produce it. There is a reference, for example, in Bede's Ecclesiastical History (completed in 781 A.D.) to the fact that "wines are cultivated in various localities" and there is a charter, dated 955 of King Edwy (great grandson of King Alfred) which grants a vineyard at Pethanburgh, Somerset, to the monks of Glastonbury Abbey. We also know that not all vineyards were owned by monks and that the Laws of King Alfred made it an offense for anyone to destroy a vineyard. The most authoritative source on the state of English winemaking in this era is the Domesday Book of 1086 which William the Conqueror published as the complete inventory of the assets of his new kingdom. It lists a total of thirty-eight vineyards of which twelve were monastic.[9]

In any case, the Norman knights who invaded England with William in 1066 took no chances on depending on native English wine or limited supplies of French wine in England. As the Bayeaux tapestry explicitly shows, they crossed the Channel with stocks of wine and arms in virtually equal measure.[10] Following the conquest, imports of wine from northern France rose sharply, much of it coming from the riverport of Rouen in Normandy but probably originating in vineyards throughout the Ile-de-France for this was the wine the Normans knew and liked best. By the year 1200, however, an important shift in the source of wine was underway since shipping records show that while wine was continuing to flow from these northern vineyards, a majority was coming from France's western provinces of Anjou and Poitou via the port of La Rochelle.[11]

After the Norman conquest, England increasingly had something to trade for wine that the French wanted more than animal hides: wool. With the establishment of this wool for wine exchange, the amount of wine being imported rose substantially and the new Norman rulers of England -- monarchs, nobles, and high clergy -- became as expansive as their counterparts across the Channel in their use of wine. And this sharp increase in England's demand for wine fueled the interests of these elites in controlling these regions in France where wine was produced or, at least, in profiting from the trade in wine which was surging between the two countries.[12]

The growth in economic prosperity which England realized with its expanding wool trade encouraged her to develop other industries that would further diversify the country's largely agricultural economy. Some entrepreneurs came across deposits of coal and metal, including iron, lead, and tin, but the initial exploitation of these natural resources were inefficient and made no impact on the economy comparable to that of the wool trade. Like many such enterprises, the early mining industries were under-capitalized and suffered from a lack of overland transport.[13]

English shipping, however, got off to a fast start. Because it was isolated from the continent and needed to get its wool to foreign markets, England developed its maritime industry far more quickly than France. It began with fishing as a source of food and work in the many English communities located along the country's extensive coastline. The wool trade brought more attention to the coasts, particularly in those ports which afforded easy access to the continent. For example, wool-shipping towns like Kinston-upon-Hull, King's Lynn, Yarmouth, Dover, and London itself prospered because of the growing business with the ports of Flanders. Other coastal towns like Southampton also grew in importance as a flourishing wine trade developed between England and the French province of Gascony.[14]

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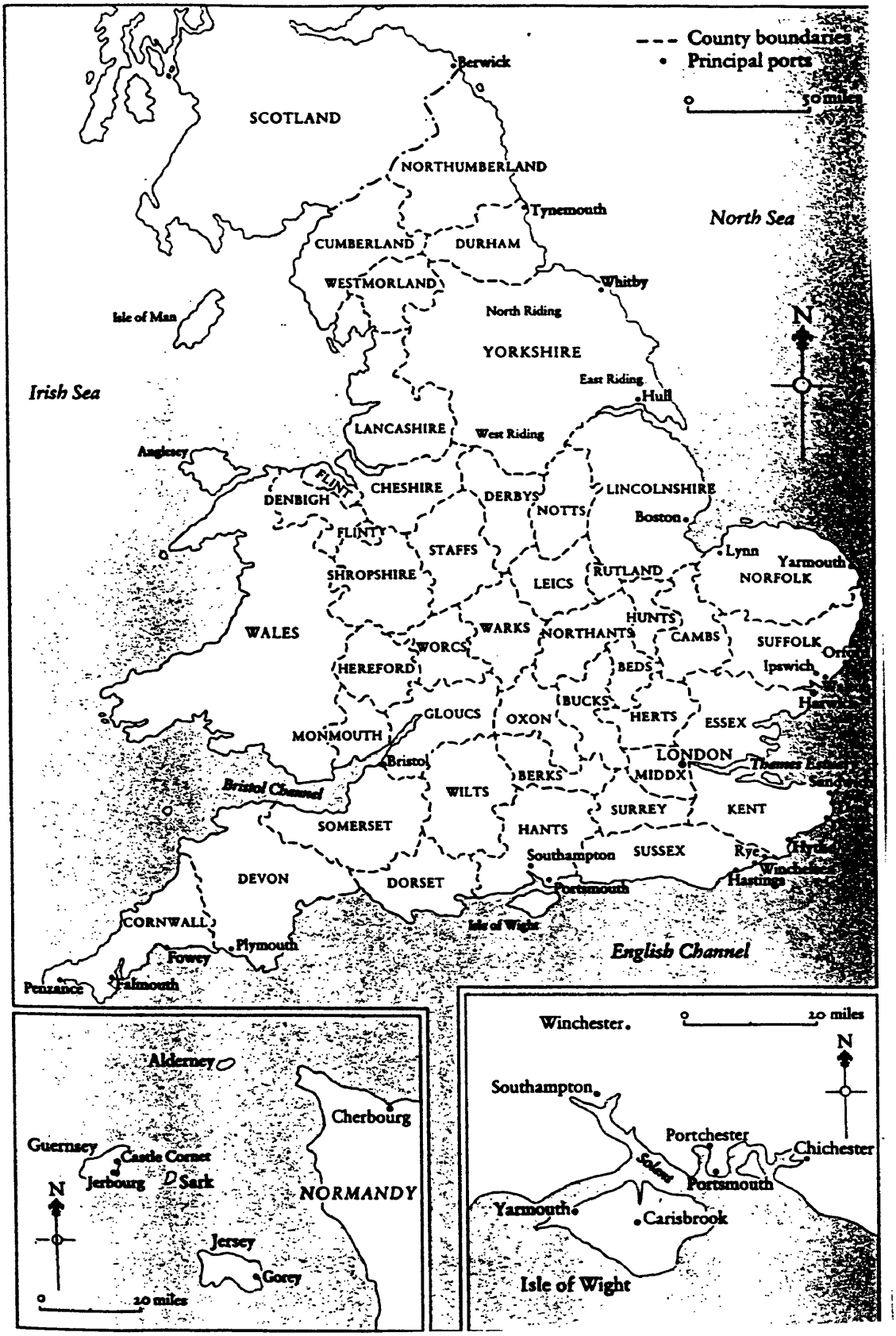
Nowhere was the concentration of people and industry greater, however, than in London. While most of England's numerous towns remained small, London continued to grow in size and significance. It would be the only English city up to and through the fourteenth century that could stand comparison with the cities of continental Europe. With a population between 40-50,000, it was less than half the size of Paris; but by 1377, it outnumbered the next four largest English cities of York, Bristol, Plymouth, and Coventry combined.[15]

ENGLAND IN THE LATTER MIDDLE AGES[16]



London prospered in part because of its location on the Thames river and because of the growth of the monarchy's administrative apparatus around the borough of Westminster. By the reign of Edward III (1327-1377), London had become the political, commercial, social, and literary center of the kingdom. And, while this emerging capital maintained many of the characteristics of a small country town and was plagued by all the hazards of the growing continental cities -- including poor sanitation, outbreaks of disease, and rampant crime -- it became a mecca to the English people, attracting a wide variety of artisans, craftsmen, soldiers and adventurers from across the English countryside.[17]

The cosmopolitan atmosphere created by this influx of people to London, however, gave a false picture of the country's overall economic situation. Most of the population was engaged in subsistence farming on too little arable land and those fortunes that did exist belonged largely to the French nobility who had left their estates across the Channel to appropriate more land in England. For these Anglo-French nobles and their companions and supporters, England indeed seemed a land of wealth and plenty. Their outlook is reflected by the fourteenth century chronicler, Jean le Bel, who when camping with the English army near York in 1327 wrote that he had "never ceased to wonder at such abundance" and further clamored about the continual flow of cheap victuals from the nearby villages which could be washed down with wine brought in by sea from Gascony and the Rhine.[18]

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The great land-based fortunes held by what was, at least initially, a foreign nobility masked the adverse circumstances in which most Englishmen lived and that wealth was far more unequally distributed in England than in France. Moreover, the small land holdings typical of most English property owners were being continually reduced in size as the population grew and the competition for fertile land increased. Thus, these free landholders and members of the minor gentry were by the fourteenth century increasingly

vulnerable to harvest failure, natural disasters, and economic depression. Sumption appropriately described the plight of the lesser gentry when he wrote that "their fortunes were always delicately balanced between profit and loss." And, as for the largely unfree peasants who made up the majority of the population in central and southern England, the situation was worse still; less than half of them had the minimum acreage necessary for mere subsistence living.[19]

At the opposite end of this economic spectrum stood the greater nobility who, despite their wealth, lived rather conspicuously on large estates scattered about the English countryside. Including only between 150 and 200 families, this affluent and separate class was pleased to be referred to as 'magnates' of the realm but participated in the political affairs of the country only when their heredity or economic interests were threatened. As long as they had the three cardinal virtues of the English nobility -- Norman ancestry, royal favor, and money -- they could virtually count on access to the king's ear because of their feudal position as one of his vassals.[20]

One key attribute of the noble class, however, a capability long deemed essential for communicating with the monarch, was beginning to fade away by the start of the fourteenth century: the ability to speak the French language. When the Norman invaders were forming this new monarchy in the eleventh century, they only spoke French. As transplanted French nobles who still had lands, fortunes, and families back in France, this was to be expected. Language was an important symbol of their elevated status and it set them apart from the native peoples they had conquered. And, initially, nothing in Anglo-Saxon culture persuaded them that there was any advantage to learning the local tongue.[21]

By the early fourteenth century, however, many things had changed for the upper class descendants of these Norman invaders. The English monarchy was well developed and had come to have more differences than common interests with the throne of France. It also sought to call attention to its increasingly independent status by adopting English traditions, culture, and language. Earlier generations of the nobility would only have

spoken French, and some might have been able to read Latin; but, by the end of the thirteenth century, English had become the language of business, light reading, and polite conversation. As the Hundred Years War approached, Froissart noted that in the ever more difficult negotiations between England and France it was a well known trick among English diplomats to evade answering embarrassing questions from the French by pretending not to understand them.[22]

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Despite the great disparities between the classes, a sense of English identity and national unity was also beginning to take hold by the early fourteenth century. It was not only the growing use of a common language but that England's political institutions were starting to work more broadly and uniformly across the entire country. In combination, these trends helped politicians, administrators, and subjects feel that they owed an allegiance to a greater community than just the locality in which they had been born and raised. Yet another factor in binding the new nation together was the shared experience of external threats. According to Sumption:

> Their sense of identity was intensified by the consciousness of enemies without. The sea defined the frontiers of the kingdom on the south and east and separated it from its most powerful rivals. On the west and the north it was bound by alien societies still largely pastoral and tribal, only intermittently at peace and the object of crude contempt and venomous detestation.[23]

This idea of being "English", as opposed to just being from Dorset, Kent, or York, and moreover, of having that sense shared to some degree across the classes, was a social and, ultimately, a political development of the first importance and one not shared at that time in France where allegiances remained far more local and divided by class. It was, in fact, an important first step in England's emergence from feudalism toward -- much further down the road -- a constitutionally limited monarchy because at the heart of this newfound

nationalism was the concept that an individual's loyalty was owed not just to king but *country* .

England's newfound sense of identity began to work itself out in a variety of ways, not all of them conducive to domestic harmony and public order. For example, to differentiate herself from other countries England began to develop a crude cult of insularity which took the form of heaping scorn and sometimes physical abuse on foreigners residing in England. Alien advisors of the king became the objects of public ridicule, foreign merchants trading in English towns were ostracized, and alien clergymen sent by the Pope were resented by the domestic population.[24]

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Despite such growing xenophobia, the English also directed much of their public anger inward, most notably toward their kings. While England increasingly gave the impression of being a coherent kingdom, the frequency of coordinated political opposition to the monarch by the nobility in this period is far greater than in most European states, certainly greater than in France. From the advent of the thirteenth century to the end of the seventeenth, England's history of devastating civil wars over who should occupy the throne stands unrivaled. Surprisingly, from a modern standpoint, these insurrections were directed less against the institution of the monarchy than against the individuals who held the throne. The accession of Edward III on the eve of the Hundred Years War in 1327 is just one example of the violent English trait of unseating one particularly hated monarch, in this case, Edward II (1307-1327), only to replace him with another.[25]

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One of the largest obstacles standing in the way of England's development of a solid national identity and a society at peace with its monarchs was its ongoing ties to France and the Capetian crown. Even by the fourteenth century, the Plantagenet kings of

England had by no means separated themselves from their French origins and, like many among the nobility were still closely bound to France through family ties, culture, and most importantly, by their territorial possessions in that country.[26] Beginning with the Norman conquest but strongly reinforced by the acquisition of Aquitaine, twelfth century England controlled more land in France than the Capetian kings.

It was not until 1204 that the French monarchy struck back by confiscating the duchy of Normandy, a development which sharply reduced, at least temporarily, the English grasp on French territory. From that point forward and throughout the thirteenth century the political interests of the English kings and nobles were driven in large measure by their efforts to retain, retrieve, or expand their lands across the Channel.[27] By the fourteenth century, some among the English nobility, whether of Norman or Angevin origin, had lost enough of their ancestral possessions 'back home' or had become sufficiently Anglicized by their time in the island kingdom to lose interest in the ongoing struggle over territory in France. But for a majority of English leaders, especially the kings, the ties to their first homeland remained strong and engendered divided loyalties which remained a critical problem for the stability of English society and the advancement of the English state.[28]

Moreover, this was a problem that could not easily be resolved because it was not just a question of self interest in land ownership but of the land-for-loyalty-and-service bargain between medieval kings and their nobles that lay at the heart of the feudal concept of vassalage. Because of the tangled early history between England and France many among the English nobility found themselves owing allegiance to both the Plantagenet and Capetian monarchies. According to the customs of feudalism, a medieval king was supposed to be able to depend upon the loyalty of his nobles, including the obligation to provide military service whenever the monarch required. Thus, because much of the English nobility still held property in France, the French crown could insist that they were honor-bound to serve in campaigns intended to drive the English from their possessions in

France. Moreover, the English kings themselves, because they were of French descent, were theoretically obligated to support the Capetian crown. But these same kings had also given huge land grants in England to their Norman supporters and their descendants and thus were in a position to insist on their loyal service in campaigns to hold on to English territory in France.[29]

Accordingly, it was possible for an English noble to be a vassal not only to the king of England but also to that of France at a time when his Plantagenet monarch was in conflict with -- but still obligated to -- his Capetian overlord. Anne Curry, an historian of the period, has provided some useful insight into this hopelessly complicated situation confronting many in the English nobility when she wrote:

> English kings were sovereign in their kingdom, but they held their French lands as dukes or counts. Thus, they had a superior lord -- the King of France -- to whom they owed homage. Feudal custom gave the superior Lord various powers over his vassal. Not least, he could declare confiscate his vassal's lands if he considered that the latter acted against his own will as Lord.[30]

And the French king's feudal authority did not end there. As Curry writes:

> There were . . . difficulties over the notion of one king paying homage to another, not least because this implied an obligation to provide military service against the French king's enemies. If the latter were the English king's allies, there was a considerable danger that the possession of non-sovereign lands in France could impede English foreign policy. But the greatest problem was undoubtedly the French king's right as overlord to interfere in a vassal's government of his own fief.[31]

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Another obstacle in the path to achieving English unity was the crown's inability to consolidate its control over the entire territory we know today as the British Isles. Just as the Capetian dynasty had met resistance in trying to gather various neighboring principalities into the domain of the French crown, the Plant- agenet family of England had failed to induce Ireland, Wales, and Scotland to sub- mit to its authority. Henry II (1154-1189) had supposedly conquered Ireland during his reign but the force of English law still was hardly felt beyond the vicinity of Dublin. During the reign of Edward I (1272-1307),

Wales had been vanquished in a long conflict lasting from 1276 to 1295 but was still restless under English rule. It was Scotland, however, which turned out to be England's most obdurate neighbor.[32]

Very little success was achieved in subduing the Scots despite ten years of almost ceaseless struggle from 1296 to 1307. And continued Scottish resistance seemed all the more certain after the English defeat at Bannockburn in 1314. By the time Edward III came to the throne in 1327 the campaign to subjugate the Scots had taken on all the doggedness of a papal crusade. Edward's best efforts notwith- standing, Scotland remained England's most persistent and effective antagonist, a stance it was to maintain throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. But as Sumption noted, all this "hostility was a problem which the English had brought upon themselves."[33]

It is important to recognize the degree to which England suffered from its seemingly endless struggle with Scotland. While much of England was quite distant from the actual fighting, the effects of these chronic border wars were felt across the country because they continually drained the wealth and manpower of England. Another thorn in England's side was the old alliance between Scotland and France, a circumstance that became increasingly vexing to Westminster as its differences with Paris escalated toward full-scale warfare in the early fourteenth century. As a reminder to Edward II that France had an ally at England's back, the last Capetian king -- Charles IV (1322-1328) -- formally renewed relations between France and Scotland in April 1326 with the Treaty of Corbeil.[34] And in the 1330's, Charles' immediate successor, Philip VI (1328-1350), continued to support the Scots even when they appeared to be on the brink of destruction. Not surprisingly, this alliance became one of the many catalysts of the Hundred Years War, a conflict in which the Scots would play a prominent part.[35]

* * * * *

These foreign conflicts notwithstanding, England continued to make substantial progress in the development of its domestic political institutions. Jean Froissart had enough confidence in these institutions to declare England to be "the best governed land in the world." Since the eleventh century, the country had been governed as one territorial unit and its system of justice, for example, extended well beyond the king's domain and his immediate tenants to virtually all places and men. This was what was meant by the 'common law', in other words, a standard of civil behavior common to all of England, where all free men could pursue their case from an itinerant justice in one of England's shire courts or even at the king's court at Westminster.[36]

Despite such advances, there was another factor limiting the development of English unity: periodic struggles for power between the crown and the higher nobility. Given the supposed superiority of the monarch within any feudal system, the frequency with which the English nobility successfully challenged the king is remarkable. Certainly, nothing of this sort occurred to the same degree in France. English history is marked by irregular but often violent eruptions in which an incensed and temporarily united baronage staged political struggles to oppose the king's authority and to demand for itself at least temporary control over the crown's officials and the direction of the country.[37]

This ability of the English nobles periodically to stand successfully against the will of their king established precedents critical to the development of the monarchy. King John's submission to his barons in 1215 by signing Magna Carta is but the most obvious example. In most medieval kingdoms, the baronage dutifully supported the monarchy in its adventures abroad but in England the king could do virtually nothing of importance without winning the cooperation of the nobility. Such cooperation was least likely to be forthcoming when the king wanted to conduct an aggressive foreign policy, particularly one which ran the risk of war.

Many of the barons had lost their possessions in Normandy and across western France and, as a result, had become more insular in their outlook. These nobles thought

the interests of the English community, including their own, would be better served by the king tending to the many pressing issues of the day at home. Others, whether or not they still owned lands in France, were simply tired of paying taxes and serving in the king's army. Together they often constituted a sufficient consensus among the barons to block the sovereign's plans for foreign expeditions. Consequently, they drew up an ordinance and presented it to Edward II in 1311. It read, in part, as follows:

> Because the king ought not to make war against anyone or leave his kingdom without the general assent of his baronage, on account of the many perils that could happen to him and his kingdom, we ordain that henceforth the king shall not leave his kingdom or make war without the general assent of his baronage given in Parliament, and if he does otherwise and has his feudal host summoned for the purpose, then the summons shall be void.[38]

* * * * *

The crown was not without its own resources, however, in these periodic crises. The barons, for example, only exercised their authority when some great issue arose, while the monarchy operated on a more continuous basis and through an increasingly pervasive and effective administrative apparatus. This royal bureaucracy exercised control through thirty-nine shire governments of unequal size and varying importance. Unlike France, in England each of these districts was a royal administrative area and not merely a feudal entity.[39] Governing over these districts were the principal organs of what we now call "the state" including the Chancery and the Exchequer.

These institutions were older and more developed than their counter-parts in France; in fact, they had been in place for two centuries by the time Edward III came to the throne. The Chancery, manned mainly by long-serving clergymen, acted as the secretariat for most operations of government. Characterized by a notable esprit-de-corps and a fondness for documentation, they had the authority to use the king's great seal on their innumerable letters, orders, and writs, giving the impression that each of these documents was a direct pronouncement of the king's will.[40] The Exchequer handled the financial administration of

the realm. Endowed with a large staff, this department exercised partially effective control over the king's expenditures. This agency of government never attained the influence of the corresponding institution in France, however. It was valued, nonetheless, for the accuracy of its accounts and, in a world where communications were slow, was praised for the timeliness of its reports.[41]

The king was able to exert the greatest influence on those institutions of government that were closest to the throne and most administrative functions were concentrated in the royal household. Medieval governments were far smaller than they are today and were operated more directly by the monarch himself. Consequently, their success had much to do with each king's personality and the time and energy he was willing to devote to these tasks.[42]

Within the household was the King's Council which was a small body of personal assistants, including confidential clerks, well-off knights, and the Chancellor, all of whom owed their jobs to the position of trust they had established with the king. The Council was the inner circle of the royal government and, because of its immediate knowledge of political, economic, and military affairs, was an asset the monarch could use in his periodic struggles with the council of barons.[43]

The king conducted his financial affairs within an office of his household known as the Wardrobe. This office was the pivot of his administration and the source of policy guidance to the Exchequer. The mobility of the wardrobe was a critical asset; it enabled the king to collect taxes and issue warrants even in time of war when the monarch was governing from his campaign tent. During the Hundred Years War, Edward III had no time to dictate policy throughout the normal bureaucracy and so he relied upon the Wardrobe to collect revenues directly from custom posts and the royal manors and to issue demands for Parliamentary subsidies. This practice made the Wardrobe the principal spending department and placed the dispensing of revenue under the personal control of the king.[44]

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Nothing limited the English king's power, however, so much as a lack of money. The monarchy had several traditional sources of revenue, including the profits from the royal mints, the imposition of fines and fees, plus income from the productive activities and rents of the properties he owned. In the 1330s, the total revenues collected from all these sources was between £15-20,000 a year or about one-sixth what the French monarchy raised from similar sources. Like their French counterparts, the English monarchs found they needed additional income to support their armies and implement their foreign policies. One thing they chose not to do, however, despite the precedent established by the French, was to manipulate the nation's currency; over time this proved to be the right course of action as the English pound sterling held strong against other currencies well into the fifteenth century.[45]

Most of the additional income the crown raised was raised through several different forms of taxation. The tax that proved to be the most profitable was the custom duties imposed on goods being shipped in and out of the island kingdom. Initiated by Edward I as a tax on English merchants who were exporting wool and hides, it was extended after 1303 as an additional duty on foreign merchants. The yield from these levies became substantial and they were extended to imported and exported goods of every description.[46]

And the English crown did not stop there in terms of taxation. In addition to the usual customs duties, the king's Wardrobe income was supplemented by a personal property tax which was set at 10% of a subject's total property value for those living in towns and 15% for those who lived in the country. This was a bold initiative and predictably unpopular, leading taxpayers to frequently evade financial responsibility through many ingenious methods. As a result, when the crown received only a modest increase in income through this tax, it turned to others that proved more profitable. These included acquisitions of subsidies from Parliament and forced annual gifts to the monarchy from the clergy.[47]

As England and France drew ever closer to open conflict, London's determination to be aggressive in its foreign policy increased. This, in turn, prompted the monarchy to find still more revenue to support its plans. As Sumption put it:

> Faced with onerous and occasionally urgent commitments abroad and only a modest income arriving at measured intervals at home, the English kings from Edward I onward resorted to heavy borrowing not only from their own subjects but from the nascent banking systems of Flanders, the Rhineland, and, above all, Italy.[48]

There was a succession of Italian bankers, starting with the Riccardi family, that did business with the north European powers and who ruined their fortunes by working too closely and trusting too much. The remarkable thing is that there were other Italian banking families who were willing to replace them. In the 1320s, the Bardi family of Florence became so closely associated with Edward II that their London headquarters were ransacked by the mobs that initiated the riots of 1326. This family also went bankrupt trying to cater to Edward III's ambitions but not before it also lent money to the Plantagenet's nemesis across the Channel.[49]

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All of these resources and limitations notwithstanding, the effectiveness of the English monarchy in this period ultimately depended upon -- more than any other single factor -- the capacity for personal leadership exhibited by the king. Unfortunately for England, this quality was not evident in the monarch who occupied its throne for two decades in the period just preceding the Hundred Years War. Edward II (1307-1327) showed none of the political acumen and strength of character evidenced by both his father and his son and he was successfully challenged by the barons early in his reign. We will relate Edward's unhappy story in more detail in the next chapter, as part of a review of the reigns of all those English kings who were also Dukes of Gascony. For now, suffice it to say that Edward II's capacity for leadership was so low that by the end of his term England had been beaten by the Scots, had lost all its territories in France, and had endured crushing

taxation, famine, and civil war at home. Once again the barons had moved against their king but this time, instead of just forcing him to adopt some set of reforms or forego a foreign adventure, they had deposed him from the throne and, with his wife's connivance, he was imprisoned and subsequently murdered.

As we have seen, France entered the decade preceding the Hundred Years War on a low note as well. With the death of Charles IV the Capetian dynasty of nearly 350 years had ended and the succession to the French throne was in dispute. But the Capetian's long struggle to retrieve their lands from England's Plantagenet kings had been a success; their investments in developing a more efficient central government and more effective armed forces had paid off. England, in comparison, was in far worse condition both economically and politically in 1327 and, for a feudal society, it had just done the unthinkable: the barons had deposed and, directly or indirectly, killed their king. To be sure, the continuity of government was assured because Edward II had a male heir but he was only a boy and those immediately in charge of England's government were deeply distrusted even by those who had wanted Edward deposed. In Chapter V we will take up the tale of Edward III as he came to manhood in the ten years between his father's death and the start of the Hundred Years War. For the purposes of this study, however, it is important to pause and first examine one French/English province, Gascony, and its chief economic activity, the wine trade, which, at least from England's point of view, were to become major factors in that conflict.

CHAPTER III

GASCONY: THE MAVERICK DUCHY (FROM ANTIQUITY TO 1327 A.D.)

Viewing the major events of European history through the lens of England's relationship with Gascony in the time preceding the Hundred Years War provides some very helpful insights into what England and, to a lesser degree, France had at stake in that protracted conflict. It also runs the risk of losing perspective on other major factors that precipitated the war. Mindful of the need to guard against that risk, we will nevertheless use this device in the conviction that insufficient attention has been paid so far to the role of Gascony in these tumultuous events.

More specifically, this chapter will briefly examine the reigns of the six kings of England who were also Dukes of Gascony during the 185 years preceding the war. What those kings did or did not do about this southernmost English overseas possession during this era speaks volumes about their abilities as monarchs, about the other pressures they were experiencing and, most important, about the growing prominence of Gascony in the foreign policy of both England and France. First, however, it is important to define Gascon nomenclature, geography, early history, and economic resources which made Gascony a potent trading partner in medieval Europe.

* * * * *

Gascony is a place that has had many names and whose borders have shifted with surprising frequency. The Romans called it Burdigala and in the Middle Ages it was

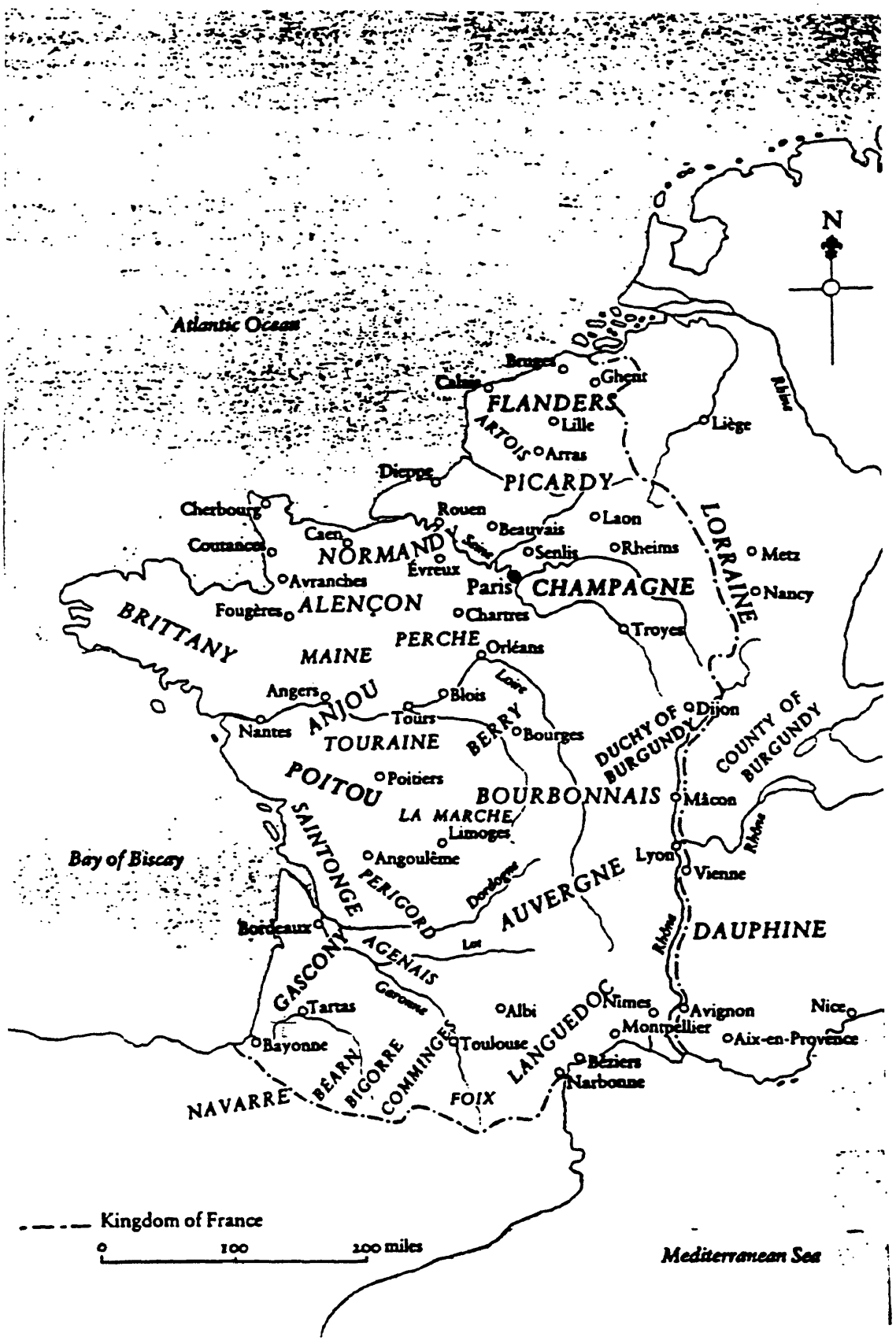
referred to variously, in a wide range of French and English texts, as either Aquitaine, Guienne, Guyenne, Gironde, Gascony or Bordeaux. It is fairly clear, however, that the term Aquitaine refers to the far larger region extending southward from the Loire River Valley to France's border with Spain. Gascony, it is generally agreed, is the southwestern most portion of this enormous territory, bounded by the Charente River in the north and the Pyranees Mountains in the south.[1]

For the purposes of this study, however, it is far more helpful to look at Gascony not in terms of borders but of rivers. It is this region's abundant waterways which had first attracted the Romans, which provided an ideal environment for winemaking and, most importantly, which equipped it to easily ship its wines and other products to England. Viewed in this way, Gascony is a great drainage basin facing the Atlantic on France's western shore. Its two main rivers are the Dordogne and the Garonne -- the first rising in the high country of the Massif Central and flowing generally east to west; the second starting in the Pyranees and running north and then northwest.[2]

These two rivers meet to form the broad Gironde Estuary -- not unlike America's Chesapeake Bay -- which flows another 65 miles to the northwest before emptying into the Atlantic. Standing near the confluence of the Dordogne and the Garonne is the great port city of Bordeaux, a trading center and provincial capital which during the period we are examining was already three-fourths the size of London. In a country blessed with a wealth of river systems, only the Loire is longer and none is more open to ocean-going traffic than that of the Gironde.

The early history of this region is less well documented than that of the other important vineyard areas of France. This is probably the case because the Roman tenure here was briefer than for these other regions and because the role of the Church in Gascon viticulture was comparatively slight. In any case, it is believed that the Romans established

FRENCH PROVINCES[3]



the city of Bordeaux, possibly as early as the first century A.D. More certainly, we know from the writings of the region's fourth century Roman governor, poet and vintner -- a man named Ausonious -- that Bordeaux was a thriving port and wine producer during his tenure. What little is known about what happened thereafter, roughly from the fall of Rome to the seventh century is perhaps best summarized by Hugh Johnson:

> In Bordeaux the unwelcome intruders were . . . the Goths . . . the Vandals . . . and the Visigoths (who) came to stay in 414 . . . Gothic as they were, though, the new arrivals were not unimpressed by the old Gallo-Roman establishment . . . they sought out its leading families, intermarried with them and were happy to take over their rational working of land and government . . . This extension of the Roman system was ended by the arrival of the Franks at the close of the fifth century. The sixth century is lost to us in a welter of Frankish princelings and Saxon earls. The seventh is complicated still further by the arrival of . . . the Gascons, who came north from . . . Spain.

Johnson has also provided a useful precis of what transpired in Bordeaux from the arrival of the Gascon people to the era of the Norman Conquest:

> The Gascon era was interrupted by the advance of the Saracens, also from Spain. . . Now it was the turn of the Carolingian Franks [who] took Bordeaux in 763. . The city [then] withstood three waves of Viking attacks . . . until [it] was left . . . totally devastated . . . in 870. . . There is some evidence that wine-growing survived these centuries of changing management. The principal customers were Ireland and the western Celtic fringes of Britain. Eastern England, however, imported wine by the shorter route, from northern France and the Rhine. But after 870 there is a silence of nearly 250 years.[4]

* * * * *

Before documenting the events which eventually bound Gascony so closely to England, it is important to emphasize how separated this province was from Carolingian and then Capetian France. These were kingdoms of the north and Gascony was not only far away from Paris geographically but ethnically and linguistically as well. As Johnson has suggested, many of its inhabitants were of Spanish rather than French background. Given the primitive state of medieval roads and the presence of brigands in many rural areas, there was essentially no overland traffic between Bordeaux and Paris in medieval times.[5] Gascony's greatest asset was its many rivers and its easy access to the sea. But

this splendid system made England, the Low Countries and Scandinavia nearly as easy to reach as other parts of France and, moreover, these foreign countries had a greater need than the rest of France for what Bordeaux had to sell: grain, wine and salt. These fundamental facts of production and transportation made Gascony -- once its parade of Gothic, Frankish, Saxon, Moorish and Viking marauders got out of the way -- develop as an economically self-sufficient and politically independent region quite distinct from the rest of France.[6]

From the standpoint of the Capetian kings, this maverick stance of the Gascon people was irritating but not critical. This distant corner of their realm held a low place on their list of lands to be formally incorporated into the kingdom of France. In fact, Gascony and its people were regarded somewhat dismissively, even derisively, by members of the French court who thought of the region as hopelessly rural and remote and its citizens as primitive and untrustworthy. This conde- scending attitude toward the Gascons on the part of Paris was a long-standing element of France's outlook and a staple of French humor and literature almost to the present day. Among the most famous examples of this phenomenon is Alexandre Dumas' classic novel, The Three Musketeers, in which three urbane veterans of the king's elite guard are joined by a raw recruit, D'Artagnan, a country bumpkin from Gascony. In the American context, a parallel could be drawn between the Parisian attitude toward this southwestern outpost and that of sophisticated New Yorkers toward some hill country regions of the southeastern United States.[7]

Given these perceptions, it is perhaps somewhat easier to understand why Louis VII (1137-1180) was prepared to divorce Eleanor of Aquitaine in 1152 and thereby abandon at least his marital ties to the southwestern quadrant of his kingdom. His behavior is still puzzling, however, for he was no stranger to Gascony having been both married and divorced at St. Andre's Cathedral in Bordeaux. One would have thought he could have seen the economic potential of this region and, in any case, would have been constrained to hold on to it if only to keep faith with the mission of his predecessors to consolidate and

extend the Capetian domain, not shrink it. But Eleanor was determined to be free and, while he had apparently adored her, her independent behavior had been a source of some embarrassment. Moreover, she had so far failed to produce a male heir for the French throne and in 1152, as Hugh Johnson has observed, "Bordeaux was dignified with an archbishop and a duke but was on nobody's route to anywhere . . . . except the pilgrim road to Compostella in northwest Spain."[8]

Perhaps Louis VII would have thought twice about releasing his wife and thus weakening his claim to Gascony and all the rest of Aquitaine could he have anticipated that Eleanor's new husband, Henry, Duke of Normandy and Count of Anjou, would just two years later, be promoted to King of England. Whatever his reasoning, Louis further loosened the ties between Paris and Bordeaux and the English, though not immediately, took great advantage of what had happened.

* * * * *

By becoming the first English Duke of Gascony, Henry II (1154-1189) had underscored his subordinate relationship to the French king. But since, in strict feudal terms, he already was in that status because of his other titles in northern and western France, nothing much had changed. Moreover, Henry initially ignored his new possession in southern Aquitaine because more pressing concerns demanded his attention in his new role as King of England. He had succeeded King Stephen (1135-1154) in a bargain forced by the English barons to settle twelve years of civil war and many fences remained to be mended. In addition, the Scots and Welsh were taking advantage of England's internal weaknesses and Henry had to address their incursions. Finally, the relationship between the English Church and State grew increasingly difficult in the mid-twelfth century, a situation exemplified by the great feud Henry II had with his former friend, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Becket.[9]

By 1165, however, the king's domestic problems were sufficiently resolved so that he could concentrate the bulk of his attention on affairs abroad. As Kenneth Morgan reminds us in The Oxford Illustrated History of Britain:

> Out of the thirty-four years of his reign, Henry II spent twenty-one on the Continent. Socially and culturally, England was in a bit of a backwater compared with the French parts of the Angevin domain. The prosperous communities of the valleys of the Seine, Loire and Garonne river systems were centres of learning, art, architecture, poetry and music. Aquitaine and Anjou produced two of the essential commodities of medieval commerce: wine and salt. These could be exchanged for English cloth and this trade must have brought great profit to the prince who ruled over both producers and consumers.[10]

Despite all this time in his French domains, Henry II apparently never devoted much attention to Gascony nor did he do anything memorable to promote its wines. As a native of Anjou, he favored the wines of the Loire and his wife Eleanor -- before she was imprisoned in England by her husband -- also lived in the Loire Valley at Poitiers and Fontrevault and preferred the wines of Poitou. When Henry decided in 1172 to divide his huge kingdom among his four sons, events were set in motion which eventually advanced the fortunes of Gascony and its trade with England but no one could argue that this had been among the king's intentions.[11]

Henry II designated his eldest son, Henry, as his successor in England, Anjou and Normandy; Richard got the Aquitaine; Geoffrey was tapped for Brittany; and John, the youngest, got nothing. Not surprisingly, John soon became known as "*Sans Terre*" in France and Lackland in England. Young Henry and Geoffrey, however, died before their father's demise in 1189 -- an unexpected outcome which advanced Richard as King of England, freed Eleanor to resume her role as Duchess of Aquitaine and left John as Lord of Ireland, the kingdom's least desirable position. With these radical changes in England's leadership structure, as Hugh Johnson has written:

> At last, in the 1190s, Bordeaux began to come into the picture. With its cathedral and ducal palace, it became Richard II's base in France (although from 1190 to 1192 he was away on the Third Crusade, earning himself the surname Coeur de Lion). But La Rochelle still had favoured treatment (as the main source of

> England's wines). In 1190, the Queen-Duchess built it a new port whose monumental walls still stand today. New deep-draught freighters, known as cogs, were coming into use in northern ports and required better anchorages and deeper wharves. Bordeaux began to complain bitterly that the royal favour continued to rain on the makers of down-market white wines around La Rochelle, while a great log-jam of old feudal dues and customs prevented its (Gascony's) wine industry from competing at all.[12]

It was Richard II's disregarded brother John who succeeded him in 1199 and who began to pay attention to the potential of the Gascon wine trade with England. In following this path, however, John was driven less by the outraged pleas of the Gascon vintners or a newfound preference for their wines than he was by pressure from Louis VII's successor in France, Philip II -- also known as Philip Augustus (1180-1223). Philip and Richard had been partners on the Third Crusade but Richard was captured on his way home and imprisoned in Austria from December 1192 to February 1194. Philip, already back in France, had decided to move against England's possessions in his country and started by attacking English forces in the Vexin and Normandy. Richard was ransomed at enormous cost by England and spent the next five years resisting Philip's encroachments. As Morgan has reported:

> By the end of 1198, Richard's skillful diplomacy, fine generalship and, above all, greater resources meant that he had succeeded in recapturing almost everything that had been lost. Then, in April 1199, Richard died as the result of a wound suffered at the siege of Chalus-Chabrol . . . . In the Angevin-Capetian struggle this was to be the decisive turning-point.[13]

Immediately after Richard's death, Philip II resumed the pressure against John, being well acquainted with his weaknesses. In 1200 the new English king ceded the Vexin to France and in 1202 Philip pushed him harder, declaring that all of John's French domains were forfeit. In 1203, John "threw in the towel and withdrew to England. Philip overran Normandy, Anjou, Maine, Touraine and all of Poitou except La Rochelle. These humiliating reverses earned for John a new nickname: 'Lack-land' now became 'Soft-sword'."[14]

These events left the King of England with only one of his French domains intact: Gascony. In his role as Duke, John traveled to Bordeaux in 1203 and, according to Johnson:

> accepted the arguments of Bordeaux's citizens that lower taxes would mean higher revenues. Unblock our port, they said, and let our city prosper. John still drove a bargain. In exchange for vessels and support against the King of France . . . . he exempted them from the principal tax on their exports, the so called *Grand Coutume* . . . . Gascon merchants were at last to start coming to England.[15]

La Rochelle, still in English hands, loudly protested this new favor showed to Bordeaux and succeeded in winning the same exemption in 1204. But in the next year the Gascons found a new way to curry favor with King John by stoutly resisting a siege of the city of Bordeaux mounted not by Philip of France but Alphonse of Spain. By thus demonstrating their fealty to England and, probably, their own determination to bend to no outside force, they further ingratiated themselves to the John. He reciprocated by placing a substantial order for Gascon wine and by appointing the first native-born mayor of Bordeaux, Pierre Lambert.[16]

John may have held his own in Gascony but he was unsuccessful elsewhere. He raised taxes significantly in England, purportedly to support the armies necessary to regain the lands he had lost in France. His relations with the Church were not good and in 1209 John was excommunicated by Pope Innocent III who also closed the doors of English churches for a period of six years. England's barons, fed up with their king, attempted to overthrow John in 1212 but he survived. Philip II threatened to invade England in the same year but the attack did not materialize. In 1214, John went on the offensive in an attempt to at least regain territory in Poitou but was disastrously defeated at the battle of Bouvines. Exasperated with these results, some members of the English nobility rebelled against John and in 1215 he retained his throne only by agreeing with the barons to adopt a fundamental program of reforms, redefining the powers of the monarch. The document he signed was called Magna Carta.[17]

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By 1216, John was dead and his place was taken by his nine-year-old son, Henry III (1216-1272) who did not begin to reign in his own right until 1232. By then, England had suffered another defeat in France but one which worked to the advantage of the wine merchants of Bordeaux. In 1224, Louis VIII -- who had suc- ceeded Philip II -- renewed the Capetian pressure on Poitou and, with the conn- ivance of its inhabitants, finally captured the port of La Rochelle. Louis also threatened Gascony but its defenses held and the mayor of Bordeaux wrote to Westminster to remind the regency how stout his people had been in defense of the king's territory compared to those in La Rochelle. He further promised that: "We will defend Bordeaux, the town of our lord the King of England, whom we will never fail faithfully to serve, so long as life is left in us." England responded with reinforcements of its garrisons in Gascony in 1225 but the danger had then passed.[18]

From this point onward, Gascony had pinned its hopes on the King of England rather than on France or on going it alone. By defying Louis VIII and so openly pledging their loyalty to Henry III, the Gascons had chosen what they must have known would be a dangerous path but one which also promised tremendous economic success. The English needed what they had to sell; France did not. And, with the closure of the port of La Rochelle, the English had nowhere else to turn if they wanted French wine and, clearly, they did. Consciously or not, both sides now recognized their interdependence and each was determined to profit from it.

Of course, this strengthened relationship ran a lot deeper than the wine trade which, early in the thirteenth century, was merely a trickle between the two countries. At the time of the loss of La Rochelle to the French, Gascony's immediate concern was increased protection from the incursions of the Capetian kings while England's focus was that it was down to just one base on French soil from which to launch any efforts to recover its former

domains. But anyone with an ounce of economic sense on both sides could also see that there were fortunes to be made from exporting Gascony's primary product to England.

Henry III's formal recognition of the significance of the stronger bonds between England and Gascony did not occur until 1235 when he granted the citizens of Bordeaux the right to elect -- rather than have him appoint -- their own mayor, a privilege extended to no other English possession in France and granted to the City of London only as recently as 1191. He did so because he was keenly aware that: "After 1224, only Gascony remained of the lands of Henry III's ancestors had once held in France. The effect of this was to reverse the territorial balance of the twelfth century."[19]

Things got no better for Henry throughout the remainder of his reign. The military expeditions he led against France in 1230 and 1242 failed to dislodge the French and eventually, pressured by his barons, he signed the Treaty of Paris in 1259 with Louis IX, also known as St. Louis (1226-1270). By this agreement, Henry surrendered England's claims to all it former lands in France *except Gascony* and to retain Gascony he had to further pledge that it was, ultimately, a feudal fiefdom of the French monarchy for which he and future English kings would have to pay homage. This agreement was a bitter pill for England to swallow but was, in large measure, only a recognition of the military and political *status quo* . Moreover, it bought England a thirty-year period of relative peace in its never-ending dispute about sovereignty over territories in France. These thirty years also bought Gascony an unparalleled period of calm in which to develop its wine production and exporting capacity.[20] While the treaty bought some time for all the parties involved, the long-term ramifications of the accord were quite detrimental. The treaty was harmful because it further complicated the feudal issue, making the lord-vassal relationship harder to interpret as time went on. As Edouard Perroy mentioned, "It has been rightly said that the Treaty of Paris, which replaced the two sovereigns in a most delicate feudal position, was at the very root of the Hundred Years War. Its application, which

immediately raised overwhelming difficulties, provoked ceaseless conflicts for the next seventy years."[21]

Henry III had been in trouble at home since 1233 over his domestic policies and, by the time of the Treaty of Paris, real power had devolved, once again, to the barons. Civil war broke out in England in 1264 and, while the king eventually prevailed in 1267, he died only five years later without having made any progress in retrieving his lost lands in France. Certainly, like other English kings, he would not have let the treaty stand in his way if there had been any realistic hope of regaining French territory through military intervention. Thus, at the end of Henry's reign, Gascony remained England's last bastion on the continent.[22]

* * * * *

Henry's successor, Edward I (1272-1307) is arguably the English king who most involved himself in the affairs of Gascony. He learned of his father's death in Sicily as he was returning from yet another crusade in the Holy Land and, consistent with his obligations under the Treaty of Paris, went first to the French capital to pay homage to the new king, Philip III who was also known as Philip the Bold (1270-1285). Edward's statement acknowledging his status as a vassal of Philip -- then limited to the province of Gascony -- was carefully crafted to meet the letter if not the spirit of the law. This evasion did not escape Philip's attention nor did Edward's next move which was to depart Paris not for London but Bordeaux. By commencing his reign in the Gascon capital, Edward was signaling his determination to retain his foothold on French soil.[23]

Of the six English kings who were also Dukes of Gascony, none was better known or liked by the Gascons than Edward I. He remained in Bordeaux from 1272 to 1274. He was the darling of his Gascon subjects, particularly the Bordelais, because he was the closest thing to a resident duke they had had since the English takeover and because he paid so much attention to their economic and military security. He promoted the burgeoning

commerce between the two main parts of his kingdom with wine being shipped north from Bordeaux and wool, cloth, leather and corn coming south from England. Moreover, well aware of the many ambiguities left by the Treaty of Paris regarding the borders of Gascony, he paid considerable attention to the fortification of his duchy.[24]

When Edward returned to London in the fall of 1274, he plunged into a series of governmental reforms and renewed the crown's efforts to subdue the Welsh and the Scots. In these military expeditions he utilized large numbers of Gascon soldiers who turned out to be good fighters and especially skillful in the use of the crossbow. Edward's campaigns against Wales began in 1276 and were fairly successfully concluded by 1284; his wars against Scotland, however, continued throughout his reign and this king remains best known to history as "the Hammer of the Scots."[25]

Despite these ongoing struggles at home, Edward I again underscored the importance he attached to Gascony by returning there for a three-year period of personal rule from 1286 to 1289. He was the last Plantagenet king to hold court in Bordeaux and his extended presence further cemented the ties between England and Gascony. It was a bond, however, always being challenged by the French crown. Despite Edward's initial pledge of fealty to Philip III, the French monarchy was increasingly convinced that the English king was not living up to his interpretation of the Treaty of Paris. In retaliation, Philip's successor, Philip IV -- also known as Philip the Fair (1285-1314) -- periodically applied pressure to the borders of Gascony and challenged English and Gascon commercial shipping.[26]

Getting no satisfaction from Edward, Philip declared the Duchy of Gascony forfeit in 1293 and demanded at least a ceremonial surrender of the main Gascon fortresses. Edward acquiesced but when it became apparent that the French would take advantage of this token gesture and permanently occupy the forts, England declared war in 1294. The conflict continued until 1303 and involved a series of English campaigns in Gascony punctuated by intervals of truce since neither side thought they could afford the costs

involved in continuous fighting. In addition, Edward was once again preoccupied with his battles for control of Scotland. By the end of his reign, however, Edward's grasp on Gascony was essentially as firm as it had been when he began.[27]

Clearly, Edward I ruled over Gascony with a far lighter hand than he imposed on Scotland and Wales. Scotland and Wales constituted a severe drain on the English economy and the king's purse, while Gascony contributed more every year to both. Royal income from the wine trade alone, worth only about £300 per year in the 1240s had grown to £6,000 by 1300. By the end of Edward's reign it was easily double that amount.[28]

One might reasonably conclude from this evidence that the relations between Edward I and his Gascon subjects were entirely cordial. In fact, the king and his resident English nobles found the Gascons nearly as stiff-necked, shrewd and self-absorbed as the French had always insisted. Edward was certainly their greatest champion and the monarch who knew their character best, but he described them as a "very captious and unreliable people" and he made it a practice to record all the promises he got from the Gascons in writing.[29] English merchants in the wine trade with Gascony, as will be described in more detail below, found their counterparts from Bordeaux to be very sharp customers. In summary, the relationship between England and Gascony flourished during the reign of Edward I in part because of his personal attention but also because they shared, if not a deep affection, a strong set of mutual interests.

* * * * *

Edward II (1307-1327) is the last King of England and Duke of Gascony whose reign was completed before the war began and his performance in both roles is generally agreed to have been a disaster. The strength of character so evident in Edward I did not show up in his son. Sir Jean Froissart, the foremost chronicler of the period, concurred with these sentiments as he compared the royal father and son. He noted that:

> we must remark a common opinion of the English, . . . that between two valiant kings of England there is always one weak in mind and body; . . . for true it is that

> his grandfather, called the good king Edward the First was brave, wise, very enterprising, and fortunate in war. . . When he died, his son by his first marriage succeeded to the crown, but not to the understanding or prowess of his father, for he governed his kingdom very unwisely, through the evil counsels of others, . . .[30]

The war with Scotland was in full flood when Edward II succeeded his father and England was experiencing military setbacks in Ireland, Wales and Gascony as well. The English barons, frustrated by years of high taxation and demands for reforms left unsatisfied by Edward I, were determined to work their will on his son. In 1308, when Edward II formally ascended the throne, he was forced by the barons to accept a coronation oath which more explicitly obligated him to obey English law and custom.[31] Three years later, they imposed stiffer terms upon his freedom to rule with a set of ordinances supplementing Magna Carta. In 1312, the barons seized Edward II's great personal friend and court favorite, a handsome young Gascon named Piers Gaveston, and beheaded him. From that point forward, the king was at war with his nobles.[32]

Edward II was no luckier in his foreign affairs. In 1308, he had begun his reign by pledging fealty to Philip IV and by marrying Isabelle of France, the sister of the nobleman who was to be the last Capetian King of France, Charles IV (1322-1328). Isabelle bore Edward, the son who was to become Edward III (1327-1377), but it was soon apparent that the marriage would not be a success nor would England's relations with France become improved by their union. France continued to gnaw away on the borders of Gascony and, unlike his father, there is scant evidence of Edward having paid much attention to this threat, much less of having paid a royal visit to assert his determination to hold this duchy for England.[33]

To be fair, Edward II was swamped by issues on the home front: one, to maintain his authority as the monarch against an increasingly restive and divided nobility; and two, to win the war his father had left unfinished against Scotland. In pursuit of the latter goal, Edward mounted a huge campaign against the north in 1314, committing an army of about

25,000 against a Scottish force of about 10,000 under the command of Robert the Bruce. To the great surprise of all involved the Scots won in a prolonged, pitched battle near a stream called Bannock Burn. Winston Churchill had called it the greatest "slaughter of English chivalry (that) ever took place on a single day" and concluded that the Scottish "feat in virtually destroying an army of cavalry and archers mainly by the agency of spearmen must nevertheless be deemed a prodigy of war."[34]

This huge defeat, followed by a succession of bad harvests, livestock diseases, and increasing taxation in the period 1315 to 1321 led to a civil war between Edward's royalist party and his opponents in the nobility led by the Earl of Lancaster. Edward prevailed at the Battle of Boroughbridge in 1322 and beheaded Lancaster but substantial opposition to the king's rule and way of life persisted throughout many parts of England. This threat forced Edward to keep his attention fixed at home and, seeing his chance, Charles IV seized Gascony in 1324.[35]

This loss marked England's lowest ebb, in terms of controlling territories abroad, since before the time of William the Conqueror. Not surprisingly, it also made Edward II one of England's most despised kings. Reduced to helplessness and harassed on every side by the barons, he surrendered the reins of government to his wife Isabelle who arranged his deposition from the throne in 1326 and probably his murder in 1327. Although the crowning of their son, Edward III, preserved the principle of hereditary success, the deposition of Edward II by his queen and barons had shaken the English monarchy to its roots because "the inviolability of anointed kingship had been breached."[36]

* * * * *

So what are we to make of this strange but serviceable relationship between England and Gascony in the nearly 175 years between Henry II and Edward II? At least until the catastrophe of the latter king's reign, it is a story of an increasing economic and political bond, a marriage of convenience that catered to the interests of both sides. In this

sense, the territorial and increasingly economic alliance between England and Gascony is unusual in feudal times when master and servant relationships, not partnerships, were the norm between monarchs and the lords of duchies.

England adopted and perpetuated this special arrangement, in part, because it was all it could afford but also because that was all the independence-minded Gascons would allow. To a surprising degree, England's monarchs recognized and respected the will of the Gascons to govern and protect themselves. While they could have introduced large numbers of civil servants and soldiers as they had in some of their other French possessions, in Gascony they opted for a minimalist approach. No Englishman, for example, was ever appointed to the See of Bordeaux and few English nobles received Gascon land grants from the king.[37]

As we have already seen, royal visits to the duchy were few and far between. Although the English crown ensured that personal representatives of the king made frequent visits to perform specific duties or conduct investigations, the year-to-year administration of the duchy was carried out by the Seneschal of Aquitaine, in effect a royal governor, who was a member of the English nobility appointed by the king to oversee the duchy's civil and military affairs. The Seneschal was assisted by a council composed of local barons and resident members of the English nobility including one permanent and powerful member known as the Constable of Bordeaux. This office was always held by an English civil servant, typically a clergyman, whose job it was to supervise the financial affairs of the duchy. Answerable directly to the king's Exchequer in Westminster, he was a key figure in the Gascon government.[38]

Apparently the king's appointment of this civil servant was important enough that its announcement was made a point of public record. In examining the Calendar of Patent Rolls it was made evident that the assignment of the Constable of Bordeaux held enough significance that all of the king's subjects should be made aware of the selection. An example of the appointment as it was written in the Patent Rolls went like this: "Protection,

with clause volumus, for one year for Master John de Weston, constable of Bordeaux, going to Gascony on the king's service." Albeit a rather brief and seemingly minor announcement, the frequent installation of this political figure provided the king an opportunity to return the favors of his loyal friends and nobles and to demonstrate Gascony's importance for the realm.[39]

Nearly all of these leaders and civil servants lived in the capital city of Bordeaux. Within its fortified walls stood the Cathedral of St. André, the castle of the Ombrière, a mint, factories, docks and warehouses supporting the duchy's trading activities. Bordeaux's population of about 30,000 -- mostly made up of merchants, shopkeepers and laborers -- made it far larger than most English cities and was only about 10,000 fewer than London in the same period.[40]

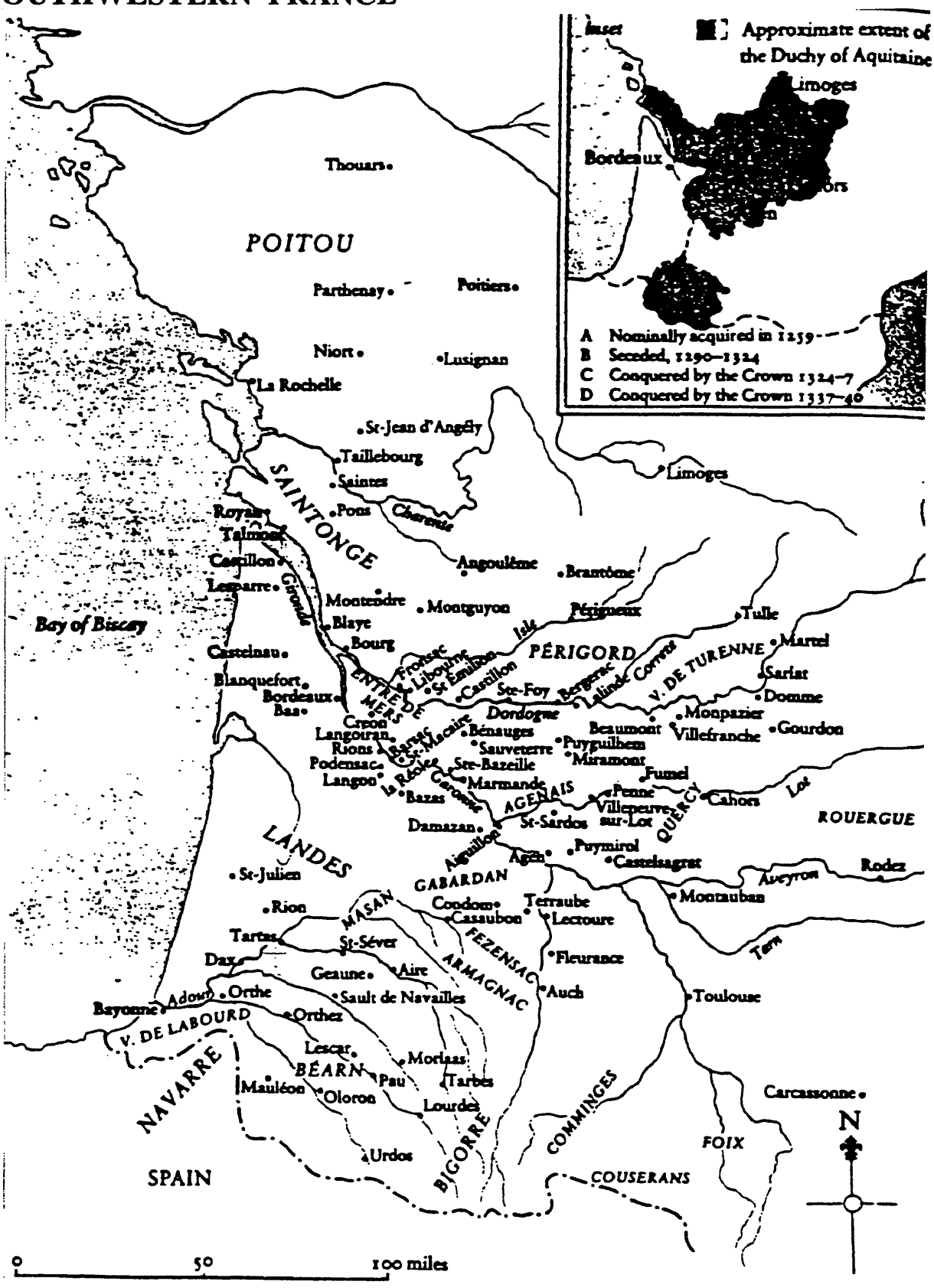
Outside the capital city, the duchy was divided into three administrative districts where local governments was left largely in the hands of native sub-seneschals, *prevots, baillis* and domestic tax collectors. The English did not attempt to extend their civil administration far beyond Bordeaux because they had learned from experience that some of the local barons and peasantry were essentially ungovernable unless physically subdued. Their disdain for authority, an extreme part of the general Gascon penchant for independence, applied to both English and local officials. There were, in effect, safe and unsafe zones within the duchy and the English administrators had decided to leave local government to the locals.[41]

A parallel situation existed in the military arena. The English built major fortifications at Bordeaux, Bourg, Fronsac, Saint Émilion, Libourne and La Réole -- all in the vicinity of the capital -- but made no attempt to spread castles throughout the duchy as they had done in Wales. Major bridges, fords and road junctions were protected by garrisons but more than three-quarters of these strong points were manned by Gascon rather than English troops.[42] Of course, the percentage of English troops could rise sharply when Gascony was attacked by the French but, even then, the English made no

attempt to defend the entire duchy. The extent of England's military involvement varied directly in proportion to the frequency and scope of these incursions, with London sending reinforcements only as required. England could afford to take this relatively detached posture in part because the recapture of Gascony was not France's highest priority -- at least not until well after the Treaty of Paris -- and because the Gascons could be trusted to react vigorously in their own defense. Thus, under peaceful conditions, the number of English soldiers in Gascony rarely exceeded a few hundred.[43]

What had evolved was a fairly common feudal relationship in which the English had learned to accept, even appreciate, the desire of the Gascons to largely govern and defend themselves; and in which the Gascons had learned not to ask more of the English than was necessary to keep out the French. While the nature and limits of this relationship changed under various English kings and was periodically tested by the raids of the Capetian monarchs, it was challenged as never before in 1324 when the forces of Charles IV walked into Bordeaux while Edward II was distracted by the collapse of his authority at home. And it would go on being challenged, at least intermittently, for the next 129 years as England and France attacked one another in earnest.

SOUTHWESTERN FRANCE[44]



CHAPTER IV

THE WINE TRADE: THE VITAL ECONOMIC LINK BETWEEN GASCONY AND ENGLAND

Old habits die hard. As was previously noted, Great Britain today is still the world's largest importer of wines from Bordeaux. The amount it imports is more than twice as much the United States takes despite that it has about one-fifth the U.S. population.[1] This thirst for Bordeaux is accounted for in part by the fact that, unlike the U.S., the United Kingdom has no native wine industry. It is also true that the U.S. -- more a nation of immigrants than the U.K. -- imports more wines from the many nations from which its people came, in addition to several New World sources like Chile, Argentina and Australia.

So, what accounts for England's continued devotion to the wines of Bordeaux? Good taste is one explanation. Bordeaux not only produces more wine than any fine wine-producing region of France, it also produces a higher percentage of its wines that are fine.[2] Not to partake from such a favored source would be nonsensical for the British who enjoy a reputation for having the most cultivated, certainly the most studious, approach to wine among all the nationalities -- the French included.

But the answer goes deeper than that and, as we have already contended, it is to be found in the commercial and cultural ties that have bound England to Gascony since the thirteenth century. The links that were forged in that period have proven strong enough to survive more than seven hundred years of political upheaval including such fundamental

changes as the shift in Gascony's allegiance from England to France and the extraordinary diminution of England's power on the world's stage.

Hard evidence in support of this proposition can be found in many places, not least of all from taking a walk along the Quai des Chartrons, the waterside warehouse district in Bordeaux where the major wine shippers still have their offices. There, one can observe how many of the firms bear English names with Barton, Johnston and Lawton being perhaps the best known. Such enormously wealthy and influential "Chartronnais" families still control the better part of the highly lucrative Bordeaux wine trade and they are the functional, if not lineal, descendants of the pioneering entrepreneurs of the thirteenth century -- both English and Gascon -- who established the vineyards, built the wineries, constructed the warehouses and docks, financed the shipping, paid the taxes, and ultimately made the fortunes that made Bordeaux -- the product, the city, and the region -- world famous.

To understand why these original investors in the Bordeaux wine trade were able to establish business dynasties and national tastes that have survived to the present day, it is important first to grasp why Gascony is such an ideal site for winemaking; and how, once it came to England's full attention, an economic partnership grew up that quickly became so valuable that neither side could afford to let it go.

* * * * *

As was pointed out in Chapter III, Gascony is quite fortunately situated both from the point of view of winemaking and shipping. Its geography is ideal in terms of latitude, i.e., far enough south to ensure good grape ripening in most years but far enough north to guarantee that sufficient fruit acids will remain in the grapes to balance the sugars made by the sun. Its climate is also nearly perfect because of the presence of so many rivers and the proximity of the Atlantic Ocean; such bodies of water provide a moderating effect on the extremes that occasionally upset Gascony's typically mild weather. The region's

topography and geology also contribute to Bordeaux's success as a wine production area with easily cultivated, flat to gently rolling terrain and largely rocky subsoils that offer good water drainage and rich mineral reserves for the vines.[3]

This combination of favorable environmental factors the French call *terroir.* Literally translated, this word just means 'earth' but from a vintner's point of view it includes all of those conditions -- atmospheric, geographic, geologic and even cultural -- which influence a vine to produce wines with a recognizable, individual character reflecting that place on the earth and no other.[4] Cabernet sauvignon, for example, is a species of red wine grape that is cultivated widely in both the Old World and the New. Yet the wines made from these plants taste differently -- despite highly similar vineyard and winery techniques -- when they come from Bordeaux, Italy, Chile, Australia and various locations in the U.S. The differences are less a matter of quality than of character, and character is primarily determined by the environment -- the unique combination of air, earth and water or *terroir* -- in which the grapes grow.

The *terroir* available to the eleventh century vintners of southern England and northern France for making the wines that were in such demand by the Norman invaders of England was markedly inferior to that of Gascony. So far as modern research can tell, those wines were white, weak and acidic -- chiefly because they came from vineyards that were located in the northern extremity of those latitudes in which wine grapes can be grown. Modern recognition of this fact of nature explains why there are no significant, commercial vineyards today in the English shires and French *départments* bordering the English Channel. Even as far south as the Ile-de-France region around Paris where, in medieval times vineyards were not only widespread but the chief source of wines for the Capetian kings, the growing conditions are now considered far too cold and damp for decent winemaking.[5]

What made such environmentally-challenged winemaking feasible and even profitable in the days of William the Conqueror was that the source of supply had to be

close at hand in an era when transport was a major problem and when, in the absence of airtight containers, wine spoiled in short periods of time. Despite these realities, it is evident that at least the wealthiest French and English wine consumers of the high Middle Ages were aware that the growing conditions were not ideal and that better wines could be made in more southern locales. Moreover, these wealthy patrons were willing to pay a premium price for wines from as far away as Mediterranean France, Italy and even Greece if they could be delivered unspoiled.[6]

The great majority of English wine consumers, however, had to make do with what they extracted from native vineyards or, far more frequently, imported from the vineyards located just across the Channel in northern France. Things improved somewhat for English wine drinkers when the Plantagenet family took over the English monarchy. Hailing from Anjou, the Plantagenets were fond of the wines of the Loire River Valley which certainly were more abundant and palatable than those made along the Marne and the Seine. Moreover, while the Plantagenet ports of Nantes and La Rochelle were further from London than Rouen, the wines coming from western France were still reasonably fresh by the time they reached Southampton or other English ports. Thus, from roughly 1154, when Henry II made Anjou an English dependency, to 1203 when King John lost it, England's main source of wine was the Loire Valley.

It was not until 1224 in the reign of Henry III when the port of La Rochelle was also lost to the French that the wines of the Gironde River system became so vital to British wine importers. The English had traded in Bordeaux previously, especially after King John eliminated the tax on Gascon wines in 1203, but not to any great extent because the taste for Loire wines was well established and the shipping time from Bordeaux to London was a bit longer than from La Rochelle. Once the latter port was closed, however, the English merchants knew that, short of the Mediterranean, they had no place else to go and they descended on the port of Bordeaux in a rush. Looking forward from 1066 to 1224, it is evident that for reasons of policy as well as of pleasure, England's primary source of

wine had been moving steadily southward.[7] Looking backward from today to 1224, it is obvious that in Bordeaux it had found its true home.

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The sudden, great demand for Gascon wine that occurred in the second quarter of the thirteenth century forced the region to make fundamental changes in its still agriculturally-based economy. Contrary to our modern-day picture of Bordeaux as a great commercial center completely surrounded by vineyards, the fact is that in this period, wine-production capacity in the capital area was still fairly sparse. For most of the twelfth century, the majority of Gascon wines were made inland in what was known as the *Haut Pays* or "High Country" district east of Bordeaux. They were then moved downstream to the capital, often blended with other wines and then either consumed locally or shipped out to customers in England, the Low Countries or Scandinavia. As Hugh Johnson has described the situation:

> The quantity of wine England bought, and the speed with which Bordeaux was suddenly ready to supply it, suggests that huge vineyards had already been planted in the (capital) region in readiness. In fact, it was not so. Bordeaux had started out as an "emporium" and, when her star rose in the thirteenth century, was again more of a port than a producer. The area immediately around the city, especially the district of Graves to the south, was the principal vineyard of Bordeaux. There were also vineyards along the steep banks of the Garonne opposite the port (today the *Premières Côtes*), in Entre-Deux-Mers, between the Garonne and the Dordogne, and others along the estuary at Blaye. The Médoc had hardly any vines. The grand total was not very impressive.[8]

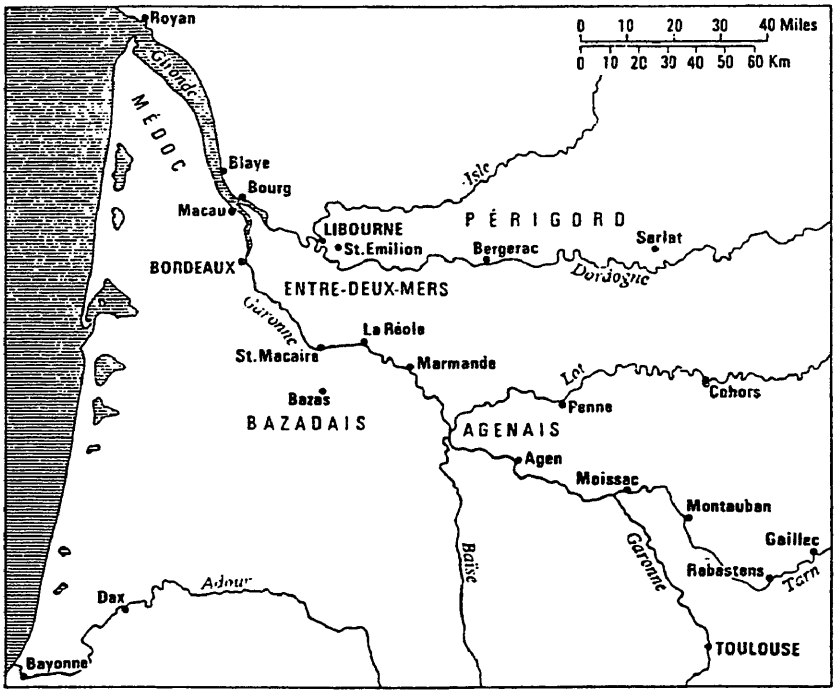
The reference to the lack of wines from the Médoc is particularly interesting, given its present day role as the supreme source of Bordeaux wines. This district, which lies along the left bank of the Gironde estuary, was a swamp in the days of Henry III and its was not until the mid-seventeenth century that its marshes were drained by Dutch engineers and the great estates so prized at present, for example Chateaux Lafite, Mouton and Margaux, began to make their appearance. To make up for this dearth of vineyards in the immediate vicinity of Bordeaux, the Gascon vintners initially went along the rivers

throughout the duchy and contracted for whatever was available. As Hugh Johnson has reported:

> It was the Aquitaine basin as a whole, reaching right up to the High Country, that supplied the bulk of England's needs. Most Gascon wine came down the Garonne from Gaillac, Moissac and Agen and, closer to home, St.-Macaire, Langon and Barsac; or down the Dordogne from Bergerac and, although less important at first, St. Emilion. Cahors, high up the river Lot, was another provider of what were called High Country wines to distinguish them from the produce of Bordeaux itself. In all probability they were often better, stronger wine than most of what Bordeaux made locally, and the Bordelais were correspondingly jealous of them and anxious to sell their own production first.[9]

To do this, the merchants of Bordeaux sponsored a huge expansion of vineyards in the district close to the capital and, when they came into commercial production, adopted restrictive trade practices to discourage English access to the *Haut Pays* wines. The first major issue was space. Other agricultural products were set aside to make way for vines. The once dominant grain fields of Gascony were replaced by vineyards that poured into the Graves district south of the city, across the river into the Entre-Deux-Mers and up the river valleys leading eastward from Bordeaux.[10]

SOUTH-WEST FRANCE[11]



Another requirement was the expansion of the labor force to work the new vineyards. In other wine-producing areas of France where monasteries were the predominant source for labor, monks tilled the soil out of religious obligation. But Bordeaux had no broadly established relationship between the Church and the wine making industry and laymen had to be recruited from other occupations to do this work. Wineries as well as blending, storage and shipping facilities also had to be expanded on an unprecedented scale in order to get the product to market before it spoiled.[12]

A major issue for the Gascon vintners was to come up with a commercially feasible product that would appeal to their new English customers. These buyers, the Bordeaux merchants knew, were used to the lighter white wines of the Seine, Marne and Loire valleys but were also showing interest in the stronger, southern wines from their *Haut Pays* vineyards. They decided to bridge this apparent contradiction by coming up with a new wine for the English market that would also meet their requirements for easy mass production from grape varieties already well adapted to the region's *terroir.* [13] This goal fostered a great deal of experimentation which eventually resulted in a new light wine made from a mixture of red and white grapes that were pressed and fermented together.[14] This blend, was known by a variety of names including *vinum clarum, bin clar, vin gris* and, from Old French, *clairet,* but its primary characteristic was that it was "clear, light and bright enough to be distinguished from other red wines."[15] The English, apparently were frantic for it from the outset and eventually adopted the generic word for it they still use today to describe all Bordeaux reds: "claret". Hugh Johnson provides some idea of what this original claret must have been like:

> Claret was made as . . . what the French call a '*vin d'un nuit* ' -- one that spends a single night in the vat. The grapes were trodden in the usual way, and the wine fermented in the vat on the skins -- many of which in any case would have been white -- but for no longer than 24 hours. Then the pale liquid was run off into barrels to ferment as clear juice . . . It is tempting to compare claret, pale, light, highly swallowable, soft enough but with a refreshing 'cut', to modern Beaujolais Nouveau. This must have been the general effect.[16]

Under no circumstances should one assume that this wine tasted anything like the sophisticated, complex and age-worthy red wines of the Médoc and other distinguished Bordeaux districts that we know today. It was made from different grapes according to far less advanced methods and intended for consumption within months of its manufacture. The quality of medieval wine generally was so poor by contemporary standards that even the best products of the Middle Ages would not stand comparison with today's most ordinary wines.[17] And there is no reason to believe that we would find this new creation of the Gascon vintners especially appealing. The important point, however, for the purposes of this study is the fact that in the early to mid-thirteenth century for Gascony's new English customers this wine was an immediate hit.

Thus equipped with a stunning new product and a strong base of wines from the Haut Pays, the wine merchants of Gascony began to ship their wines in earnest and as Robert-Henri Bautier has asserted: "Wine, more than anything else, contributed to forging the permanent economic and political links between England and the possessions in the Guienne."[18] And the Gascons did not limit their exporting activities just to England. They expanded their market to include Scotland, Ireland, Flanders and the Baltic states. Moreover, they challenged the vintners of Burgundy and Germany who already had flourishing markets in these countries. For example, in less than fifty years following the fall of La Rochelle, Gascon exporters had largely taken over the wine trade the Germans had previously established with England and the Low Countries. Their shipping distance was longer but their argument was that they could deliver better wines at lower prices; the marked change in the market in favor of the wines of Gascony indicates that their customers agreed.[19]

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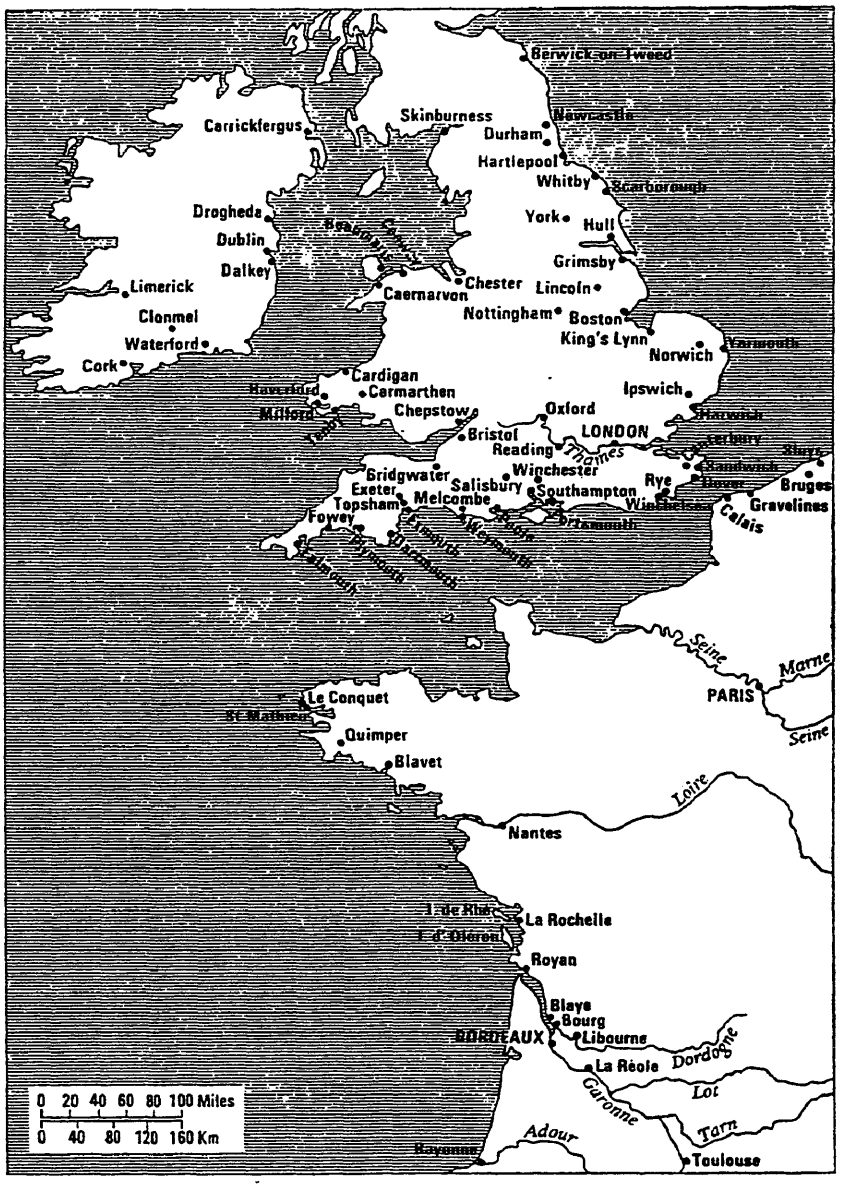
The shipment of these wines from Bordeaux was a logistic operation of vast scope and complexity because it was concentrated into two relatively brief seasons of the year.

The first sailing occurred as soon as the new wine was made in the autumn, typically in October or early November; and then there was another following the Candlemas celebration in February that took more mature and therefore less valuable products often called "reek" wines.[20] This seasonal rhythm was determined by a number of factors. The first was that the vine's annual cycle demands grape harvesting in the fall, typically in

NORTH-WEST EUROPE[21]



September, occasionally in October. A second factor was the urgent interest of the shippers in getting the wines back to market in England before the approaching winter made navigation more hazardous; in this way the wines could be sold in the lucrative Christmas season. A third factor was that medieval wines had trouble surviving more than a year in barrel and therefore needed to be delivered to the customer as soon as possible.[22] The combined effect of these compelling influences was that literally hundreds of sailing ships showed up virtually on the same day in the port of Bordeaux, all wanting the same cargo and all wanting to head back for England or wherever almost immediately. As Hugh Johnson has described it:

> It is hard to exaggerate how important timing was. The wine Bordeaux sold, although certainly a degree fruitier, possibly a degree stronger, and probably a more pleasant and satisfying drink than the northern whites it began to supersede, was no less perishable. It was expected to turn sour within a year at most and tasted best within a few months of the vintage. Year old wine was halved in price as soon as the ships with the new vintage dropped anchor. In many cases its was simply thrown away.[23]

Initially, the fleet that carried the wines abroad from Bordeaux was almost entirely composed of Gascon ships. As the Anglo-Gascon wine trade was in its youth, the Bordelais had little trouble meeting demand and taking on the dual role of vintner and shipper. This trend continued well into the reign of Edward III (1327-1377) and is shown best in the English kings' Patent Rolls. In this regard the Rolls are particularly helpful in that not only do they report all of he king's major public decisions but they even document his most basic requests -- especially those for wine. As this one entry from one Patent Roll elucidates:

> Whereas the king has charged Peter del Vyne, master of a ship called *La Cogge of St. Martin* of Bayonne, laden with wines purchased for the king, now lying in the port of Plymouth, to bring the same with all speed to Sandwich, he has taken the ship and wines into his protection and the master and the mariners with the ship are to have free passage in any port or place in coming thither; directed to admirals, sheriffs, mayors, and others.

This entry was just one of hundreds like it in the Patent Rolls of King Edward III. The important thing to note, though, was the trend for Kings Edward I, II, and III to be requesting and providing protection for wines coming from Gascon shippers like Peter del Vyne from Bayonne.[24]

Over time, however, the amount of wine being exported went way beyond the capacity of these home-based shipping firms and seafarers from other countries, chiefly English, got involved. At first, it was just in those years of a particularly successful harvest the Bordeaux vintners called upon other merchant mariners, including those from the Low Countries, Italy, Germany and Spain. However, as the demand increased for Bordeaux wine, Gascon merchants simply could not keep up and it was not long before English maritime companies were asked to help with the flurry of business occasioned by each new harvest. Once the English merchants broke into the business of shipping wine, they saw the potential for great wealth and a strong competition began between the shippers of England and Bordeaux.[25]

The mass sailing that occurred each fall was a tremendous maritime effort. While not on the scale of the D-Day invasion of France in June 1944, for its day it was an incredible armada of sailing vessels that required an enormous surge of seasonal manpower in the ports of England and Gascony. In the Middle Ages, though, this kind of operation required a great deal of organization on a scale that could only be handled by a monarch. The annual fleet of cargo vessels sailing from south-western France needed the plentiful resources of the English crown particularly in terms of protection from piracy and raids from enemy vessels as the war loomed on the horizon. The English kings' involvement meant that orders were given thus making them a matter of public record. The following excerpt from the Patent Rolls of Edward III shows to what degree the English king went to, to ensure that year's vintage made it to England:

> Protection until Whitsunday for a ship of John Bamme and Simon Thoky of Lynn, merchants, called *La Rose of Lynn*, which they are sending to Gascony for wines and other merchandise, with the fleet of ships going there under the license lately

> granted by the king at the prayer of merchants and masters and mariners of ships complaining of the loss caused by the arrest of their ships for his service and on condition that all ships going in the fleet be well found in men and armor to resist attacks by enemies, and for the master, mariners, men and servants of the same.[26]

Many hands not normally involved in the wine trade were hired for this great annual event. As the trade grew the importers and exporters involved sought ways to cut their costs and not a few began to acquire their own ships instead of paying professional mariners to transport their cargoes.[27] This explains why wine supply firms are to this day often referred to as "shippers" -- even if they have no involvement in the maritime movement of their products.

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As the vineyards so hastily planted around Bordeaux to meet England's new demand came into maturity, the merchants of the Gascon capital became less dependent on the wines of the Haut Pays and took measures to exclude them from the market and, in particular, the most profitable autumn shipment. This discrimination against the wines of eastern Gascony began as early as 1203 when King John, in an attempt to recognize Gascon importance and as an incentive to increase production, exempted the merchants of Bordeaux from paying the *Grand Coutume* customs duties. The latter saw to it that the exemption applied only to them, thus ensuring that every barrel of High Country wine cost more in London than one from the vineyards immediately around Bordeaux.[28]

Bordeaux got away with this because the river system that threads through most of Gascony and on which all the vineyards in the duchy depended to move their products, flows into the Gironde estuary which is dominated by the port of Bordeaux. Consequently, all river traffic carrying wine to England, even from Gascony's most insignificant upstream vineyards had to pass under the guns of the capital and deal with its tax collectors. To give some idea of the influence this monopoly had over Gascon growers and merchants, the case of the tiny village of Castelsagrat, situated along a barely navigable

tributary of the Garonne over 100 miles from Bordeaux is apt. English records show that its vintners did not dare plant any vines within Castelsagrat's walls without first petitioning the English king for a discount on the customs they would have to face in Bordeaux.[29]

The discriminatory methods employed by the Bordeaux merchants and their consorting government officials were indeed selfish but there were compelling forces that drove them to such lengths. Because medieval wines could turn sour so rapidly, they had to be sold, shipped and consumed as speedily as possible. To give a concrete example of how quickly wine declined in value, it is useful to look at some of the data available for the vintage year 1342 when the Hundred Years War was already five years old. In that year, *vin nouveau* sold at dockside in Bordeaux at an average prices of 21 livres per *tonneau* ; the same wine at six to eight months of age, a *vin ancien,* sold for only 12 livres and at a year old the same wine was a complete loss. To protect themselves from price reductions of this sort, Bordeaux merchants utilized many different methods, both fair and unfair, to ensure that their wines were sold promptly.[30]

Throughout the thirteenth century, the output of the Haut Pays vineyards still exceeded that of the Bordeaux district and therefore was Bordeaux's biggest competitor for shipping facilities and cargo space aboard the wine freighters. So, to further discourage this competition, the Gascon capital exacted a tax in addition to the *Grand Coutume* already paid by the Haut Pays producers. Called the *Petit Coutume,* this tax applied to all wines sold retail within its administrative district, one of the three into which Gascony was divided. Needless to say, this duty did not apply to the Bordeaux district vintners but was required of all vintners outside this area.[31]

Often the capital district was the only one into which the Haut Pays and other Gascon vintners could afford to sell their wines because the Bordelais took additional measures to ensure that their products were the first on the market each year and guaranteed a place on the great fall sailing. Only when the stocks of Bordeaux wines were insufficient to meet the needs of their best customers were wines from outside the Bordeaux district

allowed access to the port. Typically, these other Gascon wines were delayed for export until well into the fall. This meant that the wines and merchants of the Haut Pays were left 'stewing' on the docks of the capital through October while the wines of the Bordeaux district were already on the high seas or being consumed in England.[32]

Nicholas Faith, in his revealing book about the history of the wine trade in Bordeaux called The Winemasters, has described this exclusionary practice in the following way:

> The citizens of Bordeaux cleverly used the normal pattern of wine-buying by the English for monopoly purposes. English ships would descend in their thousands in October in time to buy the latest vintage and depart six weeks later to reach England before Christmas. To use this seasonal rhythm to the best advantage they obtained the rights to forbid the sale of wine from outside the *Sénéchaussée* (the capital district) before 11 November, St. Martin's Day. Indeed wines from outside simply could not be brought into the city from the Haut Pays as from 8 September, well before the vintage, until either St. Martin's Day or, if the Bordelais preferred, Christmas.[33]

In addition, as Hugh Johnson has found, these discriminatory methods were not only condoned and enforced by the Gascon government in Bordeaux against the interests of the rest of the duchy's vintners, they were formally enshrined in law. "Gradually, during the course of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the city arranged for itself a code of unfair practices guaranteeing its precedence over its neighbors and rivals -- a system known as the '*police des vins*'. It was tolerated by the kings of England because it simplified their tax collecting. When Bordeaux eventually became French again, it was tolerated to prevent seditious backsliding by those who thought they had had a better deal under the English."[34]

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Before delving further into the subject of taxation -- and, make no mistake about it, it was revenue from the wine trade to the English crown that made Gascony, at least from an economic standpoint, so dear to the monarchy -- it will be helpful to say something

about the units of measure and the kinds of ships that were involved. The basic unit was an oak cask called a *tonneau* which could hold 252 U.S. gallons or 900 liters of wine. These wooden barrels were manufactured in Périgord, the Saintonge or the Angoulême regions and became a trademark for the wines of Gascony. For purposes of identification and subsequent taxation, the dimensions of this barrel were carefully specified and supervised and, in effect, patented because, initially at least, neighboring regions were not allowed to use casks of the same size.[35]

With the expansion of the wine traffic between Gascony and England until it became the largest single element in medieval shipping, the Gascon *tonneau* or, its exact equivalent, the English "tun" became the standard measure for determining the carrying capacity of a ship. These casks weighed about 2,000 pounds -- today's "ton" -- and required about 100 cubic feet of space in a ship's hold or a merchant's warehouse. These units of measure, developed for the wine trade, were the basis for determining taxes and have persisted at least in the English-speaking nations as the standards for shipping and storage of bulk goods to this day.[36]

Such huge barrels were hard to maneuver, however, and the merchants of Bordeaux soon devised a new container of exactly one-fourth the size holding 225 liters. This *barrique Bordelaise* remains the most widely used oak container for aging and shipping wines even at the end of the twentieth century and hold enough to fill 25 cases of wine of 12 bottles per case. When first employed the *barrique*, like the *tonneau,* was unique and was used to distinguish Bordeaux wines from those of any other source, including other wines from Gascony.[37]

The volume of wine that needed to be transported and the containers in which it was carried had a tremendous influence on the design and number of ships built in the Middle Ages. Medieval shipping varied greatly in size and shape until around the twelfth century. Before then, the ships used predominantly to transport wine were slim, usually open longboats, not unlike the Viking ships in style; in the twelfth century, however, active

ports like La Rochelle and others along the Flemish coast began using a new kind of craft called the 'cog'. This was a broadly built ship with a capacity of about 1,000 tuns which was far greater than that of the longboat because of its innovative hull. The cog was specifically designed for carry- ing bulky freight and its roundish prow and stern not only gave it a greater girth but also much improved maneuverability. These factors made it a more efficient way of transporting wine and, as such, was quickly adopted by other ports. In addition, be- cause of its quick helm and ability to carry large amounts of men and arms, the cog was favored by the English monarchy because it could also be used as a warship.[38]

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The complexities and costs involved in shipping wine from Gascony to England were great despite the interest both parties shared in seeing this trade flourish. Considerable capital had to be advanced to pay not only for the ships that moved the freight but also for the handling and storage of the great oak casks at either end of the trip. Another major expense was taxation, for every port at which a wine freighter called wanted its slice of this highly profitable commerce. To add to the complexity of these voyages, the taxes varied considerably over time and by whether the shipper was a Gascon, an Englishman or some other nationality. Before wandering into this maze of medieval regulations, for which some evidence is still lacking, it may be best to start with some general statements about the theoretical basis for the taxation of wine as it stood at the outset of international trade in this commodity. As Unwin has pointed out:

> The earliest medieval taxes on wine, such as the *modiato* of Rouen dating from 1055, and the later *recta prisa* of England, were essentially 'instruments for supply of the sovereign's table' but such taxes gradually emerged as a more general method of increasing the income of the Exchequer through the commutation of a seizure of wine into a money payment for the right to import wine. By the middle of the twelfth century, a general wine custom seems to have been imposed on wines imported into English ports. From the thirteenth century this varied in amount from two pence to six pence a tun.[39]

The English monarchs not only exacted taxes on wine imports, they reserved the right to take a part of the cargo for their own use at what amounted to confiscatory prices. Continuing with Unwin on this point:

> Of more importance was the 'prisage' or wine 'prise', which by the end of the thirteenth century had developed in England into a formal right, known as the *recta prisa* . This required from each ship the 'seizure by the crown of two tuns or over, on the payment of 20 shillings a tun to the owners'. One tun was to be taken from behind the mast, where the better wine was stored, and the other tun from the front of the mast. This enabled the king to buy the best quality wine at less than the market price, although, if the cargo was between 10 and 20 tuns only one tun would be seized and, if the cargo was less than 10 tuns no wine would be taken.[40]

Thus the principle of the English government's right to impose taxes, confiscate portions of a cargo and otherwise regulate and restrict the activities of those involved in the wine trade was well established long before the Gascon market exploded starting in 1224. And, in the case of Gascony and England's other former possessions in France, the English monarchs were in a position to tax and regulate on both ends of the voyage since the ports involved were all under the control of the English crown. As we have seen, King John exempted Gascon merchant ships departing Bordeaux from paying the *Grand Coutume* but that didn't free them from paying other taxes when reaching English ports, nor did it free English ships and those from other nations from paying the *Grand Coutume* and other taxes before leaving Bordeaux.

One of the problems in sorting out who paid what is that English policy on taxation varied considerably over time as the monarchy altered its system of incentives or restrictions to favor one group or another and as its needs for revenue rose and fell in reaction to domestic or foreign crises. English merchants, many of them capitalized by -- or otherwise connected to -- the nobility, were in a good position to make their aspirations and complaints heard by the crown and were forever seeking regulations that would favor their fortunes at the expense of their foreign competitors. Some of these 'aliens', the Gascons in particular, were quick to respond, however, that as subjects of the Duke of

Gascony, i.e., the King of England, they were every bit as English as their native-born competitors in Bristol, Southampton or London.

The English monarchy had already learned that the best way to ensure some degree of allegiance from its continental possessions was to provide them with ready markets in England and to offer them what today would be called "preferential tariffs."[41] With Gascony its last remaining foothold on French soil and its only political basis for reasserting its sovereignty over lands formerly held in France, the general inclination of England's thirteenth century monarchs was to treat the merchants of Bordeaux as generously as possible. Evidence of this generosity becomes evident in the Patent Rolls as the king's special requests for friends and other business associates were documented for posterity. King Edward III made it quite clear who his friends were in the wine industry and what he could do for them in this excerpt that was just one of hundreds like it during his reign: "Protection until Christmas for Robert de Whetewe and Henry Annore purveying victuals in England for John de Insula, mayor of the city of Bordeaux, his household and others dwelling with him in the garrison of the city."[42] This inclination was reinforced in that, even with comparatively light taxation and regulation, the royal revenues from Gascon wine sales were growing handsomely.

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To get some sense of what an early thirteenth-century Gascon merchant might expect on his arrival in England, it is helpful to imagine a Gascon ship on its way to London from Bordeaux. On coming up the Thames, the captain would have had to fly a flag to identify himself until the ship reached London Bridge. Once tied up at the wharf, such ships had to wait about thirty-six hours before being allowed to dispose of their cargo. This holding time was required so that the king's London sheriffs could come aboard and take advantage of the king's privileges. These could involve the exaction of taxes on the cargo or, as previously explained, to exercise the monarch's rights of 'prisage'

of wine wanted for royal use.[43] Whatever the king's choice, though, it could not escape the permanent record of the Chancery. As such there's repetitive evidence of the king's requests for how his privilege was to be addressed. In just one case in the Patent Rolls, it states:

> Writ of aid for John de la Pole and Henry Deorday, deputed by Richard de la Pole, the king's butler, to levy and collect two shillings on each cask of wine imported by foreign merchants, in the port of London, during pleasure. The like for the following: Yarmouth, Ipswich, Sandwich, Wynchelse, Chichester, Southampton, Devon & Cornwall, Somerset & Dorset, Bristol & Cheapstowe.[44]

Royal use, though, in and of itself was a complicated phrase. The term was a rather broad stipulation that encompassed personal consumption and the use of wine for his own armies. In addition, the monarchy did not resign itself from a little state trading of its own. But, as one might expect, even these decisions on how the king wanted to use his stock of wine were documented. In examining the Patent Rolls, one can find just one of a variety of ways in which the king chose to distribute his reserves. For instance: "Grant for life to John de Wodeford, king's chaplain, of a tun of good wine, beyond the three tuns yearly already granted to him by letters patent, to be received by the hands of the king's butler, to wit two tuns of good wine of vintage between Michaelmas and Christmas, and two tuns of good wine of rack between Christmas and Easter."[45]

At the insistence of the English wine merchants who wanted to further curb Gascon involvement in the wine trade, restrictions were placed on the activities of Gascon wine merchants while they were also ashore in England. These restraints included limits on the individuals or parties to whom they could sell their wines, a forty-day limit on the length of their stay in England, and a requirement enforcing all foreign tradesmen to live with a denizen host. Changes in these laws were made as early as 1280, however; the first one being an extension of the amount of time a foreign merchant could stay in England from forty days to three months. These kinds of changes continued and they were plainly intended to favor, in particular, the merchants from Bordeaux.[46]

The men from Bordeaux who involved themselves in the wine trade were businessmen of varying status. Some were ship owners who, having delivered their annual cargo of wine, thereafter sought loads of grain, salt, wool or other products for their ships. Some were wine producers who had hired a ship and then followed their vintage to England to promote its sale, returning as soon as possible to Gascony to prepare for the next year's crop. More common, however, was the Gascon wine merchant who made no wine of his own but represented the interests of several Bordeaux vintners. These were the merchants who focused their attention on getting the best price for their wares from English importers or on selling their wine directly at one of the many seasonal trade fairs held throughout the English countryside.[47] Most of the merchants were only seasonal visitors to England because it was all they could afford. However, there were some wealthier Gascons who took advantage of the liberties of the City of London and established permanent residences in the capital. These individuals enjoyed and extremely privileged situation because not only could they export their wine from Bordeaux without the customs duties that English merchants were forced to pay, they were also exempt from paying English duties because of their status as "freemen" of the City of London. Naturally, these privileges were deeply resented by English merchants who lobbied hard for changes in the laws. Others, however, took the more enlightened course of taking up residence in and around the city of Bordeaux in pursuit of similar privileges.[48]

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As the thirteenth century drew to a close, the wine merchants of Bordeaux had become the most numerous, influential and wealthiest members of the English wine trade.[49] Hugh Johnson points out that: "to be a Freeman of both London and Bordeaux was a license to print money -- which is more or less what the grandest Gascons did, lending to the king in competition with the great Italian bankers."[50] The favor these fortunate merchants enjoyed from the crown was no accident because Edward I (1272-

1307) was on the throne during their ascendancy and of all the English monarchs of this era, he most involved himself in strengthening the bonds between his kingdom and England's last remaining duchy in France.

Edward's preference showed itself in several concrete forms. As Unwin has reported:

> From the end of the thirteenth century a new royal policy emerged and this began to favour aliens more than denizens, particularly with respect to commercial activity in the City of London. . . [It] culminated in the grant . . . of the so-called Gascon Charter of 1302. This allowed the Gascons safe conduct throughout the king's realm, permitted them to trade wholesale, and allowed them to dwell where they wished and to keep their own hostels. Moreover, on the arrival of the new vintage, all existing wine stocks were to be tested by juries and any which had deteriorated were to be destroyed. The king also released the Gascons from the *recta prisa* and in exchange they agreed to the payment of a new duty of two shillings on every tun of wine which they imported.[51]

These permissive conditions, incorporated a year later in a general set of trade regulations called the *Carta Mercatoria,* put the Gascon merchants on an even firmer financial and political footing with the monarchy but the resentment in the English business community grew stronger still. But Edward I held fast against it for all of the reasons previously described and possibly because, as Hugh Johnson speculates, the king "had inherited his father's quite remarkable wine bill [and] this was his way of paying it." So, the Gascon wine merchants continued to prosper and "were even granted the right to establish their own association [in London], the Merchant Wine Tonners of Gascoyne, later known as the Mystery of Vintners."[52]

With the death of Edward I in 1307, however, the English rivals of these favored Bordeaux merchants had a new opportunity to reduce the advantages heretofore enjoyed by their competitors. The Gascon harvest of 1308 produced more wine imported by England than in any year before or since: 102,724 tuns.[53] In the same year, however, the English wine merchants addressed their new king, Edward II (1307-1327) and argued that the *Carta Mercatoria* had died with his father. Edward initially ignored their complaints and

renewed the charter but by 1309 the king was already held in such low respect by the barons and the business community that the terms of the charter became unenforceable and the hostility shown to the Gascon wine merchants went unabated.[54]

The Gascons were quick to recognize their declining position and took what steps they could to protect their right to transport and sell wine to the English market. Despite the rising costs involved with transport, as relations with France deteriorated in the early fourteenth century, selling wine remained a highly profitable business. The Gascon wholesalers had effectively utilized the privileges granted to them by Edward I to form the trade association previously described, the Merchant Wine Tonners of Gascony, later known as the Vintners Company. Now they used this association to lobby against the hostility they faced from their native-born rivals in London.[55]

The Gascon merchants' opposition to change placed their English counterparts in a quandary. On the one hand, English merchants both in London and across the country wanted to encourage foreign commerce because of the domestic revenue it generated. On the other, these businessmen, particularly the wine merchants, felt disadvantaged by all the special privileges that had been granted to the Bordeaux shippers and merchants. Because these Englishmen felt so threatened, they worked with other merchants to develop more restrictions on the role and profits of their Gascon rivals and found that their goals were more easily achieved under the weak, distracted rule of Edward II.[56]

The isolationism of many of the English wine merchants and the legislation they gradually succeeded in getting implemented resulted in great changes in the way Gascon wine was transported in the early fourteenth century. Relations between English and Gascon merchants had so worsened by 1315 that the latter were willing to quit the English market entirely. In the last year of Edward II's reign, 1327, the English merchants finally attained their own exemption from the king's prisage which the Bordeaux shippers had enjoyed for decades.[57] The English believed they had at last leveled the playing field with the Gascons but there is some evidence to suggest they had actually gained the upper hand.

In addition to pursuing changes in the trade laws, they had also been pursuing extra-legal methods to reduce the advantages of the Gascons. For example, Edward I had appointed an official called "the guager" who was assigned to check the quality of the wine being brought into English ports. The Patent Rolls of the period show the addition of this new authority. By order of the king: "Mandate to sheriffs, bailiffs, and other ministers to cause public proclamation to be made in the king's name in all ports where ships with wine call that no merchant or other mariner under a heavy forfeiture sell any wine in casks or pipes unless the wine has been duly gauged."[58]

By the early fourteenth century this royal bureaucrat appears to have been suborned by the English merchants. This seems obvious from the complaints frequently made by Bordeaux shippers who protested that the guagers often forced them to sit on their wines for eight to fifteen days before inspection while English shipments were inspected far sooner. A tun of Gascon wine sitting on a London dock for two weeks would thus lose a great deal of its value.[59]

The crowding out of Gascon merchants from the wine trade in London and other English ports forced many of them to return to Bordeaux and to take reduced prices for their products. For their English customers on the consumer level, however, there was not a noticeable change because the wine from Bordeaux was still getting to its importers; the only difference was that increasingly it was arriving in English rather than Gascon ships. In one way, at least, Gascony benefited from this shift in transportation arrangements. It will be recalled that when the Bordeaux wine market suddenly expanded, the Gascon vintners had responded so well that all other agricultural pursuits took a back seat. While Gascony had once been a tremendous producer of grain, not to mention other farm products, it had been virtually independent of the rest of France. But when these staples of the medieval diet were suddenly replaced by vines to meet the demand for wine from England and elsewhere in northern Europe, the result was that the Gascons had virtually eliminated the diverse economy that was fundamental to their political independence.[60]

By the latter half of the thirteenth century Gascony needed to import grain and other essentials and was looking for more ships to import these cargoes. Here, once again, the English shippers were eager to get involved. Indeed, in some ways the English crown felt obligated since they had helped to create the market and had subsequently taken greater control of the shipping traffic. As the Patent Rolls seem to show, the English monarchy had not only encouraged English shippers to get involved in sending victuals to Gascony but formally organized it through letters patent. A fine example would be:

> Appointment of William de la Pole of Kyngston-upon-Hull to arrest in the ports of Kyngston-upon-Hull and other ports and places thence towards the west, ships to take wheat, wool, and other things, which the king has ordered him to purvey for his service in the duchy of Aquitaine, and to man them with suitable crews, and to send these ships with the fleet now going there to buy wines and other merchandise for the realm.[61]

With the English takeover of the movement of wine north from Bordeaux, suddenly there were many more foreign merchant ships available to bring in grain and other commodities. This further sowed the seeds of English-Gascon interdependence and established a more broadly-based trading relationship that has persisted into the modern era.[62] More immediately, it meant that with the war clouds darkening over England and France by the end of the reign of Edward II, the ships that were increasingly at risk plying north and south along France's west coast and through the English Channel were more frequently English than Gascon. At least for the moment it looked as though the wily Gascons had once again got the better of their English 'cousins'.

* * * * *

When one surveys the Gascon-English wine trade over the century and a quarter encompassing King John's exemption of the Bordeaux wine producers from paying customs duties (1203) to the forced resignation of Edward II (1327), enormous changes are evident. Clearly, the closure of the port of La Rochelle (1224) is a key event because it forced the English wine importers to look further south for their main source of supply.

So, too, are the several measures taken by the English monarchs, particularly Edward I, to facilitate the work of the Gascon wine merchants in shipping and selling their wares, even at the expense of English traders.

But it is in trends rather than specific events that the most dramatic changes become apparent. In just over a century, Gascony had transformed itself from a rather obscure outpost of England's domains in France to become the monarchy's second largest trading partner (after the Low Countries' market in wool) and the largest single contributor of customs duties to the king's treasury. Moreover, it had radically altered its internal economy from one that was broadly based in agriculture and therefore largely self-sufficient to one that was devoted almost entirely to a highly specialized single product on the borderline between agriculture and manufacturing for which the principal customer was overseas. Put more starkly, Gascony had to a substantial extent made itself dependent not only for its continued economic success but for the bread it ate on the ability of foreign, i.e. mainly English, ships to get through to the port of Bordeaux.

Gascony's growing dependence on England was reciprocated if not precisely mirrored. That part of England's population responsible for nearly all of its political and economic decision-making looked upon wine as a necessity, not a luxury, and essentially had been left with only one source: Gascony. While England's own wine industry never amounted to much, the flood of better and cheaper wine from Bordeaux that became available during the thirteenth century put an end to the hopes of domestic vintners and more than "1,300 commercial vineyards were grubbed up all over England, and grapes made way for more profitable crops."[63]

For English wine merchants, the profits to be made from buying, shipping, storing, blending, and selling the increasingly prolific and urgently wanted vintages from Bordeaux had become irresistible as their tenacious struggle with their Gascon counterparts for every slice of this market demonstrated. And, for the king himself, the wine trade had become equally compelling because the tax revenues it yielded had risen from a negligible sum

during the reign of King John to one that rivaled all the income Edward II got from his domestic tax base.

The mutual dependence that had grown up over this relatively brief span of time was manifested in other ways as well and was most evident in the capital cities of these trading partners. In Bordeaux, the hand-in-glove relationship between the local government -- English-dominated but largely Gascon-run -- and the wine industry -- Gascon at its base but increasingly English-operated at the top -- became closer every decade. In London too, despite their rivalries over market shares and royal favor, the Gascon and English wine traders became functionally indistinguishable and Gascon merchants were recognized -- officially, at least -- as English, the most successful among them eventually emerging as citizens of London and electors of its mayor.

One thing had not changed, however, and that was the political status of England's former possessions in France. From John's surrender of Normandy, Anjou, Maine, Touraine, and Poitou in 1203 to the end of Edward II's reign in 1327, the only major events -- notwithstanding Henry III's periodic expeditions -- had been the previously noted French takeover of the port of La Rochelle and the 1259 signing of the Treaty of Paris by which England acknowledged -- legally, if not genuinely -- that the *status quo* -- was irrevocable. The bottom line was that England began this period only with Gascony and ended it the same way. Thus, as the Hundred Years War approached, Gascony was as vital as it had ever been, possibly more, in terms of England's hope to regain territory in France. The difference was that it had become vastly more important -- and more vulnerable -- economically because of the spectacular growth of the wine trade.

CHAPTER V

THE WAR: THE ROLES PLAYED BY -- AND THE EFFECTS UPON -- GASCONY AND THE WINE TRADE (1327-1453)

This chapter is about the Hundred Years War -- viewed from the perspective of Gascony and its wine trade with England. Most of the catalysts for this enormous conflict are now well understood and require little further argument; others, however, seem to have been somewhat overlooked and remain worthy of further investigation. One of these, surely, is the wine trade between England and Gascony which, I believe, has been undervalued in most assessments of what drove the English monarchy's dogged effort to hold on to its last Aquitanian province through more than a century of armed struggle with France.

The preceding chapters were intended to provide a broad picture of the political, economic, and social circumstances of England and France from the turn of the millennium through the early fourteenth century. Moreover, they were meant to highlight the special roles played by the duchy of Gascony and its wine trade in the increasingly contentious relations between England and France. I have tried to make clear how feudalism both tied England and France together and, at the same time, set them on a collision course. As the war loomed in the 1320s, the status of Gascony was at the heart of this political issue because it was the last remnant of the vast Aquitanian province that the English monarchy once held in France. And, in economic terms, retaining Gascony had become crucial to England not only because the duchy was its primary source of that indispensable beverage,

wine; but because -- with the transformation of Gascony into a largely one-product economy, it had become one of London's two most important overseas markets for English goods and the ships that carried them.

No attempt will be made here to tell the entire story of the war, though some of the major events -- well known to most students of this period -- will be recounted to provide a chronological framework on which to exhibit the less familiar information available about Gascony and the wine trade. I shall instead try to demonstrate not only how this duchy and its economy were affected by the war but how they, in turn, prompted and perpetuated the struggle. This reciprocal relationship between the war and the wine trade is one important key to understanding why the war went on so long and why, for England more than France, the conflict began and ended in Gascony.

* * * * *

When Edward II (1307-1327) was deposed by his wife, Isabella, and her allies, their minor son, Edward III (1327-1377), was elevated to the Plantagenet throne. Edward II was overthrown and subsequently murdered less because he was a tyrant than because he was simply incompetent to govern. As was demonstrated in the preceding chapters, political instability arose in the English monarchy more often than in France and usually in response to some issue or issues that divided the king from the great barons of the nobility. This was the case in the first decades of the fourteenth century and most experts agree it would not have occurred if Edward II had not been such a weak monarch and thus given the nobility an opportunity to exert its usually latent power at his expense. Edward II was a king who neither enjoyed nor excelled at the business of governing and therefore failed to gain the confidence of most of his subjects.

Fortunately for England, those leadership traits which were so lacking in Edward II proved to be abundant in his son. This was not immediately apparent because Edward III did not rule in his own right until 1330 when he ended the regency by permanently

imprisoning his mother and hanging her consort, Roger Mortimer. With these decisive acts, he quickly demonstrated not only his aptitude for command but also an equally important gift for understanding the limits of a king's authority within England's unique political system. As Jonathan Sumption has suggested:

> Edward III and that other great paradigm of medieval kingship, Henry V, were men with limited power to command who succeeded because they were their own men, and because they learned the limits of their power and knew that beyond those limits government was a matter of friendships and patronage, dependent on the reputation of the king and his skills in persuasion and bluff.[1]

These personal attributes of Edward III were crucial to English realm's success in rebuilding its strength in this period. As the medieval chronicler, Sir Jean Froissart, has pointed out, the anarchy that prevailed in England under the rule of Edward II could not have been so readily replaced by the power and confidence exhibited by Edward III. Laden with political gifts, this new leader was quick to perceive that it was in his and England's best interest for him to find a way to work with the nobility. His inclination to promote a bond rather than a conflict between the barons and the crown permitted England's strength to coalesce rather than continue to dissipate and he was the first king to pursue this policy in over a century and a half.[2]

This development notwithstanding, it is important to recall that England was in a very weak position both at home and abroad when Edward III took charge in 1330. Just three years previously, Isabella had made a hasty and disadvantageous peace with her brother King Charles IV of France (1322-1328). This accord had settled none of the old issues that caused contention between the two kingdoms since 1154 and, in particular, meant that Edward began his reign with less feudal control over what remained of Aquitaine than his father.[3]

As has been indicated above, France too was going through a wrenching, though more natural succession crisis in this period. On February 1, 1328, King Charles IV -- who was only 33 at the time -- fell ill at the royal manor east of Paris known as Vincennes

and died.[4] This event was made more serious by the fact that Charles had left no male heir. This was an abrupt change for France because for the past 300 years the Capetian family had always provided at least one son capable of taking the throne. The responsibility for finding a replacement was daunting because many dynastic issues were involved and several candidates for the throne were in contention. One of the claimants was Edward III who, through his mother Isabella, was a nephew of Charles IV.[5]

After considerable debate among the French nobility, however, a prominent and well-respected statesman, Philip of Valois, whom Charles had previously chosen to act as regent when he became incapacitated, was selected to be the new king. Philip was no stranger to the court as he was a first cousin to the king and had proved to be a loyal vassal in his position as the Count of Anjou and Maine. Philip was not well known outside the court, however, and -- in view of the several other choices that could have been made -- it is remarkable that his ascension as King Philip VI (1328-1350) aroused no great protest within France.[6] Certainly this, the most troubled French succession in three centuries, can be regarded as calm in comparison with the transition that had just occurred across the English Channel.

Elsewhere, including Gascony, the news of Philip's ascension stirred great interest and apprehension. Since no one in Bordeaux or London knew what the new French monarch intended with respect to foreign policy, orders were issued by Edward III to prepare Gascony for any eventuality. English officials in that duchy were told to look for shifts in public opinion toward the new French king at the expense of Edward. Anglo-Gascon forces were also put on alert in case Philip had plans to further consolidate his domain.[7]

* * * * *

While these political events were unfolding, the exporters and vintners of Bordeaux were focused on the recovery of their trade. Since its high point with the spectacularly

successful vintage of 1308 when Gascony shipped 104,895 tuns of wine, the Bordeaux producers had experienced a downturn in the volume of wine sold. This decline was at least partially due to the growing friction between France and England. When Charles IV took over all but a coastal strip of Gascony in 1324, the French occupation greatly disrupted Bordeaux's exports, nearly halving the average annual volume during the first two decades. When Isabella and Charles IV made peace in 1327, the Gascons hoped for an opportunity to close out the decade with better numbers and enjoyed a success in 1328 with well over 93,000 tuns exported.[8] This achievement may have been, in part, a response to the ascension of Edward III in 1327 when he called for the resumption of vigorous commercial intercourse between Bordeaux and Britain and encouraged this goal by renewing the privileges of the Gascon merchant vintners. These efforts are confirmed in the Patent Rolls of Edward III as he stressed his desires for all merchants in the realm to respect and obey the Gascon Charter of 1302 designed by his grandfather. The king commands:

> Exemplification under the seal now in use of a charter dated 18 March, 8 Edward III inspecting and confirming a charter, dated 13 August, 30 Edward I [30th year of his reign] granting license for the merchant vintners of the duchy of Aquitaine to trade freely within the realm under safe conduct and protection of the king, upon terms specified in the charter.[9]

As for the wholesale price of wine leaving Bordeaux, it showed remarkable strength and stability throughout the first decades of the fourteenth century. Despite bad harvests, poor weather, famine, disease in the 1310s and the renewal of Anglo-French hostilities in the 1320s, the long-term average price of a tun of claret at the docks in Gascony held steady at about £3.[10]

As was previously discussed, the English monarchy was collecting a high percentage of its income from these shipments strongly suggesting that income from the wine trade was driving England's position in Gascony. Moreover, it seems more than coincidental that in 1329, a banner year for the Bordeaux vintners, Edward III was conducting his foreign policy toward France in a manner calculated not to disturb this

profitable relationship. In the first two years of his reign, young Edward had faced the threat of losing his last remnant of the Aquitanian provinces; had been pointedly reminded of his feudal obligation to pay homage to the French throne; had endured repeated insults, threats, and endless needling from Charles IV and had had his hopes for inheriting the French throne dashed by the accession of Philip VI. With that kind of behavior at Paris, one might reasonably assume that Edward III would have reacted with hostility in some form. Instead, in 1329, Edward -- in his capacity as Duke of Guienne -- wrote to Philip to assure him of his friendly intentions and of his plans to pay homage to the new king. In an exceptionally acquiescent letter written in April of that year, Edward seemed to do all he could to appease French demands. In it, he wrote:

> My most serene prince and lord, to whom I wish every success and every happiness, I desire to inform your magnificence that I have long since had the desire to pay you a visit in France, in order to fulfill my duties as was fitting; but, as a result of the hindrances and difficulties which beset me in my kingdom, as you must be aware, I have not been able up to now to accomplish the project which I had formed. As soon as I am free, and God willing, I shall come in person to pay you the homage which I owe you.[11]

While this acknowledgment of Edward's subordinate relationship to Philip was seen in Paris as a great diplomatic victory, it is important to recognize that Edward was still operating under the regency of Queen Isabella in 1329 and that, in any case, this show of submission to a more powerful France was a matter more of necessity than choice. Westminister desperately needed to hold onto Gascony for its political value as the basis for reviving any claims to its former territories in France; for its military value as a great port with deep river access to France's west coast; for its economic role as a major trading partner and as a primary source of direct income to the crown. In the wake of the disastrous reign of Edward II, the Island Kingdom was so weak that if the only way its sovereign could retain all these assets was in his status as duke rather than a king then he would swallow his pride and pledge fealty to Philip. Accordingly, in June 1329, young Edward went to Amiens cathedral and performed his duty as a vassal of the French king

chiefly, it seems certain, so that he could buy time for himself and his country to gain strength.[12]

* * * * *

The dispute over feudal status of the duchy of Gascony was among the key issues at the heart of the conflict between England and France in the late 1320s and early 1330s. In fact, at this point there were even important differences over the definition of exactly what was owed by a subordinate in a vassal-to-lord relationship. Given France's demonstrated ability to seize Gascony militarily as it had as recently as 1324, England was not in a position to argue for undisputed sovereignty over the duchy; still, it sought to limit its feudal obligation to what was known as 'simple' homage, i.e. periodic ceremonies involving nothing more than gestures of respect to the suzerain such as Edward III had performed when he came to Amiens in 1329.

The French, on the other hand, expected a great deal more and chose to recognize Edward's Amiens display as a rendering of 'liege' homage, a more substantial rite in which a vassal obligates himself to defend his lord before any other man and against all other forces. And from a legal context one could see not only how the French got that impression but also how legally right they may have been. In another letter written by Edward III shortly after his visit to Amiens, the king quite clearly expressed his intentions of the type of homage he chose to pay to King Philip VI of France. As shared by Froissart, the Plantagenet king wrote:

> We make known, that when we paid our homage to our excellent and well-beloved lord and cousin, Philip, King of France, at Amiens, it was required by him of us, that we should acknowledge such homage to be liege, and that we, in paying him such homage, should promise expressly to be faithful and true to him . . . we entered into his homage in the same manner as our predecessors, the dukes of Guienne, had in former days entered into homage to the kings of France who for that time were, and being since, better informed as to the truth, acknowledge by these presents, that the homage, which we paid to the king of France . . . was, is, and ought to be considered as liege homage, and that we owe him loyalty and truth, as duke of Aquitaine, peer of France, earl of Poitou and Montreuil; . . .[13]

The language in the letter above makes utterly clear Edward III's intentions of the type of homage he was expected to pay. From those words, how could the French think otherwise? But, to imagine that the King of England would act as the defender of the King of France -- his most likely opponent -- was presumptuous of the French in the extreme. Nevertheless, the French court continued to press the issue of liege homage throughout the 1330s and seriously threatened to reconfiscate Gascony if Edward would not comply. This threat was deemed by Edward III to be sufficiently real to persuade him to conclude a new agreement in Paris in 1331 which excused him from a fresh rendering of homage to France but only on the understanding that the ceremony at Amiens had obligated Edward to liege homage.[14] While Edward was by then ruling in his own right, it appears that he again had agreed to make a diplomatic concession to the French court in order to buy time to strengthen his hand and to pursue other objectives such as his ongoing war with Scotland. An example of Edward III "buying time" can be found in the king's Patent Rolls. Among many other efforts, the king had to keep sending diplomats and other ambassadors to France to appease their demands and offer distractions. Edward III made an official order of this in November of 1330. The order demands:

> Appointment of Master John de Hildesle, canon of Chichester, and Master John de Fordich, professor of civic law, king's clerks, as proctors for the king in matters touching the duchy (of Aquitaine), the county of Pointhieu and Montreuil and other territories in France, and especially for all that concerns the homage to be done for the duchy, to appear before Philip, King of France, a fortnight after St. Andrew's Day and afterwards as required.[15]

However, there can be little doubt that the presence of substantial French forces along the borders of Gascony also compelled him to accept the French interpretation of his feudal obligations.

The French and English monarchies spent much of the 1330s dealing with one another in this threatening and disingenuous manner. The two kings surely realized that the peace concluded back in 1327 had done little to resolve the 'issue over Aquitaine' and that

all the subsequent peace conferences had failed to reduce the tension over the nature of the homage England owed to France. The only thing on which both agreed was that this issue had become sufficiently serious to provoke further hostilities, possibly even set off a prolonged conflict, and that neither monarch wanted this to occur. As Edouard Perroy has written:

> In 1331, it was simply a question of completing and consolidating, by detailed agreements, the understanding in principle which had emerged from their meetings. Three or four years later, though nothing definite had changed the data of the problem, hope of achieving the 'final peace' had been abandoned. All that the two kings asked was that the war should not become general. Neither Philip, too much preoccupied by his dreams of the crusade, nor Edward, absorbed in Scotland, wanted a general war. But they had got to the point of fearing it, and that was enough to make it possible.[16]

Again, it is not our contention that the issue over Aquitaine was the sole cause of the Hundred Years War. Although negotiations on this point continued throughout much of the 1330s, there were other conflicts between the two sides that arose during this period including differences over the plans for the next crusade, disputes over alliances with other kingdoms, French threats to English trade and military clashes on each other's borders. But at the center lay the question of the status of Gascony which, as Perroy argues, was "the eternal apple of discord between the two dynasties." When it was apparent to both sides that this issue could not be resolved through further negotiation a resort to violence was accepted as the only remaining option. The fact that the war lasted as long as it did and that it both began and ended in Gascony are good evidence that the Aquitanian issue was at the heart of the dispute.[17]

Philip VI was the first to act and precipitated the war in May 1337 by declaring that Edward's possession of the duchy of Gascony was null and void. This incidentally, was the third time the French had done so in the past forty years.[18] The English quickly followed suit and, as both sides prepared for the resumption of hostilities, they found it necessary to formally justify the breach of the peace with a legal pretext. Philip did so by declaring that Edward III was a disloyal vassal who refused to fulfill the obligations of his

fief. Edward countered by declaring that France's intervention on behalf of Scotland in the now chronic Anglo-Scottish conflict was a hostile act.[19] While it would be years before the main armies of England and France would clash, hostilities broke out immediately in some regions, most seriously in Aquitaine where French forces crossed the Gascon frontier and captured several English fortifications. In addition, the war also began at sea along the English Channel as a Norman fleet skirmished with English shipping and plundered communities along the English coast.[20]

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As one would expect, the Anglo-Gascon wine trade was adversely affected once clashes of this sort, both on land and at sea, started interfering with the production and transport of Gascony's chief export. The first half of the 1330s had shown great promise for vintners and exporters alike. The economic future had looked favorable again for both the growers and the merchants because the output of the vineyards was good and the prices being charged for wine in England allowed for a solid margin of profit for all concerned. By the second half of the decade, however, a sharp decline in the supply of new wines available for export was clearly underway. The tax records for the 1336 vintage show that production only about a quarter what it had been in the previous year and that this was due in large measure to the loss of the Haut-Pays vineyards, located well east of Bordeaux, to incursions by the French. This normally very productive hinterland region of Gascony normally accounted for only about 10% of the total volume exported from the duchy each year because, as was discussed earlier, the Bordelais had taken measures to displace it in favor of wines grown closer to the capital. Nevertheless, it was an important reserve when capital area crops were sparse and suddenly it was in enemy hands. With this loss, the burden of production for the English and other foreign markets fell increasingly on vintners located in the vicinity of Bordeaux.[21]

By the time the war began in earnest in 1337, the French forces encroached further on English territory, penetrating the Garonne valley and seizing the fortifications at St. Macaire and La Réole. Over the next three years the fighting in Gascony was fairly constant as the French moved into the Dordogne valley, even taking over Libourne and St. Emilion just across the river from Bordeaux. Particularly hard hit was the rich vine-growing region of the *Entre-Deux-Mers* , the peninsula east of the capital formed by the confluence of the Garonne and Dordogne rivers. The frequent clashes in these key areas threatened both the production and river transport of wine and caused what proved to be a substantial, though temporary, decline in the volume of Bordeaux exports and sharp fluctuations in the price of wine on the English market.[22]

The repercussions of the first years of the war on the wine trade were not confined to Gascony itself. The maritime traffic between Bordeaux and the English ports, always subject to the depredations of pirates, was further endangered by the marauding operations of a Franco-Scottish fleet sailing in the Channel. It threatened to paralyze the Anglo-Gascon wine shipments and the first victims of these attacks were the independent shippers who sailed alone or in small groups. Their seizure by the French and Scottish raiders resulted in an acute shortage of wine and therefore sharp rises in price. The wine merchants responded by seeking protection from Edward III for the transport of the 1337 vintage.[23] Their request was granted by the monarchy on the condition that the ships sail together in a common fleet to facilitate their protection. This issue was addressed in the Patent Rolls where there are hundreds of orders like the following designed to protect the precious trade between England and Gascony. This order states:

> Inasmuch as the king has learned for certain that much damage is done to his subjects since the last truce with France, and that pirates and other enemies are at sea on the watch for ships crossing from England, for the safety of the shipping of the realm he has appointed Robert de Ledred and William de Walkelate, kings' serjeant at arms, to arrest all ships in the water of Thames and all ports and places thence towards the west fitted out to cross to Gascony for wine in the present season of vintage, and those ships which shall be found between the outer part of the Isle of Wight towards the west and the city of London, . . . to go thence when

> the king shall provide safe-conduct for them, and the lords and masters of the same ships . . . to be there with their ships at the appointed day.[24]

Under normal circumstances, while the wine fleet arrived in Bordeaux each fall nearly as a group, they departed singly for England as soon as their cargo was loaded. The convoy system necessitated by the war meant that the new wines arrived in England somewhat later than usual but it did ensure the preservation of the ships and their precious contents.[25]

The implementation of the convoys changed not only when Gascony's wines arrived in England but also their price. As Margery James has reported:

> The average price at which the king's wine was brought increased from £3 in 1335-36 to £5 a tun in 1336-37, although prices dropped from time to time as the spasmodic arrival of a convoy relieved the scarcity of wine in England; . . . It is clear, therefore, that the price of wine had not yet permanently increased as a result of the war, but that it was simply reacting to periods of abnormal scarcity.[26]

As has previously been mentioned, the wine trade between Gascony and England had originated as a simple wine-for-cash exchange. But, as the trade developed over the thirteenth century, the Gascon economy had become increasingly concentrated on wine production at the expense of other types of agricultural activity. With the continuation of the wine trade into the fourteenth century, the Aquitaine region became ever more dependent on imported commodities such as grain, salted fish, animal hides, and even some manufactured goods, particularly textiles. England became the prime supplier of these necessities and thus, while the northward flow of traffic from Bordeaux consisted almost entirely of wine, the ships sailing down from England carried a broad variety of agricultural materials and finished products.[27] The exchange became so prevalent, even the Treaty Rolls began issuing grants to meet demand. As one entry shows: "License, . . for Stephen de la Garde of Bayonne and Thomas Norton of Bristol to export 500 quarters of wheat, beans, and peas, bought in Somerset and Gloucestershire, from any ports, to Bayonne and Bordeaux."[28]

This burgeoning reciprocal trade was good for both sides and was a frustration to pirates who previously had targeted the cash being sent from England to pay for the wine shipments from Bordeaux. But it also increased the economic dependency of Gascony on England and vice versa. It should be noted too that as the relationship progressed, the merchants which once ran the exchange themselves increasingly turned over the work to creditors, agents, and other associated middlemen whose demands for a share of the profits also increased the cost of wine in England and other goods in Gascony. With the advent of the war both the mutual dependency and the cost of goods and services escalated further.[29]

* * * * *

The 1340s began with relative peace. The Thiérache campaign, which Edward III had begun in 1339 by invading France from the north with his new Flemish allies had come to a grinding halt in the late summer of 1340. In hindsight, it was an audacious but ultimately futile exercise because the English king ran out of funds to support it. It had demonstrated, however, that the English were prepared to undertake ambitious amphibious operations in support of their war aims and that the supposedly stronger French were ill-prepared to resist them. The positive outcome of this closing chapter of the war's opening phase was an agreement for a lengthy truce to allow the Church to intercede and attempt to arbitrate some of the issues between the two sides.[30]

Fortunately for those involved in the Anglo-Gascon wine trade, the truce between the warring parties gave the vintners and merchants at least five years to revive their battered industry. While Margery James has reported that the records of the wine trade are incomplete for the first half of the 1340s, she also observed that the retail price of wine in England returned during this period to pre-war levels. That kind of evidence suggests that production must have been up and transport must have become less risky. James also noted that, while Bordeaux's total exports were reduced in comparison to some of the better harvests before the war, wine seemed quite plentiful in England. She took this to

mean that England must have begun purchasing a greater portion of the total output of the Gascon vineyards.[31]

WINE EXPORTS FROM GASCON PORTS DURING THE 14TH CENTURY[32]

Year Michaelmas to Michaelmas	Wines of Bordeaux Burgesses, nobles, ecclesiastics	non-burgesses[1]	non-privileged wines of the *Haut Pays* and Bordelais	privileged wines of the *Haut Pays*	Total[2] (tuns)
1305-6	13,958		17,956	57,934	97,848
1306-7	13,886		16,034	53,591	93,452
1308-9	12,260		30,947	38,812	102,724
1310-11					51,351
1323-24			6,234	32,305	
1328-29					69,175
1329-30					93,556
1335-36	7,958		14,136	46,901	74,053
1336-37	5,447		2,979	4,645	16,557
1348-49	867		4,586	470	5,923
1349-50					13,427
1350-51	7,282				
1352-53	10,927		8,702	0	19,629
1353-54	8,627		7,659	42	16,328
1355-56	6,698		7,713	0	14,411
1356-57	8,900		11,159	141	20,200
1357-58	10,506		15,559	1,773	27,838
1363-64					18,280
1364-5					43,869
1365-66					36,207
1366-67					37,103
1368-69					28,264
1369-70					8,945
1372-73	5,535	20	8,720	98	14,373
1373-74		605	7,099	76	
1374-75	3,080	323	4,527	0	7,930
1375-76	2,437	1,769	3,522	625	8,656
1376-77	9,636	3,138	10,761	110	23,920
1377-78	6,679	668	5,109	0	12,456
1378-79	7,597	525	5,500	0	13,622
1379-80	2,973	356	2,805	126	6,643
1380-81	4,584	614	3,474	107	9,041
1387-88		397	6,988	120	
1388-89		648	9,205	50	
1389-90		605	5,082	130	

Notes: [1]Non-burgess wines of Bordeaux were those levied at the rate of 30*s*. (Bordeaux money) a tun.

[2]The total amount includes wines laded at Libourne, Bourg, Blaye and other ports of the Gironde below Bordeaux. The accounts of the *Grande Coutume* are found in the Public Record Office, London, series E101.

Source: derived from James, M. K., *Studies in the Medieval Wine Trade*, edited by E. M. Veale, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971: 32-33.

When the Church-sponsored negotiations broke down between the English and French embassies in 1345, Philip VI responded by sending a massive army, led by his heir to the throne -- the Duke of Normandy -- into the Gascon plain in the hopes of forcing the English into the sea and finishing with the issue of Aquitaine. The English countered quickly, however, and placed an Anglo-Gascon army on the offensive under the leadership of the Earl of Derby. He pushed forward boldly, first into the productive wine regions of Saintonge, Périgord, and Agenais, and then advanced further into with Poitou with seeming impunity.[33] While these gains once again expanded Gascony's elastic borders, any hopes of soon returning these lands to viticulture were dashed by the devastation caused by fighting.

The French army finally got underway in May 1346 and proceeded to the confluence of the Lot and Garonne rivers where it attempted a siege of the well-garrisoned English stronghold at Aiguillon. Since the French believed this fortress was the key to the Gascon plain, Normandy and his forces settled in for weeks under those walls and were only moved when they heard of a major battle about to get underway in the north of France.[34]

This battle occurred on a plateau near Ponthieu called Crécy. Edward III had been raiding the northern French countryside when he was suddenly confronted by a quickly mustered 'royal army'. Edward had decided to flee the scene because his forces were small in number and made up mostly of infantry. The French closed in, however, and leaving Edward with no choice but to make a stand. He realized that he could not fight a conventional medieval battle because he lacked the experienced cavalry which the French had in such abundance. Therefore Edward broke with feudal custom and placed his archers and infantry behind hedges and fence lines in a topographically superior position which gave the English army a full view of the enemy's movements. The French knights confidently moved into the field of battle, apparently certain they would prevail but the

outcome was not what either side expected.[35] Sir Jean Froissart reported the scene from an eyewitness at the battle. He described the mêlée in the following manner:

> The English archers then advanced one step forward, and shot their arrows with such force and quickness, that it seemed as if it snowed. When the Genoese felt these arrows, which pierced their arms, heads, and through their armor, some of them cut the strings of their cross-bows, others flung them on the ground, and all turned about and retreated quite discomfitted. The French had a large body of men at arms on horseback, richly dressed, to support the Genoese. . . . The English continued shooting as vigorously and quickly as before; some of their arrows fell among the horsemen, who were sumptuously equipped, and, killing and wounding many, made them caper and fall among the Genoese, so that they were in such confusion they could never rally again.[36]

The repercussions of the French defeat at Crécy were extraordinary. Many of France's fighting nobles and the heavy cavalry that had made it the most feared army in Europe had been annihilated in a single battle. This victory gave Edward III and his forces the chance to roam freely across the northern French countryside essentially unopposed. Edward chose, however, to proceed to the port of Calais where he began a prolonged siege. By August of 1347 the siege worked and England gained a beachhead on the French coast from which to launch future operations. These triumphs in both siege and open field warfare prompted Edward to call for a cessation of hostilities, to return home for the winter and to use these achievements to politically pressure France to conclude a final peace on England's terms.[37]

* * * * *

The truce was welcomed by all those on both sides who sought a negotiated settlement and the cease fire was extended in 1348 and 1349. The prospects for a lasting peace were suddenly overshadowed in 1348, however, by the panic that spread across Europe by the outbreak of the Black Death. This epidemic was an horrific and massive explosion of several strains of the plague virus on a scale never seen before or since. It has been estimated to have killed between one-third and one-half of the entire population of Europe.[38] As people died by the thousands in every village and shire across England and

the Continent, the war simply could not be resumed and economic activity of all sorts, including the wine industry, came to a halt.

In Bordeaux, for instance, a region already devastated and depopulated by the war, the Black Death "more than any other single factor caused an economic crisis of exceptional severity." Gascon wine production fell to abnormally low levels and the duchy managed to export only about 6,000 tuns from the 1348 vintage. When the plague abated the next year the vintners were able to double this figure but these were still pitifully small outputs compared to those seen earlier in this century. It was a dramatic illustration of the fact that in this labor-intensive industry, production depended not only on a good harvest but on the availability of manpower to harvest the crop and turn it into wine. Moreover, as the production statistics for this period continued to reflect, the plague was not over in a year but returned to various communities in different strains for many decades, causing great human suffering and consequent interruptions in economic activity.[39]

The long-term repercussions of the plague combined with those of the war cannot be underestimated. It is not too much to say that the Anglo-Gascon wine trade was never the same after 1348. P.T.H. Unwin who closely researched Margery James' work has commented on these effects. He has written that,

> . . . although the various stages of the war between England and France did influence the levels of wine exports from Bordeaux it was the coincidence of renewed warfare in the mid-fourteenth century with the onset of the plague in 1348 that led to the permanent reduction in such exports from their peak at the beginning of the century. . . suggesting that the reduction of population by perhaps a third as a direct result of plague may have been at least as significant as warfare in determining the fortunes of viticulture in the region.[40]

Inherent in this comment is the likelihood that wine exports fell not only because there were fewer vintners available to produce the wine but also fewer customers to drink it. The Black Death struck England and Europe with nearly equal severity and the demand for Gascon wine in England had to have declined not only because the population dropped dramatically but because, with the general staggering of economic activity, there had to have been less ready money in consumer's pockets to pay for it.

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The 1350s began, much like the previous decade, in peace or at least what passed for it in this turbulent era. The cessation of hostilities that had lasted through the late 1340s continued for several more years because much of Europe was burying its dead and recovering in other ways from the effects of the plague. Moreover, a change of leaders took place in France which persuaded the Valois monarchy to extend the truce repeatedly until 1354. In August 1350, Philip VI died leaving his son John to succeed him. While King John "the Good" (1350-1364) adjusted to his new responsibilities, the negotiators for both sides sought to take advantage of the cease fire to design a more permanent peace agreement. Edward III's military triumphs in 1347 had shifted the political balance in favor of England and Edward hoped that the settlement would include France's concession of undisputed English sovereignty over Aquitaine and possibly several other formerly English territories in Anjou. Initially, the arbitration went extremely well for Edward and it appeared that he would get everything he asked for and more. Then the French seemed to realize all they were conceding and backed out of the deal. This stiffening of resistance on the part of the French court led to a breakdown of the talks and hostilities were resumed in 1354.[41]

Apparently Edward III was determined to demonstrate his strength to the new French king and was sufficiently confident in his forces' ability to carry out successful military campaigns in France that he sent his son, Edward of Woodstock -- the Prince of Wales -- to act as his lieutenant in Gascony. Also known as the Black Prince, the king's son was to become the scourge of France and, after arriving in Aquitaine in July 1355, promptly began to wreak havoc throughout southern France. Edward III's plan was to have the prince advance from there into northern France on short notice where he could participate with his father and another force led by Henry, Duke of Lancaster, in a three-pronged attack intended to crush King John II's main forces.[42]

In the early spring of 1356, however, the Black Prince was still raiding and pillaging Languedoc. When his father's orders came, he proceeded north to rendezvous with Lancaster in the Loire valley. The prince's army moved slowly, though, because it was laden with booty seized during its campaign in southern France. A newly gathered and strong French army, led by King John, caught up with young Edward in mid-September west of Poitiers. Since the Black Prince was unprepared to take on such a powerful force, he turned again to the tactics used by his father at Crécy and ordered his men into defensive positions from which they could ambush the French cavalry.[43] By chivalric standards, it was an underhanded strategy but one well suited to the military realities with which the Black Prince was confronted and, once again, the French forces were decimated by England's long-bowmen. Young Edward's Anglo-Gascon army also managed to take a large number of prisoners when many of the French knights fled in disorder after the slaughter of their horses. Key among them was one knight who refused to flee: the King of France, John II.[44]

Edward III thought he had achieved a decisive political advantage with his victories at Crécy and Calais but his delight was unparalleled when he learned of his son's triumph at Poitiers and his capture of the French king. It appeared that the French would have to sue for peace and that the English had earned the right to be regarded as the preeminent military power in Europe. The fourteenth century poet Petrarch wrote about this extraordinary transformation in the military reputation of England in the following passage:

> In my youth, the English were regarded as the most timid of all the uncouth races; but today they are the supreme warriors; they have destroyed the reputation of the French in a succession of startling victories, and men who were once lower even than the wretched Scots have crushed the realm of France with fire and steel.[45]

During the remainder of the 1350s Edward III took advantage of his military supremacy to try to force a favorable outcome to the peace negotiations. In 1358 and 1359, with John II his "guest" in England, Edward pursued talks in both London and Paris but the French refused to come to a settlement. The English monarchy soon tired of the French

court's dilatory tactics and decided the French needed another punishing military expedition to force a resolution of the issues between them. Led by the Black Prince, a full retinue of English cavalry and men-at-arms was landed in France with orders to make a show of force rather than to defeat an army or seize territory. Only when this expedition made it to the gates of Paris, however, and threatened to conduct a coronation ceremony for Edward at Rheims cathedral were the French persuaded to come to terms. Finally, in May 1360, the Black Prince and the Dauphin met in a small village in Béauce, called Brétigny, where a preliminary agreement was signed as the basis for a more detailed final settlement.[46]

* * * * *

Meanwhile, the Anglo-Gascon wine trade showed renewed vigor in the 1350s, in part because the Black Prince's successes had reduced the number of Anglo-French skirmishes on Aquitanian soil. James' analysis of Bordeaux exports during this period show better output but the figures are still very low in comparison with those from earlier in the fourteenth century. From these data it appears that Unwin's speculation about the combined negative impact of the plague and the war is valid. Records in England for the same period show that the English were importing a gradually increasing share of the smaller total exports from Bordeaux. In addition, James' figures show a significant overall rise in both the wholesale and retail prices of wine. In the early 1340s, the average price per tun had been selling from between £3 and £5. Following the resumption of hostilities in 1347 and the onset of the plague in 1348, prices shot up dramatically to between £6 and £8. Then, during the 1350s, these prices moderated somewhat, descending to an average of about £5 to £6.[47]

* * * * *

Much to the benefit of both kingdoms, the preliminary Treaty of Brétigny that had been signed by Edward, the Black Prince, and Charles, the Valois Dauphin, in May 1360

was ratified five months later. It was the closest the two sides had yet come to a final peace accord in that it addressed many of the centuries-old issues that had proved to be so contentious. Nevertheless, it would be inaccurate to characterize this treaty as more than a generalized agreement because it left many of the most vexing problems unresolved. Moreover, whatever the text of the document said, it was most unlikely to be regarded by the Valois monarchy as a permanent settlement because of the circumstances in which France had been forced to the bargaining table. It was certain, in fact, that as soon as an opportunity presented itself, the French monarchy would seek to redress the military balance in its favor and to reopen the bargaining for a settlement on terms more favorable to Paris. Still, the importance of the Brétigny accord should not be underestimated because, if nothing else, it managed to curb substantial military activity for nearly ten years.[48]

As for the 'issue over Aquitaine', with this treaty Edward III had finally accomplished what he and his predecessors had been insisting upon since 1259: undisputed sovereignty over the duchy of Gascony. In return, Edward had to renounce his claim to the French throne but by doing so he also reacquired nearly all of western France, including Aquitaine, Poitou, Ponthieu, Guines and, in the north, he retained the key port of Calais.[49] In the end, the signing of the treaty mattered more to England than to Gascony because for centuries the Gascons had considered themselves to be subjects of the English rather than the French monarchy and thus the Treaty of Brétigny was nothing more to them than a confirmation of the status quo.

This is not to say, however, that the Gascons were not pleased with the developments of 1360 because the peace agreement finally gave them time to recover from the ravages of the fighting that had plagued their territory since the start of the conflict. The Bordelais, in particular, were glad to seize the opportunity to restore their vineyards and their wine trade with England and other nations. The official export records of the increased volumes of wine leaving Bordeaux in the 1360s demonstrate that Gascony made the most of the peace. Averaging out the numbers provided by James shows that Bordeaux

exports for the 1360s rose to about 30,000 tuns annually; while there had already been some improvement in average output during the 1350s, this was the most significant rise in production figures since the onset of the plague in 1348. One might assume that with this increase in supply that the price of wine leaving the docks in Bordeaux would go down but this did not occur. As stated earlier, the average wholesale price for a tun of wine in the late 1350s was between £5 and £6 and, perhaps to make up for earlier losses, the Bordeaux vintners were determined to hold to this level. Consequently, retail prices in England also stayed the same or increased.[50]

The issue of fair pricing became the dominant question of the Anglo-Gascon trade during the 1360s. With the war at a standstill and the production of wine up throughout Aquitaine, many importers and retailers in England brought their demands for a reduction in prices to the king and Parliament. The king addressed some of these issues firsthand and recruited several favored nobles to investigate the wine trade. Due to the official appointment of someone for the task, the king's selection made it into the Patent Rolls. In one entry, Edward III called for a:

> Commission to Geoffrey de Staunton, et al., to make inquisition in the county of Nottingham touching unlawful confederacies in cities, boroughs, market towns and elsewhere to meet fishermen and merchants, alien as well as denizen, . . . and taverners who sell wine at excessive prices, contrary to the king's proclamations against forestalling the market and against selling of wine by taverners except at reasonable prices, having regard to the cost of the same in the port of landing and of the carriage thence to the place of sale, lately made for the common good in all counties of the realm.[51]

When the nobles who had a stake in the wine trade saw that there was little change in either wholesale or retail wine costs, they pursued legislative initiatives intended to discourage monopoly practices or forestalling of price reductions by the Bordelais. In 1363, for instance, the House of Commons demanded that wine importers submit paperwork showing their actual expenditures in the Gascon wine market. In the years following, further legislation was enacted to restrict the importers from doing business with certain Gascon wine merchants suspected of profiteering but when these restrictions resulted in

still higher retail pricing, free trade was reestablished. The Commons even attempted to force the Gascon exporters back into the wine shipping business so that they would absorb the costs of the voyages to England, an expense the English importers had assumed when earlier they had driven the Gascons out of this activity.[52]

To some extent, the Bordeaux vintners and exporters insistence on high prices despite increased production was justified. They had to bear the cost of replanting the vineyards lost through the war and still needed to expand their Bordeaux-area fields to replace the production previously coming from the Haut-Pays district. Moreover, unlike wheat, corn, and other crops, there is at least a four-year time lag in growing wine grapes between replanting and the first commercially useful harvest. Finally, the progress made in reviving the Gascon wine industry had been further interrupted by a return of the plague in 1362 and a severe famine in 1363. In retrospect, even though the Bordelais were free from the consequences of warfare for nearly all of the 1360s, life as a Gascon vintner and shipper must have been very difficult throughout this decade.[53]

* * * * *

These challenges to Gascony's most important economic activity were exacerbated in this period by an important change in the political relationship between Edward III and his Gascon subjects. One of the things that may have prompted Edward to settle for peace in 1360 was that his responsibilities for conducting the war had reduced the attention he could pay to Gascony. In an attempt to reassert his authority over this key outpost of his realm, Edward elevated the status of the duchy to a principality and put his son, the Black Prince, in charge.[54] Over the course of the 1360s, however, the younger Edward showed that he lacked the political skills of his father and perhaps took too literally Edward III's instructions to reassert England's control over the Gascons. According to Perroy:

> (The Black Prince) had brought with him the harsh requirements which made up the strength of the Plantagenets: a meddlesome administration, a great need for money, and a resolve to be obeyed without a murmur by all, whether villagers, vassals, or clergy. . . (The Gascons) were 'anti-French' only in so far as they disliked the

> interference of the king's officials and preferred the mild tutelage of a distant Plantagenet.[55]

It seemed that for this brief period the English monarchy had forgotten what a fiercely independent people the Gascons were and that Westminster's relations with this stiff-necked region prospered only when England ruled with a loose rein. The Black Prince's rule risked the possibility of anarchy in this prized province and caused some prominent Bordelais to question, possibly for the first time, whether they might not be better off by finally submitting to the Valois throne. Apparently, some Gascon nobles considered this issue seriously enough that they specifically made a trip to Paris to speak to the French king about the possibility of switching allegiance. The chronicler Froissart, who was a member of the French court at the time, reported that:

> The King of France listened without complacency to the lords of Gascony, when they requested from him help and assistance as from their sovereign lord, adding, that should he refuse it to them, they would withdraw their allegiance, and apply to some other court; so that, for fear of losing his claim to this sovereignty, he in the end complied with their request. He was, however, sensible that this affair must cause a war, which he was desirous not to begin without some appearance of right: . . .[56]

To what degree the French throne provided aid to the Gascon region is difficult to assess. In fact, much of the evidence shows that none was offered but the important thing to note here was not that the French responded in any manner but that the Gascons considered supplanting their allegiance at all. This was the first credible sign or dent in the armor that surfaced in the Anglo-Gascon alliance.

This inclination to consider abandoning English rule may also have been prompted by the ascension of an attractive new French monarch in 1364. Under the terms of the Treaty of Brétigny signed in 1360, King John II of France was to have remained a prisoner in London until the first installment of a ransom payment was made by the French court. By 1364, however, the money had still not been paid and the French king died in captivity. He was replaced by the Dauphin -- John's son, Charles -- who had been acting as regent in his father's absence and had skillfully brought France through some of the worst times in

its history. Taking the throne at the age of twenty-nine, Charles V (1364-1380) also became known as Charles 'the Wise' and proved to be a very capable politician and diplomat. He had served as a lieutenant after the defeat at Poitiers and, while not a terrific soldier in the mold of the Black Prince, he did possess great energy and showed a gift for delegating authority.[57]

Despite Charles V's evident abilities, there was growing dissension in many parts of the French kingdom because of the realm's military defeats and the disadvantageous settlement that followed. As time went on, some of the king's leading vassals began expressing their grievances not just to the monarch himself but among their peers and it was not long before resentment became widespread among France's nobles.[58] Edward III caught wind of this swelling discord and sought to capitalize on it by reasserting his title as King of France as of June 1369. Charles was startled by the brazenness of Edward's action because forfeiture of England's claim to the French throne was, for France, the key provision of the Brétigny accord. Charles carefully considered his options but in November of that year responded by confiscating all the lands in France that Edward had reacquired in 1360. Once again, all the old issues that had divided the two kingdoms came to the fore and hostilities were immediately resumed.[59]

* * * * *

These events precipitated one of the most violent and lengthy periods of combat in the Hundred Years War. While the conflict up to this point had largely been fought with wide-ranging but brief military campaigns separated by long periods of truce, the 1370s was a decade of virtually constant fighting. Sparked by Edward's resumption of his claim to the French throne, Charles V's military response was massive and successful on virtually every front. France's effort was costly in both time and resources but in just a few years it had managed, once again, to overrun Brittany, Ponthieu, and Becherel and to

reduce Plantagenet Aquitaine to a mere coastal strip between Bordeaux and Bayonne.[60] Froissart recorded this episode and described the fall of Ponthieu in this way:

> There was a grand skirmish, with many valorous deeds of arms . . . The English were so roughly handled, that they were either slain or made prisoners, and the bridge and fort conquered by the French. In short, the whole territory and county of Ponthieu were freed from the English, so that none remained who could any way do mischief.[61]

These French triumphs, probably unexpected by both sides, were the result in part of new tactics adopted by Charles V. Because of the problems the French army had experienced in previous direct confrontations with English forces, France implemented a scorched earth defensive policy and when the French did go on the offensive, they attacked English-held garrisons, fortresses, and towns rather than field armies.[62] Here too, Froissart provided a good example of the lengths made on behalf of the French to reclaim occupied lands.

> We will now return to what was going forwards in a distant part of the country, and relate the siege of Réalville in Quercy by the French. There were upwards of 12,000 combatants, all good men at arms; . . . The French had set their miners to work at Réalville, and by their machines, which cast stones, etc., into it day and night, had harassed the garrison so much they could not sufficiently watch these miners, who succeeded in their operations, and flung down a great part of the walls; by which means the town was taken, and all the English in it were put to death without mercy, which was a pity, for there were among them several good squires.[63]

The French, however, were not the only ones to alter their strategy; though, in England's case, it was not for the better. Since the resumption of hostilities in 1369, the English war effort showed a lack of the central direction that had once allowed it confidently to conduct simultaneous and interdependent landings in France. The most plausible explanation for this failure may be that, while Edward III did not die until 1377, he had lost his beloved wife in the same year the war resumed and was showing signs of senility by the early 1370s.[64]

Whatever the case, Edward certainly had difficulty trying to conduct the war and increasingly delegated his responsibilities to less capable subordinates. The result was the

execution of several uncoordinated military expeditions to France that accomplished little but cost a great deal. For instance, in 1370 a major invasion led by one well-respected English noble turned into nothing more than a futile coastal raid. In 1372, an English fleet attempting to provide Edward's forces in Aquitaine with some relief was sunk by a Castilian fleet off La Rochelle, losing all the gold intended to pay the king's soldiers in Gascony. In 1373, Edward III's third son, John of Gaunt and Duke of Lancaster, succeeded in penetrating France's coastal defenses and led a bold campaign across the French countryside but, like others before it, his effort bore no fruit.[65] The culmination of England's failures was France's successful invasion of Gascony in 1374. When the English fortress at La Réole fell to the French, it opened the way for an assault on the Bordeaux region itself which reduced England's holdings to just the four dioceses of Bordeaux, Dax, Aire, and Bayonne.[66]

Despite these successes, the French realized that their resources were eroding and decided that the time had come to return to the bargaining table. England, stunned by the extent of its losses and equally low on resources was also willing to talk if only to stop the fighting and reevaluate its position. Thus, in 1374, negotiations were resumed though the early talks showed few results. England did not want to discuss any outcomes different from those it had achieved at Brétigny and France was demanding new frontiers based upon their victories at Calais, Brittany, and Gascony. In 1375, despite these wide differences, each side sought to show that it was serious about arbitration by renewing its embassies with high level diplomats who were brought together at Bruges. Although these new ambassadors were soon able to agree to a cease fire, once the discussion turned to Aquitaine any semblance of harmony was quickly dissipated, proving once again that for England the fate of Gascony was non-negotiable. The issue, as always, was sovereignty which Edward III believed he settled for all time in 1360. With equal conviction the French argued that they could not permanently accept any settlement which violated the integrity of what they believed were the natural borders of France.[67] Froissart, who was on the scene

while these negotiations were taking place, commented that, "Notwithstanding all that the prelates could say or argue, they never could be brought to fix upon any place to discuss these treaties on any part of the frontiers; these treaties, therefore, remained in an unfinished state." Both kingdoms remained obdurate on this point and thus the talks broke down and hostilities were renewed in 1377.[68]

The English, who had shown no appetite for taking the offensive in the preceding few years, were even less inclined to do so in 1377. The Plantagenet realm was suddenly faced with an internal crisis it had not faced in half a century. As Perroy described it, "England was in mourning, a ship without a pilot." On June 21, 1377, Edward III died, a monarch who guided the destiny of the Island Kingdom for more than fifty years. It was the longest reign since Henry III and Edward never let the English forget or lose touch with their continental origins and claims to territory in France. The loss was especially devastating because the Black Prince had died prematurely only the year before. The Prince of Wales had returned to England in 1371 with his health broken and his reputation tarnished by his humiliating losses to the French in Gascony. So, in the summer of 1377, the English monarchy skipped a generation and the crown devolved to a boy of ten, Richard of Bordeaux, the Black Prince's only son. The French, who had nearly succeeded in winning back their kingdom with the victories they achieved in the early 1370s, were suddenly presented with a second chance to finish the job while England was staggered by the loss of one of its greatest leaders.[69]

Something must have stiffened English resolve because, when the cease fire ended in 1377, the Plantagenet forces not only held their ground but succeeded in reversing the first French advances. The high expectations of the French king were quickly dashed when English reinforcements arrived in Gascony to strengthen the combined Anglo-Gascon defense force. What was remarkable was the relative ease with which the English were able to reestablish Gascony's borders, force back their opponents, retake some lost garrisons, and launch punitive raids into the French interior. By the time a Castilian raid on

Bayonne was handily repulsed by the Anglo-Gascon forces, it was clear that France's expectations of an early victory could not be realized.[70]

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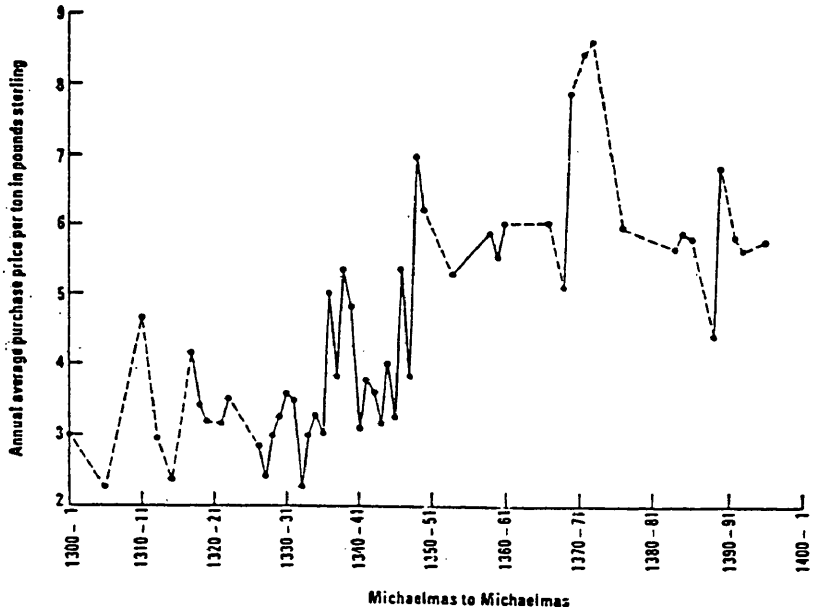
The effects of this violent decade on the wine trade were tremendous. Merchants who had hoped to see a decline in prices from the highs of the previous decade were deeply disappointed in the 1370s when a series of adverse circumstances resulted in a further contraction in the availability of wine and a consequent boost in prices to as much as £8 per tun. The contraction in vineyard output can be seen in the tax records for Bordeaux which show that the annual wine exports for this decade averaged only about 10,000 tuns. Although this reduction in supplies to just one-third of what had been available for export in the preceding decade would have by itself been enough to cause a rise in prices, the situation was made worse by the fact that there were unusually wide variances in the amount of wine produced from year to year. These fluctuations are clearly evident in the data researched by James; for example, while the 1376 vintage provided almost 24,000 tuns for export, in 1379 Gascony's vineyards yielded only 6,500 tuns. The market uncertainties caused by such broad swings in the amount of wine available for export were as responsible as the overall reduction in supply for the sharp rise in both wholesale and retail pricing in the 1370s.[71]

The reduced availability of Gascon wine can be attributed to several factors. First and foremost was the war which returned to the region with a vengeance in the early and late 1370s. These periods of fighting sharply reduced the borders of Gascony to a perimeter in the immediate vicinity of the port of Bordeaux. The wine industry was directly affected in two ways: first, many of the vineyards were destroyed as the fighting raged over large sections of the Gascon countryside; and

PRICES AT WHICH THE KING'S WINES WERE PURCHASED IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY[72]



second, as the English frontier in Gascony was reduced many still productive vineyards fell into the hands of the French. Adding insult to these injuries, the viability of the wine industry's extensive labor force was tested again as the Black Death reemerged across southwestern France in 1373 and a severe famine followed in 1374. Back in England, these shocks to the wine industry were compounded by the fact that Edward III's declining years were marked by an economic depression which reduced the demand for wine imports.[73] One of the reasons England had chosen Aquitaine as its primary vineyard was that it had proved to be a seemingly inexhaustible source of good but cheap wine. By the end of the 1370s, however, its wines were no longer affordable to many Englishmen and, with the average annual production hovering at only the 10,000 tun level, the major import

houses in England must have been wondering whether if this well -- which had produced over 100,000 tuns as recently as 1308 -- was at last running dry.

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The violence and the relentless pace of the fighting in the 1370s seems to have sharply reduced the appetite for battle in the last two decades of the fourteenth century. In any case, the 1380s and 90s proved to be comparatively peaceful and those clashes that did occur were typified by piracy in the English Channel and skirmishes over frontier fortifications. The large-scale military campaigns formerly undertaken by the opposing monarchies were set aside as both focused on the development of new leaders. As was previously noted, King Edward III died leaving his ten year old grandson, Richard II (1377-1399), to take the throne. In France, three years later, King Charles V died unexpectedly and had to be replaced with a son, Charles VI (1380-1422), who also was only ten when he acquired the position. Therefore, the 1380s can be seen as a period of internal focus and reconsolidation for both monarchies and one in which "divergent interests in the councils of both kingdoms prevented either effective military policy or peace negotiations from being pushed forward."[74]

While it was true that during the 1380s no major campaigns were embarked upon and that no significant battles were fought that determined the outcome of the war, it was not for a lack of trying. Particularly for the French, who recognized England's weaknesses following Edward III's death and quickly tried to capitalize on them. Despite the youth of their new king, the French nobility sought earnestly to finally bring the war to England by planning an invasion of the southern portion of the island kingdom. Many small, marauding French armies were prepared in Brittany, organized, supplied, and readied to cross the Channel on very short notice; but circumstances in France repeatedly arose that delayed their planned departure dates. Alas, after several attempts, the 1380s passed without an invasion.[75]

Although the French tried to keep their invasion plans covert, amassing an army, even in the Middle Ages, attracted a great deal of attention, particularly as it was done repeatedly. So, as one might expect, the English were rightfully alarmed when they caught wind of France's plans. This concern may not have been so acute under the capable leadership of Edward III but England was now ruled by a young king who failed to acquire the confidence of not only the peasantry but, more importantly, that of the nobility. Richard II fought frequently with his closest advisors and distant nobles alike. The dissension that grew in England between king and nobility was the fuel to the fire for the French that made their potential invasion plausible. At the same time, the mere intention of a French invasion of England fed the fire of dissension against Richard II.[76]

The 1380s indeed were a time of introspection as the monarchies of France and England matured. Some of the sentiments and concerns of the period were voiced particularly loudly in England, possibly in response to the recent aggressive nature of France. Thanks to Froissart, some of these sentiments were recorded as they suggest the intentions of the English nobility and which may help explain their actions in the future. Rather cunningly, Froissart chose to create an amalgam of conversations that, as he put it, "were very common, not only with knights and squires, but among the inhabitants of many of the towns, . . ." Albeit this kind of talk placed the realm in great jeopardy, Froissart wrote that those who wished mischief said and shared the following similar concerns:

> What is now become of our grand enterprises and our valiant captains? . . . We used to invade France and rebuff our enemies, so that they were afraid to show themselves, or venture to engage us; and, when they did so, they were defeated. . . Where are the knights and princes of England who can now do such things? . . . In those days we were feared, . . . but at this moment we must be silent, for they know not how to make war, except on our pockets: . . . Only a child reigns now in France, and yet he has given us more alarms than any of his predecessors, and shows good courage and inclination to invade us. . . . It seems, also, that we are weakened in understanding and activity as well as in courage; for we used to know what was intended by France, and what were its plans, some months before they could execute them, by which we were prepared to resist them. Now, we are not only ignorant of what is going forward in France; but they are well informed of all that passes, . . . and we know not whom to blame.[77]

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These domestic interests notwithstanding, the English and French could not go on indefinitely without some effort to resolve their deep differences on the battlefield or at the bargaining table. In 1389, peace talks were resumed at which the unofficial truce was formally acknowledged by both sides and an agreement was reached to proceed with further negotiations. These talks seemed promising and, as a demonstration of good faith, the two young monarchs sent high-level diplomats to the table including the Dukes of Lancaster and York from England and of Burgundy, Berry, and Bourbon from France. Unlike the earlier talks between the representatives of Edward III and Charles V, sovereignty was not made the central issue because Richard II and his advisors seemed content to acknowledge his status as a vassal of France so long as England regained actual control of Aquitaine and Richard's feudal obligations were strictly limited to rendering 'simple homage' to Charles VI. The Dukes of Burgundy and Berry were given similarly conciliatory instructions by Charles and offered England the payment of war indemnities and the exchange of certain lands including Angoumois, Agenais, Quercy and Rouergue. They were also ordered, however, to refuse any English offers that did not include agreeing to render 'liege homage' for the control of Aquitaine.[78]

Once again, the 'issue over Aquitaine' became the sticking point in arbitration and the one irremovable road block to a lasting peace. Several different options were then considered for settling the future of the duchy. During Richard II's minority, his uncle, John of Gaunt, had essentially run the kingdom. By 1390, when Richard was ruling in his own right, he decided to grant John--who was already the Duke of Lancaster--his title as Duke of Gascony.[79] This decision caused an immediate uproar in Aquitaine and led to disruptions in the normal functioning of the government in Bordeaux. Its response was driven by fears that John and his officials, like the Black Prince before him, would abuse the autonomy traditionally enjoyed by the duchy. They also objected because Richard had taken this step in a matter vital to their interests without any prior consultation. The local

leaders became even more incensed when they learned Richard had considered granting the duchy to John of Gaunt as an appanage of the French kingdom and that John, in turn, intended to pass this appanage on to his son.[80] This scheme, while eventually abandoned, was just one in a series of potential deals drafted in the attempt to find a solution to the problem of sovereignty over Gascony. There was one conversation, however, that seemed to be largely absent and that was the voice of the Gascons. Indeed, they had strong opinions about the sovereignty of their land which were recorded by Froissart and eventually heard by the English crown. This invaluable medieval chronicler reported that:

> I was told for truth, that the king and his council had written to the duke of Lancaster to return to England, for those from Aquitaine boldly declared they would not submit to any other lord but the King of England. . . The whole council were fearful of the consequences: . . . for [Gascons] declared, that should the duchy of Aquitaine be alienated from the crown of England, it would in times to come be very prejudicial to its interests. [The English] were unwilling, therefore, to risk such a loss, as the towns of Bordeaux and Bayonne had always strongly supported the cause of England.[81]

Such machinations, however justifiable in the larger context of stopping the endless, debilitating war between France and England, seriously affected Anglo-Gascon relations by shaking the faith of the local leaders in Bordeaux in what they always believed were their fellow countrymen in London.[82]

As we saw back in the 1350s and 60s, while the Black Prince ruled over Aquitaine, the Gascons resented the intrusion. The Bordelais preferred to govern themselves with an English king as sovereign. And when an English duke came down to south-western France to rule, the Gascons reacted harshly, encouraging them to consider other sovereigns, possibly French. We saw it with the Black Prince and the issues arose again with the potential appointment of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, as Duke of Gascony. Apparently, both King Charles V and VI were receptive to the concerns of Aquitaine; they understood, after all, that capturing the heart of Gascony politically was a lot more attractive and far less costly than taking the duchy militarily. The French throne particularly pursued several Gascon barons, like the Count d'Armagnac and the Lord d'Albreth,

recognizing that their sphere of influence may be the key to those Aquitanian hearts. The Gascons are a very proud people, and they tend to react strongly when their pride is contested by another domineering ego. The English crown, by the 1350s and 60s, became that ego and the Gascons reacted accordingly. Froissart who was paying particularly close attention to the issues in Aquitaine at the time commented on the reactions of the Gascons. He wrote:

> I, the author of this history, . . . witnessed the great hautiness of the English, who are affable to no other nation than their own; nor could any of the gentlemen of Gascony or Aquitaine, . . . obtain office or appointment in their own country; for the English said [Gascons] were neither on a level with them nor worthy of their society, which made the Gascons very indignant, . . . It was on account of the harshness of the [Black] prince's manners that the count d'Armagnac and the lord d'Albreth, with other knights and squires, turned to the French interest. King Philip of France, and the good John his son, had lost Gascony by their overbearing pride; and in like manner did the prince. But King Charles, of happy memory, regained them by good humor, liberality, and humility. In this manner the Gascons love to be governed.[83]

To our benefit, Froissart had the rare opportunity to speak with the players of the drama that was the ever changing relationship between England, Gascony, and France. While it looked as though the Aquitanians were increasingly leaning toward French sovereignty due to England's overbearing ego, Froissart's conversations with several Gascon nobles at the time provide a unique perspective and reality to the Anglo-Gascon relationship. According to Froissart:

> True it is, that when I lived among these lords at Paris, I once heard the lord d'Albreth use an expression that I noted down. I believe it may have been said in joke: however, it contained, in my opinion, much truth and good sense. A knight from Brittany, who had borne arms for [d'Albreth], inquired after his health, and how he managed to remain steady to the French: when he thus answered, -- 'Thank God, my health is very good; but I had more money at command, as well as my people, when I made war for the King of England, . . .' The knight, on hearing this, burst into laughter and replied, 'In truth, that is the life Gascons love: they willingly hurt their neighbor.'[84]

Froissart reported that as these Gascon lords worked more closely with Charles V and VI to improve the Franco-Gascon relationship, it became evident that the French throne too would become overbearing. At the same time, England went through rather humbling

experiences in the 1370s and so as the English learned to swallow their pride in the 1380s and 90s, they became more attractive, once again, to the Aquitanians. Many of those Gascon lords that at once contemplated French sovereignty heartily repented this decision and came back to the fold of English allegiance. Upon their return, Froissart was quick to respond to why the Anglo-Gascon relationship is so strong. He noted, "Such are the Gascons: they are very unsteady, but they love the English in preference to the French, for the war against France is the most profitable; and this is the cause of their preference."[85]

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In August 1396, just when the peace talks neared collapse, Richard II personally intervened and made a major effort to conclude a lasting peace. His ploy was not suddenly to concede to all of France's demands but to make a grand, conciliatory gesture of a type not uncommon in the Middle Ages, i.e. to marry a key member of his opponent's family, in this case Charles VI's daughter, Isabella. This course of action was open to Richard because his beloved wife, Anne, had recently died and he had just disposed of those members of the English nobility most opposed to his reaching a settlement with the French. Thus, in the fall of 1396, after his wedding to Isabella and several direct talks between the two kings, a twenty-eight year truce was concluded.[86] Despite all the attendant pomp and ceremony, the final peace agreement was left unsigned and the opportunity to come to closure was lost just three years later when Richard was forcibly removed from the throne and succeeded by his cousin and Earl of Derby, Henry Bolingbroke. Bolingbroke was the son of John of Gaunt and had been exiled by Richard when John died in 1399 because the king did not trust those from Lancaster. With the support of a growing band of the English nobility who believed they had been wronged by Richard, Henry returned to England, imprisoned Richard, and fueled propaganda that claimed the king was a tyrant who had forfeited his right to rule. Parliament declared an empty throne and a new era emerged when Bolingbroke -- a Lancastrian -- claimed it for himself as King Henry IV (1399-

1413). Richard, incidentally, did not cope well in incarceration and eventually starved to death in 1400.[87]

This second deposition of an English monarch in less than a century provided an opening for those who had opposed Richard's efforts to reach a settlement with the French to reignite the conflict. It soon became clear, however, that Henry IV was too engrossed in protecting his claim to the English throne to renew the fighting with France and, in any event, was often too ill to lead military operations. As for the French, while they wanted to capitalize on England's increasingly obvious weakness, they too found themselves dealing with internal strife. Since the early 1390s, Charles VI had shown significant symptoms of mental illness and his condition was growing steadily worse. This situation which made carrying on the business of the French government increasingly difficult also created an opportunity for powerful French nobles like the Duke of Burgundy to reduce their allegiance to the king and to establish competing power centers within the realm.[88] Despite such growing political problems, Charles took advantage of Henry's preoccupation with affairs at home to exert military pressure on the Gascon frontier and to seize some English fortifications.[89]

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Fortunately for the wine trade, the simultaneous preoccupation of both kingdoms with their internal difficulties created another window of opportunity for the winegrowers and shippers of Bordeaux to replant their vineyards and concentrate on making and shipping wine. The result was a return to a period of modest prosperity during the last twenty years of the fourteenth century. It is important to stress, however, that the recovery of the industry was gradual because the destruction of the vineyards in Gascony had been so extensive and because the newly planted vines needed time to become productive. Thus the volume of Bordeaux exports grew only incrementally throughout the 1380s.

It should be noted, moreover, that much of the information about the wine trade available from Gascon tax records during this period is incomplete. Nevertheless, the research conducted by Margery James provides a generalized picture of what was going on; it is based not only on the data for Bordeaux exports but for the imports to England as well. Her analysis shows that in the first half of the 1390s the recovery in shipments from Bordeaux was well underway as the replanted vineyards once again became commercially productive. Still, the wine flow from Gascony remained well below the levels it had achieved in the early part of this century, in large part because the vineyards of the Haut-Pays district remained in French hands. From the evidence available, James concluded that in the 1390s Bordeaux's average annual output had risen to only about 20,000 tuns. In other words, production had doubled since the disastrous lows of the 1370s but was still only two-thirds of what it had been in the 1360s.[90]

One of the most positive developments during this period of recovery was the virtual perfection of the wine convoy system which ensured that what little wine was coming out of Bordeaux was at least getting to England and other destinations safely. And James' research also makes clear that while Bordeaux's exports were slowly growing in the last twenty years of the century, so too was the proportion of the output being imported by England. She estimates that while English merchants took only about one-fourth of Gascony's wine exports in the early years of the century, at its end between three-fourths and four-fifths must have been arriving in the Island Kingdom. Furthermore, as the 1300s drew to a close, Richard II was encouraging Gascon merchants to participate freely in the reciprocal flow of raw materials and manufactured goods to Aquitaine from England.[91]

Wine pricing was still an issue in this period and England sought to pressure the Gascons into reducing the cost of their chief product. The English importers were anticipating such a reduction as the Bordeaux vineyards became more productive and when they felt that the price levels were falling too slowly, they persuaded Richard II to mandate wholesale prices at a level between £4 and £5 a tun. When this effort at government-

imposed price control failed to achieve the desired results, it was repealed. Only when the years of abnormal production fluctuations -- stemming chiefly from the war -- came to an end did the Gascon merchants drop their prices.[92]

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One might think that the advent of the fifteenth century would have prompted the monarchs of France and England to resolve their seemingly endless conflict either by force of arms or through negotiation. Instead, they settled for a continued stalemate and therefore the uneasy peace that had characterized the preceding twenty years was extended well into the next decade. In retrospect, one might fairly conclude from the relative passivity of Henry IV and Charles VI in this period that both monarchs had decided after more than sixty years of on-again, off-again warfare that theirs was a conflict that was impossible to settle.

While the French court certainly was disinclined to undertake overt military action, it clearly recognized the weaknesses of Henry IV's government and pursued more subtle means of subverting England's position on the continent. Furthermore Charles VI had decided on a revised military strategy, one which called for avoiding costly combat with England on a country-wide basis and concentrated instead on just one region: Aquitaine. The French monarch's first attempt to undermine English authority in Gascony was to detect and foster dissension among the duchy's inhabitants. Charles VI sent several envoys to the area to test public opinion and, if possible, to provoke a rebellion. The French expected to find cracks in the Gascon alliance with England because of the enmity that was created by the clumsy rule of the Black Prince and, more recently, John of Gaunt. To their surprise, they found Bordeaux once again at ease with London though this may have been due less to England's efforts to repair its relations with its independent-minded province than that Henry IV was distant, weak, and gave the Gascons little concern. Frustrated when his Gascon project proved fruitless, Charles turned to supporting

dissension in Wales by sending money, arms, and troops but this effort also produced few positive results for the French.[93]

While Charles VI was busying himself with these covert methods of ejecting England from Aquitaine, some of his nobles still wanted to proceed more directly with a full-scale invasion of Gascony. Louis of Orléans orchestrated such a plan and eventually got permission from the royal council to attempt to seize the maverick duchy by force. The campaign which was designed quickly and launched in 1405 came remarkably close to achieving its goal. Perroy succinctly describes the story of the invasion in this fashion:

> Advancing from Poitou, the Constable, Charles of Albret, liberated all the fortresses situated south of Saintonge and on the frontiers of Périgord. The French advance reached the Gironde and the lower Dordogne. Meanwhile, having recruited an army in Languedoc, the Count of Armagnac operated in Middle Gascony, south of the Garonne, and seriously threatened Bordeaux. But once more the enterprise was beyond the means available. The campaign intended to be a lightning-stroke, dragged on to no profit. . . [T]he new Duke of Burgundy, John the Fearless, entrusted to reducing Calais, was indolent in his attack . . . His heart was not in it. The struggle between the two princes was becoming keener, and led to the abandonment of the plans of conquest.[94]

It was amazing that a campaign that began with such passion could have disintegrated so quickly into yet another exercise in futility. This endeavor, however, was typical of the period. After seventy years of conflict, the aims of both sides were clear but their resources were scant and those who took initiatives soon tired and were easily distracted.

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France's renewed efforts to drive the English from Guienne had predictably negative effects on the wine industry. Despite this, the data show that in the first part of the decade the recovery of the Anglo-Gascon wine trade that was underway in the 1380s was continuing and that greater stability in annual production was returning. As James described this development:

> Fluctuations did, of course, occur and their causes were generally the same as those which underlay those of the fourteenth century -- war, pestilence, famine, and the interruption of sea communications. . . . thus the study of the early fifteenth

century is much less complex and presents fewer problems than that of the previous period.[95]

WINE EXPORTS FROM BORDEAUX DURING THE 15TH CENTURY[96]

Year	Wines of Bordeaux: Burgesses, nobles, ecclesiastics	Wines from outside Bordeaux: Burgesses	Wines from *Haut Pays* under English rule: Burgess	Wines from *Haut Pays* under English rule: non-burgess	Other wines[1]	Total[2] (tuns)
1402-3						10,067
1409-10	4,840	3,533	3,618	1,223	56	13,270
1412-13	5,171	2,810	4,246	557	264	13,158
1418-19		1,086	1,195	102	232	
1422-23	6,107	2,886	5,822	1,388	105	16,258
1427-18	3,796	2,225	2,410	705	28	9,074
1428-29	3,747	2,817	2,769	1,004	228	10,765
1429-30	5,333	3,055	3,527	1,197	10	13,222
1430-31	5,528	2,882	3,934	1,244	46	13,634
1431-32	2,929	2,608	2,307	782	0	8,626
1433-34		2,663	2,994	604	0	
1435-36	5,586	2,616	3,466	911	14	12,603
1436-37	4,748	2,316	3,170	669	0	10,903
1437-38	2,333	712	1,430	268	18	4,761
1438-39	2,638	257	871	286	0	4,052
1443-44	4,502	2,141	1,549	735	0	8,827
1448-49		5,638	2,339	905	124	
1452-53	5,337	2,712	1,448	422	0	9,919

Notes: [1]Other wines includes wines of the Agenais and wines on which custom was compounded at one franc or one noble a ton.
[2]Totals do not include returns of customs collected at Libourne.
Source: derived from James, M. K., *Studies in the Medieval Wine Trade*, edited by Veale, E. M., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971: 55-56

The return of some stability in Bordeaux's annual output must have been a welcome development to exporters and importers alike but there was no denying that the overall production level was hovering near historically low levels. On average, the annual wine exports from Bordeaux ran between 12,000 and 14,000 tuns and when shocks to the industry occurred, like the one caused by the French invasion of Gascony between 1405 and 1407, production fell to about one-third of these levels. Again, the English responded by buying up nearly all the wine available, taking generally between 9,000 and 11,000 tuns annually. While the English were only perpetuating their trend of taking a larger slice of a

significantly smaller pie, the response is noteworthy because it further identified Bordeaux's wines as indispensable to the English. And, although the Gascons had learned not to expect much from the monarchy of Henry IV, they liked it that way and clearly understood from where their money was coming. With that continually on their minds, they kept up their strong resistance to the French.[97]

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Since the dawn of the new century France had tried to capitalize on the weaknesses of the new Lancastrian regime in England. But the deficiencies of the French monarchy were also growing as Charles VI became increasingly unstable, making his government weak and inviting some of the more powerful nobles to consider deposing the king. In the early 1410s, the Duke of Burgundy began an effort to unseat the Valois monarch and transfer power to himself.[98] England learned of this development and sought to take advantage of the situation by sending delegates, money, and reinforcements to both the Burgundians and the supporters of Charles VI. Despite the civil strife that ensued, England's intervention was resented by both sides and there was serious talk of renewing the war against Henry IV. Exactly who would lead this campaign against England remained unsettled until 1413 when the French court received the news that Henry had died. His successor was to be his eldest son, also Henry, whose qualities as a far more vigorous leader than his father were already well known to the French. As Perroy has noted, "with the new king's accession war became almost a certainty."[99]

It would be difficult to find someone better prepared to be a medieval sovereign than Henry V (1413-1422). As early as 1408, when his father was weakened by illness, young Henry demonstrated the ambition of some of his most renowned Plantagenet predecessors, taking on dangerous assignments and eventually acquiring enough supporters to try to force his father's abdication. Although unsuccessful in this effort, the son's evident impatience to rule was indicative of a prince who was sure of himself, his

capabilities, and his rights.[100] Kenneth Fowler has summed up England's apparent king of kings as follows:

> By a singular irony of fate, the first king of England who had some English blood in his veins . . . was also the man who achieved for his son the dream of his Plantagenet predecessors: the union in one person of the crowns of England and France. To succeed where Edward III had failed took outstanding qualities and in these Henry V was not lacking. King at the age of twenty-five, as a boy he had seen service in Ireland with Richard II, had served a hard military apprenticeship in the Welsh campaigns at the beginning of his father's reign and had subsequently shown himself eager to exercise the royal power. A good soldier he was also, like his ancestors Henry II and Edward I, a businesslike bureaucrat, a sound administrator, and a stern judge. . . His popularity among his countrymen was hardly less, and was possibly greater than that of Edward III; . . .[101]

Henry V went straight to work upon the death of his father to ensure that he did not lose the precious political advantage Henry IV had begun to exploit by playing on the bitter rivalry between the Valois and Burgundian factions in France. Henry V continued to provide arms and men to both sides and in return received territorial concessions. In a series of negotiations conducted over two years following his ascension, Henry favored whichever party proved more generous in turning over French land to the Plantagenet throne. From Paris in August 1413, to Leulinghen in September, to London in November, and then back to Paris in January 1414, the new English king's negotiators met with the French factions and each time the territorial demands from Westminister became more bold. Henry began by asking for sovereignty over Aquitaine and soon escalated his demands to restoration of the boundaries set by the Treaty of Brétigny back in 1360. As the Burgundian-Valois struggle became more acute, England's demand for concessions turned even more grand. Eventually, Henry asked for restoration of England's old Angevin empire as it existed under Henry II and demanded sovereignty over Flanders and Artois as well. Although he probably expected less than he requested, Henry pressed his advantage over the French vigorously because he was essentially killing three birds with one stone: undermining the strength of the French monarchy; regaining English territory in France; and keeping his military costs at a minimum.[102]

It was remarkable how much the French factions were willing to concede to the English in order to gain an advantage over one another. For instance, at the conference held at Leicester in May 1414, the Burgundians -- whom Henry V distrusted -- made some generous proposals. In return for a promise of English men-at-arms to serve in a joint campaign against the Valois forces, they offered Henry a share in the spoils of victory. But before Henry made the deal, he wanted to learn more specifically what the Burgundians were offering and therefore moved to continue the talks at Ypres in August of that year. Jean, Duke of Burgundy, quickly realizing what the English had in mind for concessions, was left with little choice but to break off the talks because by granting such demands, Jean would have jeopardized his own plans for achieving hegemony in France. The royalists must have felt threatened by these meetings between the Plantagenets and the Burgundians because they soon went even further along the path of concession. Already having promised Henry much of the land in the former Angevin empire, they also offered him payment of some old Valois war debts, full sovereignty over Aquitaine, and a dowry of two million francs for Henry to marry Charles VI's daughter, Catherine.[103]

In one important aspect of his foreign policy Henry V differed from his predecessors and that was in the indifference he displayed toward the possession of Aquitaine. For this Plantagenet king, Gascony seemed relatively unimportant, probably because he had even grander goals in mind. With the progress that he had been making in reacquiring French territory by playing the factions of France against one another, Henry had begun to entertain the thought of reasserting England's claim not just to parts of France but to the French throne itself. He realized that this grand ambition was not inconceivable because, with the royalists offering the king's daughter in marriage, Henry had a realistic chance of becoming a prince of France and therefore a legitimate aspirant to the Valois crown. Moreover, with the territorial concessions he had already received, Henry was well on his way to controlling many of the provinces north of the Loire and therefore knew that, if his way to a legal takeover of the throne was barred, he was in a position to seize the Ile-

de-France militarily. As Henry saw it, the French monarchy would soon be at the mercy of London, or at least rendered impotent, by being caught between the Burgundian domains in the east and the English-held territories in the north and west.[104]

With things already looking bleak for the Valois dynasty, the Gascons added insult to injury by going on the offensive in 1414 and promptly recovering all the fortresses it had lost to the French in their Aquitanian campaign of 1405. In addition, the Gascons pushed forward, invading Saintonge and threatening La Rochelle, while the English fleet made a raid along the Normandy coast at Dieppe. These modest military victories by the Anglo-Gascon forces backfired politically, however, at the then ongoing negotiations between Henry V and the Valois court. Charles VI and his envoys finally seemed to get their wits about them, broke off further talks in 1415 and repealed their earlier concessions to England. Henry, who had thought he was on the verge of achieving unparalleled success in France, was suddenly thwarted; incensed, he sent a message threatening war and placing the blame for it upon the French.[105] Another medieval chronicler by the name of Jean de Waurin captured the intensity of Henry's fury and the sincerity of the king's intentions in reaction to the above events. Waurin reported:

> . . . it was concluded by the English that if the king of France did not give King Henry with his daughter the duchies of Aquitaine, Normandy, Anjou, and Touraine, with the counties of Poitou, Le Mans, and Ponthieu, together with all things formally pertaining by inheritance to the kings of England his predecessors, he would in no wise forego his expedition, enterprise, and army, but would in every direction and to the utmost of his power destroy the lands of his adversary the king of France and his kingdom, . . . wherefore he intended to recover all his property, and even to take from him the crown of the fleur-de-lys.[106]

Despite his show of outrage and surprise, it seems that a renewal of full-scale war had been at the core of Henry V's planning from the start of his reign. Clearly, the royalists and the Burgundians knew that Henry had been playing them off against each other and, given the examples of prior French concession-making, had never regarded their offers to Henry as binding. Henry, certainly, was equally aware of the temporary nature of French political settlements and this realization probably explains why he had been

assembling and training an army ever since he took the throne. Charles VI's abrupt reversal of policy in 1415 finally gave Henry an excuse to throw his rebuilt forces into action.

The new campaign, which began in August of that year, was originally intended only to reconnoiter the Normandy coast for a suitable disembarkation point for an invasion of northwest France at a later point.[107] The Plantagenet king and his troops, however, moved inland far more easily than expected and were proceeding toward Calais when they were finally forced to make a stand against a much larger French army near Agincourt on the Artois plateau on October 25th. The French apparently had not learned from their mistakes at Crécy and Poitiers by sending a large cavalry charge at the English position over very poor terrain against entrenched men-at-arms and England's most devastating force, its archers. An eyewitness to the battle, who fought on the side of the English, described the events in the following manner:

> And when they came near enough to attack, the French horsemen posted on the sides rushed against our archers on both flanks of our army; but quickly, they were compelled to retreat by the showers of arrows and to flee behind their lines . . . except the large numbers whom the points of the stakes or the sharpness of the arrows stopped from flight by piercing the horses or the horsemen. . . No one had time to receive them as captives, but almost all of them without distinction of persons, when they fell to the ground, struck down by our men or by those following them, I know not by what hidden judgment of God, were killed without intermission . . .[108]

Once again, France's knights went down in great numbers and the English won an overwhelming victory. Following this triumph, Henry and his men proceeded on to Calais unmolested. The immediate impact of this victory was mainly psychological but the material payoff came two years later when a second English invasion conquered Normandy easily and Henry's troops took up permanent quarters to force the French to a settlement on England's terms.[109]

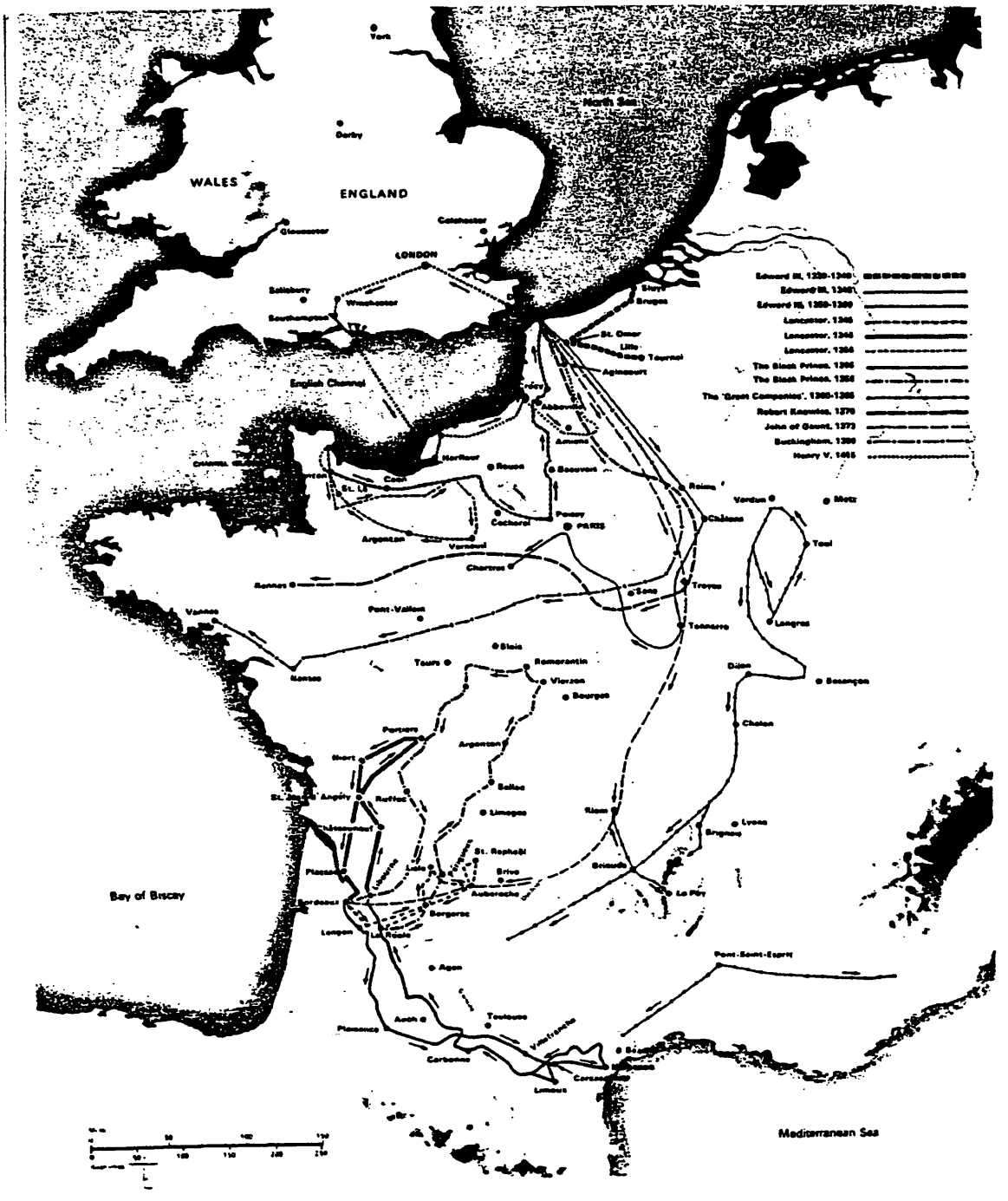
* * * * *

The events which followed would have made Edward III proud. France, still embroiled in civil strife, had lost the best of its army to its ancient foe who was now in the process of building or improving unassailable stone fortresses over much of the land it had seized in the northern and western parts of the country. In the east there were the Burgundians, equally bitter toward the king and successful in their military expansion at France's expense. Charles VI was no longer in a position to argue with the Plantagenets; he had to concede. Henry V, who had spent the better part of his first years as king negotiating with the contending factions in France knew his opponents well and was now at a bargaining table of a different sort. The difference, of course, was that he was at last in a position to dictate the terms of the peace.

It took several years but a treaty was concluded at Troyes in May 1420. According to the agreement, Henry V was granted Charles VI's daughter, Catherine, in marriage and was given a promise that upon Charles' death the French crown would pass to Henry and subsequently to his and Catherine's children. Moreover, because of Charles' growing mental illness it was agreed that Henry would begin to serve immediately as regent of France. With the mutual consent of his parents, their son the Dauphin was disinherited and plans were made to establish a dual monarchy of France and England.[110]

Henry V's 1420 triumph in assuming the leadership of both France and England had been the Plantagenet's dream since their dynasty began in the twelfth century. The victory was all the more remarkable because, less than fifteen years before, England's position in France had been reduced to nothing but a small strip of land between Bordeaux and Bayonne. Unfortunately for Henry, this high water mark in England's dominance of France proved to be short-lived. Two years after Henry's effective assumption of the French throne, he led a force into the Loire valley to subdue the Dauphin who reneged on the terms of the Treaty of Troyes. In a siege of the town of Meaux, Henry contracted

THE PRINCIPAL CAMPAIGNS OF THE HUNDRED YEARS WAR[111]



dysentery and died after only nine years on the English throne. But the political tide was not to change there only. Two months later, King Charles VI died as well. The year 1422

had turned out to be a disaster for both sides but especially for England. As Elizabeth Hallam described the situation:

> Henry had restored the crown to its full dignity and authority after the calamities of the fourteenth century. He governed his subjects with justice and mercy and strove to extend his empire over France, the ancient enemy, to bring peace and security to both realms. Although all this was achieved in a remarkably short time, much remained to be done when he died and his death left the English in an untenable position in France.[112]

Upon the deaths of Henry V and Charles VI, Westminister attempted to extend the status quo by solemnly proclaiming Henry's son as King of England and France. But, since Henry VI (1422-1461) was only nine months old at the time, this ascension lacked credibility and Henry V's older brother, John, Duke of Bedford, was appointed regent of the dual monarchy. Moreover, the success of Bedford's regency was complicated from the start in that the specific terms and organizational structure for jointly governing the two realms had not yet been completed when Henry V died so unexpectedly in 1422. In reality, Bedford found himself nominally in control of nothing more than an uneasy Anglo-Burgundian alliance in the north and east of France and a badly weakened but still viable Valois state in the south which increasingly regarded the Dauphin as its true leader. Bedford and his Burgundian ally, Philip the Good, were supposed to work in harmony but their cooperation came to an early end and the English dominion was reduced to those parts of northern France actually occupied by English troops plus what remained of the ancient province of Aquitaine.[113]

A lasting Anglo-French state might have emerged had it not been for the Dauphin who claimed a significant piece of French territory south of the Loire where he had instituted a provisional government at Bourges. With the exception of the Gascon duchy, much of the leadership and populace of southern France was disposed to put their faith in the disinherited son of Charles VI and thus allied themselves with the royalist faction. Had Henry V lived longer, it is possible that this opposition to his rule would have been crushed but with England led by an infant king and a dual monarchy recognized in England only in

a now discredited treaty, there were few signs that the Dauphin and his followers would submit themselves to Henry VI and his regent.[114]

The Dauphin was twenty when he succeeded his father in 1422. Still, like his nemesis across the Channel, Charles VII would not rule in his own right for another ten years or so. The territory which Charles held was substantial and the provisional government that he led had the potential not only to discredit the concept of a dual monarchy but to challenge England militarily. But, as Fowler explained:

> For although the kingdom of Bourges (as those lands which recognized him came to be known) was superior to the Lancastrian government by virtue of the area under its control, its financial potential, its support by the appanaged princes, and the ability of its civil service, nevertheless a lack of morale at the top and the influence of dishonest officials and greedy courtiers for long prevented a bold military effort.[115]

The greatest threat to the success of what remained of the French kingdom, however, was its leadership. The Dauphin was not, at least at first, a capable military leader and, as Fowler also pointed out:

> unlike his grandfather, Charles V, he was no judge of character, was unable to delegate responsibility effectively or to inspire good service. He doubted himself, his followers, even his rights; after his father's death he relapsed into apathy, of which his entourage were quick to take advantage.[116]

It would be years before the Dauphin's effectiveness as a leader emerged and, as the legend tells, not until a bold young woman from Domrémy with visions of glory for France appeared and inspired him to force the English from the continent.

* * * * *

In the Anglo-Gascon wine trade, the relative stability which had characterized the first decade of the fifteenth century continued well into the second. With the exception of the French invasion of Gascony in the first years of the century (1405-1407), the duchy had remained relatively free of military strife and its vintners and shippers had been able to produce a steady flow of wine for their overseas customers. Nevertheless, the average

annual volume of these exports had remained at a significantly lower level than those achieved in the fourteenth century. Perhaps in response to this situation, there was some expansion in this period of the vineyards in the districts surrounding Bordeaux. Given its grim experience with the war, which by this time had extended over three generations of Gascon wine growers, the industry knew it could no longer count on the vineyards of the Haut-Pays but continued to believe that the capital region itself would not fall into French hands.[117]

The relative stability of the trade that prevailed in the 1420s continued into the 1430s. This good fortune can be attributed to both Henry VI and Charles VII who were too young and their kingdoms too weak to undertake major military action against one another. The period of the 1430s, though, was not without problems for the wine industry. As one burgess in Aquitaine recorded, between October 1431 and August 1439 there was a substantial decline in the revenues derived from the shipments of wine from the port of Bordeaux. Although the number of ships, predominantly English, that entered the city's harbor remained generally constant, their cargoes may have been reduced.[118] The available evidence does not permit a clear answer to whether the Bordelais were producing less wine or the English were taking less.

The quality as well as the quantity of the wines from Bordeaux also appears to have been in decline during this period. As M.G.A. Vale has reported:

> In the Parliament of 1432 it was said that the quality of Gascon wines had recently deteriorated. This was thought to be a result both of adulteration by the growers and of the normal effects of shipping the pipes and barrels to England. The Commons claimed that the deterioration had set in 'because such vesselx as thei (the wines) be putte ynne aftir theire pressure, be not filled be eight or nyne inches, so that the saide wynes may not have theire naturell bulying ande purging outward as theim ought. . . .'[119]

The theory that the quality of the wines from Gascony were deteriorating en route because the barrels were not completely filled is a plausible argument since exposure to air would have had that effect. It is also possible that, with the low levels of output in this period, the shippers were diluting some wines with water.

While the problems with the wine may have been associated with the producers or shippers, it is equally important to consider that the decline in quality should have been linked to the point of sale as well. The king's Patent Rolls prove particularly insightful with this charge. During the reigns of several English kings in this period, there were many entries found addressing the vendors of wine in England, warning them not to adulterate the beverage or otherwise face official reprisals. For instance, one decree stated:

> The king being given to understand that the vintners of the city of London and their taverners selling wine by retail in the city and suburbs, mix weak and bad wine with other wine, and sell the mixture at the same price as pure wine, not permitting persons drinking in the taverns, or otherwise purchasing wine, to see whether they draw the wine in the measure from casks or take it elsewhere, to the scandal of the city and danger to the health of buyers of wine, the mayor and sheriffs are commanded to make proclamation that such practices shall cease, and to fine such as offend thereafter.[120]

It would be virtually impossible to determine whether or not this decree was enforced, but that is not the issue. The important thing to note here is that the decree was made at all and that the king considered the quality of the wine highly enough that he was willing to criminalize violations of the trade. Indeed, the Gascons may have compromised the quality of their wine to help reduce expenses, but it would be naïve to assume that English taverners were not motivated by the same incentives.

With regard to the reduced wine production levels during this decade, M.K. James has provided some helpful analysis. Her reading of the tax data is that, while there was indeed an overall decline in the volume of exports for the 1430s, production was fairly constant until 1437 when the French renewed their efforts to recapture the duchy. This shock to the industry's productivity was then doubled the following year by a recurrence of the plague. The result, she argues, was that while earlier in the decade the average annual output had been running at between 10,000 and 12,000 tuns, by 1438 the combined effects of the war and pestilence had resulted in a severe drop in production to about 4,000 tuns -- the worst vintage of the fifteenth century up to that point.[121]

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The resumption of fighting in Gascony in 1437-38 was only part of a larger effort undertaken by the royalist forces supporting the Dauphin that had begun back in 1429 to defeat the Anglo-Burgundian coalition created by Henry V. For nearly two decades France had been a kingdom divided by the factional strife between the Burgundians and the House of Valois and its royalist supporters. It was also still confronted in that great stretches of its territory were occupied by the English. In 1429 the English were conducting a siege of one of the great cities of the Loire valley, Orléans, and the French had been utterly unsuccessful in driving them away. Charles, then in residence at nearby Chinon was wracked as usual by indecision but he and his court were ready to try anything to relieve Orléans.[122]

A young woman named Joan appeared in court, claiming that she had been sent by God to rescue France and crown the Dauphin. Moreover, she said she was ready to lead the Dauphin's troops in an attack which would break the siege of Orléans. Charles raised some troops, furnished them with supplies, and permitted Joan to accompany the relief expedition. This unlikely military effort was unexpectedly successful and was taken by the royalist party as a sign of the divine intervention they had sought for so many years. Joan not only held her own in battle but by risking herself in the forefront of the fighting proved to be an inspiration to the royalist troops.[123] The recapture of Orléans was like an epiphany for Charles who saw it as the turning point in his larger plan to force out the English, unite the kingdom, and end the dual monarchy. It was here that the legend of Joan of Arc began and quickly she became the emotional leader and good luck charm for a bold new campaign to expel the foreigners and reclaim the French throne for France.[124]

In a plan inspired by Joan, the Dauphin decided to use the momentum gained by the French victory at Orléans to march across the kingdom to the eastern province of Champagne whose capital, Rheims, was the traditional coronation site for French kings. The march which its planners believed would be very hazardous turned out to be nothing more than a military parade. Many of the suspected pockets of opposition to the Dauphin

proved to be bastions of support. This welcome but unforseen development was probably due, in part, to the French success at Orléans but also because the populace had become fed up with the decades of civil war and was ready to settle for a unified kingdom under any monarch so long as he was not English. As a result, virtually every town and hamlet either surrendered to Charles' forces or welcomed them with open arms. By July 1429, the Dauphin had reached Rheims and at its great cathedral, with Joan at his side, was formally crowned as King Charles VII (1422-1461) of France.[125]

Although the royalist faction was overjoyed that the coronation had at last taken place, the fact remained that Anglo-Burgundian forces still occupied considerable portions of France. The most immediate task for the new king was to force the English out of Paris. An assault on the capital was made in September 1429 but, despite the best efforts of Joan and her troops, the attack failed. Even though much of the rest of the Ile-de-France had submitted to the royalist forces, the Anglo-Burgundian troops were able to hold onto the capital. The next step was a blockade of Paris while the French army attacked England's positions in Normandy.[126] Meanwhile, Charles VII worked to settle his old feud with Burgundy. He knew that the French treasury and the uncertain state of his government could not support an extended military campaign and that the best way to secure his position in Paris and throughout the kingdom was to end his dispute with the Burgundians and thus deprive England of its ally on the continent. Besides, it was in the king's nature to pursue this strategy because Charles always preferred diplomacy to battle.[127]

Although the military campaign to retrieve Rheims and Paris and, more generally, to reduce the Anglo-Burgundian grip on France did not accomplish all its objectives, it did produce political benefits, the most important being the onset of the reunification of France. Moreover, it had become clear that this process of restoring the French monarchy and reconciling the regional factions must go forward despite that the expulsion of the English through the recovery of Normandy and Gascony had not yet been achieved.[128] Therefore, Charles VII and his envoys made every effort to accomplish their political goals while

France's extended military operations continued throughout the 1430s. These campaigns had many setbacks but the overall trend for France was improving. Joan of Arc was captured by the Burgundians in 1430 and burned at the stake by the English in May 1431. Her legendary piety and patriotism had already become rooted, however, and the net effect of her death was to inspire the French and to raise fears in the English soldiery that they had murdered a saint.[129]

In the political sphere, the decade began with the coronation of the nine-year-old Henry VI in Paris -- the only English king ever crowned in France -- as Westminister sought to reassert the viability of the dual monarchy concept despite the personal weakness of its new king and the rising fortunes of an independent France. It seemed as though all the dynamic characteristics that had made Henry V such a great king were absent in his son. To be fair, Henry VI did not take over the direction of England's affairs until 1437 but because he was still only fifteen when the regency ended, he remained completely unprepared for the task. It may also be fair to note that his task as a leader was complicated in that, unlike all his predecessors except his famous father, Henry VI was supposedly the ruler of both England and France. Although Henry was a good man, reportedly pious and not inclined to hold grudges, he wanted to consistently please those around him -- an impossible task in the England of the high Middle Ages.[130] The immediate effect of his assumption of power was that England remained so preoccupied with its domestic problems that it could hardly give a lot of attention to its interests across the Channel.

* * * * *

The advent of the 1440s did not bring much change in Charles VII's increasingly effective military and political policies. The French monarchy had succeeded in reconciling its differences with Philip the Good of Burgundy in 1435 and the French attacks against all English-held lands on the continent thereafter had met with growing success. As the Ile-de-France was freed, French attention could be focused increasingly on Gascony.

Between June and December 1442, a number of sieges were undertaken against the duchy's fortifications, and when conditions looked promising, Charles himself took the field to lead an army that helped to capture the Anglo-Gascon garrisons at St. Sever and Dax. Bordeaux itself might have fallen that year had it not been for a minor setback at La Réole. The English, suddenly roused to protect Gascony, sent an expedition with the intention of reaching Bordeaux and "reviving the spirits of the Gascon partisans." The relief force, which was dispatched from Normandy, was led, however, by an incompetent noble who never got further than Anjou. The campaign was a miserable failure and the Gascons were left feeling abandoned.[131]

It appeared that Charles VII's efforts, both military and political, finally were bearing fruit. The English, who had shown themselves increasingly incapable of protecting their interests in at least the French half of their purported dual monarchy, let it be known in France that peace talks were in order. The event that may have forced London's hand was the formal evacuation of Paris on the 13th of April, 1444. The English position by this point had been reduced, once again, to Gascony and only portions of Normandy and Maine, apparently convincing Henry VI that negotiations remained the only way to salvage what was left. As Perroy put it:

> Henceforth the peace party was triumphant. On both sides of the Channel the people, crushed by taxation and exhausted by all the ravages of war, clamoured for peace and demanded an end of the conflict. . . . Above all, the truce (Tours, May 1444), the first since the Treaty of Troyes, in other words for nearly a quarter of a century, set the seal on the recovery of the Valois and confirmed his conquests. A fresh phase of the conflict, the last phase, was soon to begin.[132]

Although the resumption of peace talks was welcomed by the citizenry on both sides, the negotiators must have known that a lasting settlement would not result. As always, the issue over sovereignty came to the fore and the English took a rather high-handed stance, considering the weakness of their military position. They made clear that they were unwilling to renounce the French crown or to render homage for any of the territory they still held in France. While ready to sign a truce, the English wanted to defer

substantive discussions about a general peace until conditions permitted an agreement more on their terms. As both sides had done at previous points in the now century-long conflict, England was simply playing for time despite that it had almost no leverage with which to bargain. The Anglo-French kingdom now existed in name only. It could no longer call on the Duke of Burgundy for support, nor on the Holy Roman Emperor who, though he declared allegiance to Henry V and his successors, had abrogated this alliance and sided with the French monarchy after Charles VII's coronation.[133]

Notwithstanding this increasing isolation, England got what it wanted at Tours: a declaration of truce and a conclusion that a peace agreement was impossible at that time. Moreover, the parties agreed to secure the accord as they had done in the past with a marriage covenant that called for the betrothal of Charles VII's niece, Margaret of Anjou, to Henry VI. The cease fire, dating from 28 May 1444, was to last for ten months but could be extended by mutual agreement. Both parties knew, however, that as soon as the necessary resources became available, they would be back on the field of battle.[134]

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As it turned out, the cessation of hostilities lasted for about five years, which was good news for, among others, the vintners and merchants in the Anglo-Gascon wine trade. Until the truce at Tours, the fighting during 1442-44 had taken its usual toll on the wine output of the duchy. With the conclusion of the accord, however, another cycle of prosperity began, one in which, as James reported, "exports from Bordeaux and imports into England were maintained at a high level." James does not have precise numbers for the shipments leaving Bordeaux in the 1440s but M.G.A. Vale has stated that the average annual output was around 12,000 tuns. These number would plunge again, of course, once the French attacks on the duchy were renewed.[135]

The merchants in the wine trade, like all the other well informed participants in the war, seemed to know that the Treaty of Tours could not last. They strove to make the

most, however, of this opportunity which lasted from 1440 to 1449. The effects of the resumption of hostilities is immediately apparent in Vale's export data for the period. From the 1448 vintage, the Bordelais shipped 11,070 tuns; for 1449 the total shipments dropped to 5,900 tuns.[136]

* * * * *

The Valois throne made the most of the extended cease fire by continuing with its military reorganization efforts and building up its coffers in preparation for a return to the conflict. In the meantime, the French army kept its edge by picking at the English positions in Normandy. To avoid breaking the truce, these attacks were kept at a low level but this harassment eroded English morale and increased the cost of maintaining these fortifications. Little by little the region was effectively reconquered and by 1449 when the fighting resumed in earnest, the English hold on Normandy was almost broken. This left Charles VII free to turn his attention to Gascony and in the summer of 1449 he stepped up his intelligence operations to learn what he would have to do to conquer England's most enduring enclave on French soil. Charles quickly learned that he would have quite a fight on his hands because, despite England's faltering support, it was reported that the Gascons remained steadfast in: "their self-interested loyalty towards the ducal dynasty, their long-standing habit of political autonomy and the trade links with England which ensured their prosperity."[137]

Charles VII knew that these factors would keep the Gascon resistance high and that without the support of the people the duchy would be far harder to take than Normandy. Despite these odds, he decided in 1449 to break the truce and sent several small armies into Aquitaine to capture some of the Anglo-Gascon border fortresses. By the fall of 1450, some of these garrisons were in French hands, including those at Bergerac and Bazas, but with Bordeaux in sight winter forced the French to halt their operations. By the spring of 1451, French forces went back to their task in earnest. A campaign was launched under

the command of John Dunnois, Count of Orléans and Joan of Arc's partner in lifting the English siege of that city in 1429. Dunnois quickly infiltrated the Bordeaux region, taking the fortresses at Blaye, Fronsac, and St. Emilion and, not long thereafter, began a siege of Bordeaux itself.[138]

The Bordelais knew they could not long resist the French attack in the absence of an English relief effort. With no such rescue in sight, the city fathers began to prepare for the surrender of the capital and designated Gaston de Foix, a noble loyal to the English as their negotiator. It was decided that if the English sent no reinforcements by the 24th of June, they would have to surrender the city but this plan became moot when Dunnois and his forces broke into Bordeaux on the 12th. At this time, virtually all the garrisons which had held out in the hope of English relief capitulated to the French. The one exception was Bayonne which remained obstinate to the last and had to be broken by siege. To Charles and his men the great surprise in these dramatic events was that, like Normandy, the conquest of Gascony had taken only a year. They had expected far worse.[139]

Charles VII proved to be largely conciliatory in the terms of surrender he offered the duchy. Only the defenders of Bayonne who resisted so obdurately were subjected to paying war indemnities and the loss of their communal liberties. Everywhere else, Charles seemed to have seen it in his best interest to minimize dissension by maintaining the privileges and institutions of the conquered communities. His one major mistake was in Bordeaux where he had assigned northern Frenchmen to the positions of Seneschal and Mayor. The English learned by hard experience that these were offices which could not be filled with anyone but natives but the French, not sensitive to the long tradition of local autonomy in the Gascon capital, brought the wheels of the duchy's government nearly to a stop until they corrected this error. Moreover, despite Charles' best intentions, the occupation of Gascony by the French forces met considerable resistance from the citizenry who bitterly resented the pillaging of their homes by French soldiers, the ousting of local officials, and, worst of all, the cessation of the maritime trade on which their livelihoods

depended. The Bordelais had, in effect, made it very clear to Charles that they would revolt at the earliest opportunity and, in addition, made sure that their continuing fealty to England was reported in London.[140]

Given such loyalty, it is fair to ask why the English had not yet come to Gascony's rescue. The implementation of a relief effort initially seemed impossible for the government of Henry VI which was increasingly paralyzed by insolvency and by the growing dispute between the king's family, the House of Lancaster, and its chief opponents, the House of York. Following the treaty negotiations at Tours, Henry failed to make the best use of the lull in the fighting as Charles VII had done and the prospect of losing most of England's territory in France had spurred growing animosity among the English nobility. Henry desperately wanted to hold onto both Normandy and Aquitaine but his slowness to act sealed their fate. Eventually in 1452, utilizing a force which had originally been assembled for the defense of Calais, Henry answered the calls for help from Bordeaux. The expedition, which consisted of about 4,000-5,000 men gathered among the Channel ports, sailed under the command of the venerable John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury. He landed in the Médoc district down river from Bordeaux on October 14th, 1452 and within four days retook the capital with the aid of a general revolt of its citizens who greeted the English commander as "*Le Roi Talbot*". This victory initiated a rebellion which spread across the duchy, spurring Gascon forces to take back all the fortresses lost to the French from Angoumois to the Aquitanian frontier.[141]

How had Charles VII allowed this to happen? In bringing the southwestern portion of the country under the rule of the Ile-de-France, he had finally achieved what no other Valois or Capetian king before him had managed to do in more than four hundred years and in less than a year he let it slip through his fingers. In fairness, the French had been misled by initially valid information that Talbot and his forces were committed to action in Normandy and, acting on these reports, Charles had reduced his defenses in Gascony to send reinforcements to northwestern France. Confronted by this unexpected reversal of

fortune, the French king made the best of a bad situation and spent the winter preparing for a counter-offensive.[142]

This seasonal pause also allowed England to send reinforcements to Bordeaux but in the spring of 1453, when the French army advanced into Gascony, it was plain that Henry VI's force would be no match for that of Charles VII. In fact, France's numbers were so far superior that Talbot knew he could not hope to oppose them directly. He decided to wait until the French broke up their forces and to attack them piecemeal; and when he followed one small army into the Médoc where it had begun a siege of the town of Castillon near Libourne, he confidently threw his entire 6,000 man force against it. Talbot expected an easy victory and attacked impetuously but the French had by now learned their lessons from Crécy, Poitiers, and Agincourt and protected their forces from the English archers by entrenching them behind stockades. The conditions were also poor for the English cavalry and when the French loosed an artillery barrage -- at that time a rarity except in static siege operations -- followed by a flank attack by Breton forces, the Anglo-Gascon army was destroyed. The drama of this last act of the Hundred Years War was captured by a medieval chronicler who worked under King Charles VII. As an eyewitness, he reported that:

> . . . in particular, Talbot's hackney was struck by a shot from a culverine, so that it fell at once to the ground quite dead; and at the same time, Talbot, his master, was thrown under it, and was at once killed by some archers. And thus died this famous and renowned English leader, who for so long had been reputed to be one of the most formidable scourges of the French, and one of their most sworn enemies, and had seemed to be the dread and terror of France.[143]

Thus, on the 17th of July 1453 at Castillon, all of England's hopes of holding on to Gascony came to an end. Charles VII's clean-up campaign moved promptly as the French began another siege of Bordeaux, coupled with a naval blockade of the Gironde. Because of his experience with Gascon popular resistance in the preceding fall, the French king believed that this second attempt to invest the capital would be prolonged. At first, it appeared that the Gascon burgesses and nobility were ready for fierce resistance but, when

they realized that no further reinforcements were coming from England and saw the condition of the English soldiers who had survived the battle at Castillon, the Bordelais understood that they had little choice but to open negotiations. The talks began at the end of September and were concluded by October 19th when the Gascons and remaining English surrendered unconditionally.[144]

This time Charles VII showed no mercy. He began by imposing a collective fine on all the Bordelais and those who had held positions in the local government were banished from the region. Like the first occupation, French rule was harsh and burdensome but the difference this time was that everyone seemed to accept that the change was permanent. As Perroy concluded, "This was the end of the link, three centuries old, between the Gascons and the kings of England. This was the end of the great fief of Aquitaine which had led to the Hundred Years War."[145] And the realization that the ties that had bound England to Gascony -- indeed to France as a whole -- were now irrevocably broken was deeply felt in the Island Kingdom as well. As Morgan put it:

> after (the French) victory at Castillon . . . the English territories in the southwest were entirely lost. This was the most shattering blow of all: Gascony had been English since the twelfth century, and the long established wine and cloth trades with southwest France were seriously disrupted. Of Henry V's entire empire only Calais now remained. The defeated and disillusioned soldiers who returned to England regarded the discredited Lancastrian government as responsible for their plight and for the surrender of what Henry V had won. At home, Henry VI faced the consequences of defeat.[146]

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There can be no doubt that the English defeat at Castillon broke the back of England's claim of sovereignty over Gascony and -- though England did not formally surrender its title to the French throne until the Treaty of Amiens on 1802 -- shattered its larger hopes of once again ruling all of France. The shock of these losses cannot be overestimated. As Morgan reported:

> Within three weeks of Castillon, Henry VI suffered a mental and physical collapse which lasted for seventeen months and from which he may never have fully

> recovered. The loss of his French kingdom (and Henry was the only English king to be crowned in France) may have been responsible for his breakdown, though by 1453 other aspects of his rule gave cause for grave concern.[147]

The author is referring, of course, to the growing civil strife embodied by the competition between the houses of York and Lancaster. This was fueled, in part, by the burning issue of who was to blame for the loss of France and was about to expand into the Wars of the Roses. This conflict was to consume England for the next three decades and to foreclose any hopes of recovering Gascony or any other of its former territories in France.

These facts confirm that England's political and military relationships with Gascony were definitely concluded by the mid-1450s. In the economic and cultural spheres, however, the bond between the two regions, though battered, remained intact and the most resilient strand in those ties proved to be the wine trade. Charles VII found that his new prize was no pleasure to govern and that, even without any hope of English rescue, the Gascons were by no means ready to accept French rule. The citizens of Bordeaux were particularly stubborn and their contempt for their new lord and masters remained ill-concealed as the following account shows:

> When the city was taken by a French army at the end of the Hundred Years War, the French conqueror, Charles VII, found himself distinctly *persona non grata* , openly mocked by his Bordelais countrymen. The two forts that Charles built to protect the city from future enemies were facetiously dubbed Chateau Trompette and Chateau Ha -- the first because the king's builders were forced to summon the recalcitrant workers with blasting trumpets; the second immortalizing the king's dedication speech. As he stood at the rostrum before his assembled subjects, the only word the tongue-tied monarch seemed to be able to come up with was a triumphant: 'Ha!'[148]

The Bordelais, as this anecdote makes evident, were still acting like Bordelais, i.e. as brashly independent and disrespectful of outside authority as they had been under the English. Edward I had characterized them as stiff-necked and Charles VII was discovering the truth of that statement. Nowhere is the commitment of the Bordelais to conduct business as usual and to maintain ties with England more evident than in the wine trade. As Hugh Johnson has pointed out with respect to the aftermath of the loss of Gascony in

1453: "Of course what sounds like a great finale is nothing of the sort. Every year produces wine and growers and merchants must go on living."[149]

And, go on living, they did. The record of the Gascon wine trade in the 1450s makes clear that, while Bordeaux's shipments to England were roiled by the dramatic changes on the political and military fronts, the flow of wine continued on like a force of nature. In 1451, for example, when the Gascon capital was first occupied by the French, no cessation of the trade with England occurred. While the French made it difficult, they allowed those who refused allegiance to Charles VII to leave with their goods, ships, and merchandise within six months.[150] Henry VI's Treaty Rolls confirm this offer as the king formally requested that some efforts be made to at least collect that year's vintage. The document proposes a "License for Thomas Shiplode, William Howell, John Taverner, William White and Walter Corston, merchants of Bristol, to send one ship of 300 tuns or less to Bordeaux to fetch goods and money held by them in that city when it fell into the hands of the French."[151] As it turned out, many English and Bordelais took them up on that offer and by January 1452 about twenty-six English ships cleared the Gironde under safe-conduct passes and had taken at least a portion of the 1451 vintage with them. According to James, about 6,000 tuns of that vintage reached England.[152]

Then, when the reconquest of Gascony by the English occurred in the fall of 1452, it could not have come at a better time because the vintage was about ready for transport. Even though there is a modest discrepancy in the numbers provided by Vale and James, i.e. 8,700 tuns versus 9,900 tuns, respectively, it seems clear that the 1452 vintage was a better year for the trade than the preceding one.[153]

In 1453, when Talbot was killed at Castillon and the city was surrendered for the last time, the record-keeping of the wine shipments from Bordeaux apparently was suspended. After all, these accounts were maintained by the duchy's tax collectors to monitor the flow of wine to English and other foreign ports. When the French took over,

they had no reason -- at least initially -- to keep these data and therefore no record of that year's shipments seems to have survived. We do know, however, that:

> The French gave the English six months to ship the 1453 vintage . . . They grudgingly and selectively granted safe-conducts to English vessels coming for wine, while they invited Scots, Dutch, Flemish, Hanseatic, and Spanish to come and buy freely, hoping to widen the narrow (i.e. English) scope of the trade.[154]

While precise production figures for 1453 and the rest of that decade are still not available, it is clear that the capitulation of Aquitaine led to far less favorable conditions for the trade and significantly reduced the volume of Gascon shipments reaching England for quite a while.[155]

Although there may have been a brief moment in which no wine was flowing between Bordeaux and England, we have no confirmation of such a break. The demand from the British Isles was too well established to allow a complete cessation of the trade even if the wine had to find its way to English tables through third parties. Nevertheless, as the declining Gascon wine production figures for the first half of the fifteenth century, and the increasingly reciprocal nature of the trade make clear, the dynamics of the Anglo-Gascon commerce were changing well before the French took over. England was still taking 90% or more of the annual wine output of Gascony but it is not certain whether that figure is driven by the question: was demand that high or was production that low? In any case, there is evidence that England, as early as the latter half of the fourteenth century, was in search of alternative sources of wine. Some examples were Portugal and Spain, whose brandy-strengthened wines, port and sherry, were able to resist spoilage on the longer voyages from the Iberian peninsula to England. With the annual output of Gascon wine markedly lower than it had been in the previous century; with its price both higher and subject to sharp fluctuations; and with suspicions of war-induced declines in quality, it is not surprising that English merchants had taken steps to develop other markets.[156] It is here that the Treaty Rolls of Henry VI prove fruitful as well. For instance, in an entry dated 24 February 1454, there was a "License for Henry May and John May, merchants of

Bristol, to trade for one year with any countries not in amity with the English, with a ship or ships of 300 tuns, exporting any except staple goods."[157] Of course, from the wording of this license, ". . . any country not in amity with the English, . . ." could include France among others, but it does suggest that England was looking elsewhere for other markets, possibly including wine. What is more important, however, is that despite all these reverses -- the most important being the loss of Gascony as an integral part of England -- the English never lost their taste for claret and the shipments from Bordeaux never stopped entirely.

It may be surprising to learn that after the capitulation of the city to France, the party most interested in stimulating the Anglo-Gascon exchange was the French monarchy. Charles VII quickly recognized the trade's potential to contribute to his coffers and in 1455 implemented a tax of twenty-five shillings on every tun of wine exported from Bordeaux. As the revenue began to come in, Charles sought to benefit further from the wine trade by encouraging a modest level of reciprocal shipments from England. The restrictive conditions he imposed, however, made for trading conditions far different from the free-wheeling commercial activity that had prevailed when England was in charge of both ends of this lucrative relationship.[158]

Although the available records for the years after the French takeover only show what was brought into England, not what left Bordeaux, they are sufficient to show that the average annual volume of wine imported stayed in the range of 2,000 to 4,000 tuns per year throughout the remainder of the fifteenth century. The most significant and costliest restrictions imposed by the French on this commerce were the licenses and safe-conduct passes required for the English and Gascon merchants. Not only were these documents difficult and expensive to obtain, they provided no guarantee that the English shippers would be free of hostile treatment once they reached Bordeaux.[159]

Notwithstanding such harassment, the trade continued and, as this account of the relationship between the wine trade and the Hundred Years War should have made clear,

this economic relationship -- despite its fluctuations -- was "dominated by a sense of great vitality, for while the trade was threatened at all points, in the growth, production, and transmission of the wine", it always recovered.[160] This vitality is attested to by Jancis Robinson in her just published, landmark study, The Oxford Companion to Wine. As she states, in part:

> In 1453, at the end of the Hundred Years War, Gascony reverted to French rule; yet its trade with England soon picked up again, even though it never regained its fourteenth century volume . . . after the English were expelled, the Dutch became dominant (and) it was the Dutch who drained the marshy Médoc in the mid-seventeenth century, thereby creating the basis for the fine wines that (re)made Bordeaux's reputation throughout the world.[161]

This qualitative revolution, which changed the image of Gascony from a source of cheap, light, fast-spoiling wines to the premier home for luxurious, dark, age-worthy wines (thanks to the simultaneous invention of the corked bottle) first came to the attention of the English public in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Suddenly, wines like Chateau Lafite, Latour, and Margaux became in great demand and the Anglo-Gascon wine trade flourished anew despite an ongoing trade war between Britain and France and ever-increasing duties on French wines. As Robinson has found:

> Officially, British wine imports from Bordeaux declined but smuggling must have been rife to judge from the prevalence of bordeaux (from those years) in the household sales conducted by Christie's after their foundation in 1766. Conditions in both Bordeaux and Britain were ripe for the development of trade in fine claret: in the Gironde there was now an affluent bourgeoisie . . . with the means to plant and maintain expensive vineyards, while in Britain, Bordeaux's almost exclusive market was created by a wealthy, landowning aristocracy and, soon, the new industrial middle class.[162]

One need not trace the pattern of good days and bad in the Anglo-Gascon wine trade any further into modern times. The point is that this vital economic link between the two partners, though it has shown substantial strain over nine centuries for a variety of reasons, was never broken. Moreover, the cultural ties have been equally resilient and enduring for, even today, as Creighton Churchill has noted:

> in no other part of France will one find so much fluent English spoken as a second language by the educated classes. It is still standard procedure for the sons and

> heirs apparent of Bordeaux firms to be sent to England to serve their apprenticeships: to gain a mastery of the language and to cement economic and social ties.[163]

In short, while there is no doubt that it was England which lost the Hundred Years War, it is equally true that it has not lost its unique and rewarding 'special relationship' with Gascony in trading wine and a host of other valued products. Moreover, it is also clear that it has not lost its kinship with a people who were as impatient with absolute authority as the British ultimately proved themselves to be.

CONCLUSION

From 1337 to 1453, England was fighting France for a variety of reasons on many fronts. Most scholars would agree that among its territorial objectives, none was more persistent than that of Gascony. That was where the war began and where it ended. Of course England's kings wanted the northern French provinces from which their Norman ancestors had come and the warmer western lands which were the home of the Plantagenet family that had supplied the great majority of the Island Kingdom's monarchs. Indeed, these English rulers wanted all of France if they could get it and Henry V nearly made that happen. But it was Gascony -- first, last, and always -- which drove them to war despite its greater distance from the Channel ports, despite depleted treasuries, despite simultaneous military demands in the British Isles, and despite competing internal demands, even including civil war, at home.

About these facts there is not much dispute. It is in evaluating the reasons for England's tenacious commitment to Aquitaine that authorities can differ; and it has been the contention of this study that in that process not enough weight has been assigned to the attachment England had to its wine trade with this southwestern corner of France. From the far-away perspective of the late twentieth century this is an error that is easy to make. Because of the circumstances in which we live, it is hard to conceive of the devotion the members of England's ruling classes in the early centuries of the second millennium had to wine; it is harder still to imagine that they would fight and die for more than a century to retain one place from which wine could be procured.

Our difficulty in comprehending why wine and, indeed, Gascon wine in particular would drive England's kings to such great lengths stems from the fact that we live in an era

of safe drinking water and in a culture which not only offers a myriad of wines from many origins but whole classes of other beverages which the people of medieval times could not even imagine. In their era, when pestilence could reduce national populations by half in less than a decade, wine was regarded as one of the few beverages a person could consume without fear of disease and death and one of the few medicines one could take to restore health. Moreover, in their time when all the Christians of western Europe shared a single faith, wine was also one of the two essential physical requirements for sharing in the most central sacrament of that faith: the Holy Eucharist. It would be wrong to insist that wine was as critical to the functioning of medieval society as petroleum has become to our own. Still, when one is reminded of those people who controlled the political and economic life of England in the times leading to and through the Hundred Years War and how they looked upon wine not just as a source of pleasure but as a protector of their health and their spiritual well-being, it is easier to understand why it was one of the few imported commodities for which their emerging nation would risk mortal combat.

Moreover, it was not just wine but *Gascon* wine for which they would hazard so much. From 1224 forward, with France at least periodically back in control of most of its territories formerly held by the English, Gascony was the only practicable source for this beverage that was thought of not just as a nicety but a necessity. England had already proved to itself that its location and that of much of northern France lacked the sunshine necessary to make wine of acceptable quality and sufficient quantity. Burgundy and other wine regions of eastern France were never important suppliers for England in this era because the shipment of their products involved long and hazardous land or river transport before reaching European ports on the English Channel; and because they already established markets in France, Germany, Switzerland, and the Low Countries.

After the Hundred Years War, as we have seen, Spain, Portugal, southern France, and Italy all came to play a part in slaking England's thirst for wine but never won the favor accorded Gascony -- not only on the grounds of taste -- but because they were outside of

England's dominion. Most importantly, in a period still centuries away from the corked bottle, any source of wine further from England than Bordeaux was regarded askance because the quality of any wine deteriorated with every extra day at sea. Thus, during the period with which this study is concerned, it was Gascony that was held to be England's one abundant, nearby, accessible, and *national* source of good, affordable wine. For all of these reasons and more it was therefore seen as indispensable.

Virtually all of the historians of the period seem to have taken these facts too little into account when considering the motivations behind England's dogged determination to hold on to Gascony during the Hundred Years War.[1] Sovereignty over Aquitaine was, of course, the primary issue that divided Westminister and Paris in this conflict, but, for England, a vital reason for maintaining its political control over this territory was to continue to secure this source of wine, the lucrative trade it generated, and the important contributions this trade made to the monarch's treasury.

Documenting the *degree* of England's attachment to this economic and cultural asset has been one of the tasks of this thesis and, as should have become apparent, the primary sources available have been the tax records the English kept of the wine exports leaving Bordeaux for all destinations and of the portion of that flow that arrived in England. As has also been evident, these official records, while sufficiently complete to document the general dimensions and directions of the early Gascon wine trade, include gaps in the data which leave important questions unanswered. This makes it increasingly difficult to reconcile the conclusions they suggest with other economic evidence, for example, the income sources of the kings of England. Consequently, in considering those avenues for further research into the subject of the roles played by the Gascon wine trade in the conflict between England and France, the first to come to mind is the pursuit of more official records -- both English and French -- which could shed light on this phenomenon. With such evidence in hand, it seems likely that scholars could go beyond the pioneering work of James, Unwin, and Vale in this field.

In addition, it is evident that the question of the extent to which Gascon wine mattered to the Englishmen of this period merits more research. Such an inquiry would undoubtedly prove laborious but could also be exceptionally helpful in confirming the lines of argument advanced in this paper, so many of which are based on inference. We infer, for example, that the English upper classes turned to wine with such zeal because experience had taught them that water made them sick. But what, if anything, did they actually say about this subject? Further, we infer that the English initially moved their source of wine ever southward not only because of the lands they controlled but because they perceived that the qualitative and quantitative improvements they experienced in this migration were due to more exposure to the sun. Are there any written records to confirm this point? Most importantly, we infer that English monarchs prized Bordeaux not only as a source of wine but wine revenue because we have statistical evidence that the latter was among the most important contributions to their royal coffers; but what, if anything, did the kings or their treasurers have to say on this subject?

These are just some of the questions or concerns that come to mind about the Anglo-Gascon medieval wine trade. As this thesis is hardly an exhaustive discussion of the subject far more research could be focused toward a number of the issues presented in this work. For instance, did the Gascons ever return to the business of transporting in addition to the production of wine following the close of the war? That is, in response to the reduction of business with the English, did the Gascons have to pick up the slack in terms of shipping their product to markets or did they simply pass that task on to other European merchants? In addition, further avenues of research can be directed toward the issue of the quality of the wine as the war dragged on. There were complaints raised on behalf of the consumers but it would be valuable to discover if the problems arose from the point of production as M.G.A. Vale found or was the problem at the point of sale with taverners spoiling the vintage as some of the primary sources suggest.

History is a subject replete with mystery, and very often not enough evidence exists to give a complete and full picture of the past. This thesis is not an attempt to answer all the questions concerning the medieval commodity exchange, but rather at the time of the Hundred Years' War, to present a picture of an aspect of the Anglo-Gascon wine trade that had heretofore been underexamined. It is the hope that by reading this work, one can be made more aware of the vital, if not fundamental, role Aquitaine played in the events leading to and through the Hundred Years War and how the production, sale, and distribution of wine between England and Gascony certainly contributed, in part, to the inception and perpetuation of the conflict.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

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3. J.N. Wilford, "In the Annals of Winemaking, 5,000 B.C. Was Quite a Year" (New York Times, June 6, 1996).

4. Johnson, Vintage, 7.

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9. Asa Briggs, Haut-Brion: An Illustrious Lineage (London: Faber & Faber, 1994), 107.

10. Jonathan Sumption, The Hundred Years War: Trial by Battle (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), 587.

11. Briggs, 108.

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13. Johnson, Vintage, 146.

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CHAPTER ONE

1. Robert-Henri Bautier, The Economic Development of Medieval Europe, Trans. by Heather Karolyi, (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & Jovanovich, 1971), 178.

2. Jancis Robinson, ed., The Oxford Companion to Wine (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 400-401.

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8. P.T.H. Unwin, Wine and the Vine: An Historical Geography of Viticulture and the Wine Trade (New York: Rutledge, 1991), 179.

9. Ibid. 171.

10. Bautier, 79.

11. Jonathan Sumption, The Hundred Years War: Trial by Battle (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), 10. Despite that Sir Jean Froissart's life spanned from 1337 to 1410(?), and that in this point in the text I am discussing matters in the 13th century, I see no contradiction in the chronicler reporting events before his birth.

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14. Edouard Perroy, The Hundred Years War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951), 36.

15. Sumption, 10.

16. Perroy, 36.

17. Kenneth A. Fowler, The Age of Plantagenet and Valois: The Struggle for Supremacy, 1328-1498, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1967), 24.

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20. Fowler, 24.

21. Sumption, 15.

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23. Perroy, 35.

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25. Fowler, 12.

26. Perroy, 44.

27. Ibid. 44.

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29. Sumption, 30.

30. Ibid. 29-30.

31. Ibid. 32.

32. Ibid. 33.

33. Fowler, 18.

34. Kenneth Morgan, The Oxford Illustrated History of Britain, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 121.

35. Hugh Johnson, Vintage: The Story of Wine (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989), 140.

36. Fowler, 18.

37. Winston S. Churchill, A History of the English Speaking Peoples, Volume I: The Birth of Britain (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1965), 203.

38. Perroy, 44.

39. Sumption, 17.

40. Ibid. 19 & 29.

41. Ibid. 19.

42. Perroy, 41.

43. Ibid. 44.

44. Ibid. 46. The only professional forces were the knights until the king began to raise taxes to create a professionally trained army which included the peasantry. At that point, Feudalism begins to decline.

45. Sumption, 27-28.

46. Ibid. 26.

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7. Jancis Robinson, ed., The Oxford Companion to Wine (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 401.

8. Anne Crawford, A History of the Vintner's Company (London: Constable, 1977), 14.

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11. Ibid. 361.

12. A.D. Francis, The Wine Trade (London: A. & C. Black, 1972), 4-5.

13. Sumption, 41.

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16. Elizabeth Hallam, ed., The Plantagenet Chronicles (London: Guild Publishing, 1989), 261.

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19. Ibid. 40.

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23. Ibid. 39.

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26. Fowler, 38.

27. Anne Curry, The Hundred Years War (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 1.

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34. Ibid. 62.

35. Sir Jean Froissart, Chronicles of England, France, Spain, and the adjoining countries, from the latter part of the reign of Edward II to the coronation of Henry IV, trans. by Thomas Johnes, esq., (London: William Smith, 1844), 46-7.

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37. Perroy, 52.

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41. Perroy, 53.

42. Ibid. 53.

43. Sumption, 43-44.

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46. Perroy, 55 & Sumption, 46.

47. Perroy, 56.

48. Sumption, 47.

49. Ibid. 47.

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1. Edmund Penning-Rowsell, The Wines of Bordeaux, (New York: The International Wine and Food Publishing Co., Stein & Day, 1971), 38.

2. Ibid. 38.

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4. Hugh Johnson, Vintage: The Story of Wine, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989), 138-139.

5. Andre L. Simon, ed., Wines of the World, (London: McGraw-Hill, 1967), 20.

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7. Alexis Lichine, Wines of France, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), 15.

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9. Kenneth Morgan, The Oxford Illustrated History of Britain, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 123-124.

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14. Ibid. 130.

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17. Morgan, 130-133.

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18. Johnson, 143.

19. Morgan, 133.

20. Ibid. 133.

21. Edouard Perroy, The Hundred Years War, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951), 61.

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24. Johnson, 143.

25. Morgan, 136-139.

26. Ibid. 135.

27. Winston S. Churchill, A History of the English Speaking Peoples, (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1965), Volume I, 293-295.

28. Morgan, 135 & 171.

29. Sumption, 70.

30. Sir Jean Froissart, Chronicles of England, France, Spain, and the adjoining countries, from the latter part of the reign of Edward II to the Coronation of Henry IV, trans. by Thomas Johnes, esq., (London: William Smith, 1844), vol. 1, 4.

31. Morgan, 177.

32. Churchill, 312-313.

33. Ibid. 319.

34. Ibid. 315.

35. Morgan, 177.

36. Ibid. 177.

37. Sumption, 76.

38. Kenneth A. Fowler, The Age of Plantagenet and Valois: The Struggle for Supremacy, 1328-1498, (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1967), 42.

[NOTES TO PAGES 64-72]

39. Calendar of Patent Rolls, Edward III, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1891-1916), vol. 1, 6. As discussed in the previous chapter, the bureaucracy that surrounded the king included the Chancery whose job it was to document all of the crown's pronouncements and decisions. All the king's writs and letters were organized in a variety of ways. Those records that were deemed important and did not compromise royal security were published in the Patent Rolls and displayed to the public so as to inform all the king's subjects of his will.

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41. Ibid. 42.

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7. Jonathan Sumption, The Hundred Years War: Trial by Battle, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), 69.

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15. Nicholas Faith, The Winemasters, (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), 10.

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24. Calendar of Patent Rolls, Edward III, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1891-1916), vol. 8, 471.

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26. Patent Rolls, Edward III, vol. 4, 2.

27. Anglade, 87.

28. Unwin, 197.

29. Sumption, 70-71.

30. Penning-Rowsell, 31.

31. Ibid. 31.

32. Anglade, 87 & Penning-Rowsell, 48.

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33. Faith, 11.

34. Johnson, Vintage, 144.

35. Robinson, 402 & Penning-Rowsell, 30.

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38. Robinson, 402.

39. Unwin, 189.

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41. Simon, 59.

42. Patent Rolls, Edward III, vol. 5, 17.

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48. Crawford, 18 & Penning-Rowsell, 40.

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50. Johnson, Vintage, 143.

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52. Johnson, Vintage, 143.

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7. Edouard Perroy, The Hundred Years War, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1951), 80.

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17. Ibid. 62.

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21. James, 15.

22. Ibid. 14-15.

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25. James, 16.

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30. Christopher T. Allmand, The Hundred Years War: England and France at War, 1300-1450, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 14.

31. James, 19.

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35. Perroy, 118-119.

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38. George P. Cuttino, English Medieval Diplomacy, (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1985), 88.

39. James, 20.

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44. Froissart, vol. 1, 225.

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46. Kenneth A. Fowler, The Age of Plantagenet and Valois: The Struggle for Supremacy, 1328-1498, (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1967), 61 & Perroy, 138.

47. James, 20.

48. Rymer, Foedera, vol. 3, ii, I, from Treaty Roll, 34 Edward III, m.2.

49. Rymer, Foedera, vol. 3, ii, I, from Treaty Roll, 34 Edward III, m.2.

50. Unwin, 200.

51. Patent Rolls, Edward III, vol. 7, 387-388.

52. James, 22-23.

53. Ibid. 23-24.

54. Fowler, Plantagenet and Valois, 66 & 124.

55. Perroy, 159.

56. Froissart, vol. 1, 391.

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57. Fowler, Plantagenet and Valois, 69.

58. Ibid. 66-69.

59. Close Rolls, Edward III, vol. 12, m.18d.

60. Fowler, Plantagenet and Valois, 69.

61. Froissart, vol. 1, 401.

62. Fowler, Plantagenet and Valois, 69.

63. Froissart, vol. 1, 410.

64. Fowler, Plantagenet and Valois, 69.

65. Ibid. 70.

66. Perroy, 165.

67. Ibid. 166-168.

68. Froissart, vol. 1, 510.

69. Perroy, 168.

70. Ibid. 169.

71. Unwin, 200.

72. James, 36.

73. Ibid. 26.

74. Fowler, Plantagenet and Valois, 71.

75. Froissart, vol. 2, 236.

76. Ibid. vol. 2, 237.

77. Ibid. vol. 2, 237-238.

78. Perroy, 196-197.

79. Froissart, vol. 2, 566.

80. Ibid. vol. 2, 571-577.

81. Ibid. vol. 2, 582.

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82. Vale, 27-28.

83. Froissart, vol. 2, 136.

84. Ibid. vol. 2, 136-137.

85. Ibid. vol. 2, 137.

86. Perroy, 197-198.

87. Froissart, vol. 2, 687-692, 696-700, & 708.

88. Ibid. vol. 2, 536.

89. Fowler, Plantagenet and Valois, 75.

90. James, 27.

91. Ibid. 28-30.

92. Ibid. 30.

93. Paul de Rapin-Thoyras, Acta Regia: An account of the treaties, letters, and instruments between the monarchies of England and foreign powers, (London: Printed for Darby, Bettesworth, Fayram, Pemberton, Rivington, Hooke, Clay, Batley, Symon, 1726), vol. 2, 86-87.

94. Perroy, 218. One may recognize the noble names Albreth and Armagnac and notice that they were fighting for the French. I reported earlier that the barons d'Albreth and d'Armagnac were Gascon nobles who eventually returned to English allegiance. This still holds true; they did not switch allegiance again. Rather, the baronial names provided in this quote were French nobility who were given those titles to legitimize the French claim to Aquitaine. Since the Gascon territory was in dispute between England and France, each side had to provide titles to loyal nobles for all the little principalities within the region so as to bring credibility to their claims. As such, there were often two nobles for each disputed territory; one English and one French.

95. James, 38.

96. Unwin, 201.

97. James, 38-39.

98. Calendar of Patent Rolls, Henry IV, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1903-1909), vol. 4, m.2.

99. Perroy, 235.

100. Ibid. 235.

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101. Fowler, Plantagenet and Valois, 76.

102. Rapin-Thoyras, Acta Regia, vol. 2, 120-125.

103. Ibid. vol. 2, 129-131.

104. Perroy, 238.

105. Ibid. 238.

106. Jean de Wavrin, Recueil des Chroniques et Anchiennes Histories de la Grand Bretaigne, (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, & Green, 1864-91), vol. 5, book 1, ch. 3, 176.

107. Fowler, Plantagenet and Valois, 79.

108. Henrici Quinti Angliae Regis Gesta, ed. by B. Williams, (London: English Historical Society, 1850), 44-60, as cited in English Historical Documents, 1327-1485, ed. by A.R. Myers, (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1969), vol. 4, 211-214.

109. Fowler, Plantagenet and Valois, 79.

110. Rymer, Foedera, vol. 4, iii, 179.

111. Fowler, Plantagenet and Valois, 100.

112. Elizabeth Hallam, ed., Medieval Monarchs, (New York: Crescent Books, 1996), 127.

113. Fowler, Plantagenet and Valois, 80.

114. Ibid. 84.

115. Ibid. 84.

116. Ibid. 84-85.

117. James, 40-41.

118. Vale, 12-13.

119. Ibid. 16.

120. Patent Rolls, Edward III, vol. 1, 184-185.

121. James, 41.

122. Perroy, 283.

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123. Wavrin, Recueil des Chroniques, vol. 5, book 4, ch. 8, 165-168 & ch. 10, 170-175.

124. Perroy, 283.

125. Ibid. 284.

126. Wavrin, Recueil des Chroniques, vol. 5, book 4, ch. 21, 207-211.

127. Perroy, 285 & 291.

128. Ibid. 297.

129. Winston S. Churchill, A History of the English Speaking Peoples, (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1965), vol. 1, 422.

130. Fowler, Plantagenet and Valois, 89.

131. Perroy, 310.

132. Ibid. 310-311.

133. Fowler, Plantagenet and Valois, 86.

134. Perroy, 310.

135. James, 41-42 & Vale, 14.

136. Vale, 14.

137. Perroy, 320.

138. Ibid. 320.

139. Ibid. 320.

140. Ibid. 320.

141. Ibid. 321.

142. Ibid. 321.

143. J. Chartier, Chronique francaise du roi de France Charles VII, ed. by Vallet de Viriville, (1858), vol. 3, 1-7, as cited in English Historical Documents, 1327-1485, ed. by A.R. Myers, (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1969), vol. 4, 270-271.

144. J. Chartier, Chronique francaise, vol. 3, 6-7, as cited in E. H. D., 1327-1485, vol. 4, 270-271.

145. Perroy, 321.

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146. Kenneth Morgan, The Oxford Illustrated History of Britain, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 203.

147. Ibid. 203.

148. Creighton Churchill, The Great Wine Rivers, (New York: Macmillan Co., 1971), 153.

149. Vale, 14.

150. Johnson, 148.

151. Calendar of Treaty Rolls, Henry VI, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1955-), roll 134, m.17, as cited in E.M. Carus-Wilson, The Overseas Trade of Bristol in the later Middle Ages, (Bristol: Bristol Record Society, 1937), n. 104, 97.

152. James, 42-43.

153. Vale, 14 & James, 43.

154. Johnson, 148.

155. James, 43 & Vale, 14.

156. Unwin, 203 & Vale, 16.

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159. James, 44.

160. Ibid. 31.

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162. Ibid. 125.

163. Churchill, The Great Wine Rivers, 154.

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CONCLUSION

1. The only historians who give this argument its due respect are those whose subject is the medieval wine trade. As for the historians of the war, none hardly give my argument any attention at all. The only one who comes close is Edouard Perroy; however, it is his opinion that the Anglo-Gascon wine trade is a relatively insignificant side issue. The primary sources show a similarly contradictory view. The chroniclers, like Froissart and Wavrin, hardly mention the wine trade at all much less its impact on the war. But, as one investigates the public and private records of the English monarchy, and note the volume to which they addressed issues concerning Aquitaine and wine, one can clearly see the importance of those items of the period.

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