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The Social Impact of the Hundred Years War on the Societies of England and France

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THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF THE HUNDRED YEARS WAR ON THE SOCIETIES OF
ENGLAND AND FRANCE

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Honors in the Major Program in History
in the College of Arts and Humanities
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ABSTRACT

The Hundred Years War was a series of conflicts from 1337 to 1453 waged between the House of Plantagenet of England and the House of Valois of France. This thesis will analyze the affect that the Hundred Years War had on the societies of both England and France, and in doing so will show that the war was a catalyst for bringing England and France out of what is recognized as the Middle Ages and into the Renaissance and Early Modern Period. The thesis will do this by looking at three sections of English and French society: the royalty and nobility who commanded and who arguably started the war, the soldiers and mercenary companies who fought the war, and the non-combatants who either contributed to the war or were affected by it in positive or negative ways. The evolution in the power and role of the monarchs will be analyzed, while the nobility will be analyzed in their capacity as the leaders during the war and how their station in society was affected by the war. Analysis of those that served and fought in the war are of equal importance, as the Hundred Years War saw the rise of paid professional armies comprised mostly of the peasantry. Mercenary companies will also be looked at, especially in France where they contributed much to pillaging and acts of violence against the people. While the experiences of the combatants are important to understanding the history of the war, the experiences of those that did not directly engage in the war is important to understanding how the war affected society as a whole. Those peasants whose farms were destroyed by raiding armies, mercenaries, or bandits suffered greatly because of the war. Yet some, such as merchants, profited from the war and became greatly enriched. The church and its

role in attempting to mediate and bring peace, while others of the cloth served as outlets of propaganda in support of their kingdom, will also be looked at in this thesis.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The Hundred Years War was a series of conflicts from 1337 to 1453 waged between the House of Plantagenet of England and the House of Valois of France over the throne of France. The roots of this conflict stretch back to the Norman conquest of England in 1066, as the King of England was now also the Duke of Normandy, and thus was a vassal to the King of France, which resulted in a conflict between the two monarchs as the French kings attempted to rein in their English counterpart and reduce the French land held by said English monarch. A more direct reason came after the death of Charles IV of France in 1328, when England's Edward III claimed a right to the French throne through his mother Isabella. This claim was rejected in favor of Philip VI of the House of Valois. Edward III reluctantly acknowledged and paid homage to Philip VI for nine years, but after Philip's interference with Edward's war with Scotland and his confiscation of Aquitaine, Edward reasserted his claim to the French throne. Edward and an invasion fleet sailed across the English Channel in 1340, destroying the defending French fleet in the Battle of Sluys, which marked the opening battle to what would come to be known as the Hundred Years War.

In 1346, Edward mounted a more substantial invasion, landing in Normandy and marching through France pillaging and burning rather than attempting to hold territory in an effort to demoralize the populace, deny anything useful to the enemy, and subverting the authority of Philip. But in August of 1346, Philip forced a confrontation with Edward in what is called the Battle of Crecy. The Battle of Crecy was a triumph for the English, and it served as a proving ground for their longbow men, signaling their rise in importance in the coming years of

the war. Edward then proceeded north and captured Calais in 1347, which remained in English hands throughout the rest of the war and served as a useful strategic asset for keeping troops in northern France.

A third English invasion, this time under the command of Edward III's son, Edward the Black Prince, was launched from Gascony in 1356. It was during this invasion that the Battle of Poitiers was fought. English archers once again proved their worth in this battle, stopping a French cavalry charge and greatly aiding in the ability of the English army to gain ground. It was also during this battle that the French king John II was captured. John was held for ransom, and it seemed that the throne of France was all but won. John's capture and the ransom paid for his release would have a profound impact on the war and the French monarchy for years to come.

The final English invasion of the first phase of the war was largely unsuccessful, especially when compared to previous campaigns. Failing to take either Reims or Paris, and after several unforeseen circumstances that hindered the English ability to fight, Edward consented to negotiating with the French and accepted the Treaty of Bretigny in 1360. The terms of the treaty included that Edward renounce his claim to the throne of France in exchange for increased land in Aquitaine.

Following a dispute over the implementation of a hearth tax by the Black Prince in Aquitaine, France's King Charles V summoned the Black Prince to Paris, to which the Black Prince responded that he would only come with an army behind him. In 1369, Charles declared war and that all English possessions in France were confiscated, and Edward III once again claimed the title of King of France. This phase of the war went poorly for the English, largely due to the fact that Edward III was elderly and in poor health, and the Black Prince was deathly

ill. The Black Prince died in 1376, with his father dying the next year, and the crown went to Edward III's young grandson Richard II. Richard was a particularly disliked king, and his reign faced many difficulties, such as the 1381 Peasant Revolt. The war continued to go poorly as England's holdings in France were slowly reduced, largely thanks to the French commander Bertrand du Guesclin, a man of a relatively humble background who rose to prominence thanks to his skill and recognition of merit, traits which would become more important for both kingdoms as the war went on. The war continued to grow in unpopularity in England, largely due to the expenses it caused, and a peace was reached in 1389 with the Treaty of Bruges.

In between the second and third phases of the war, the monarchs of England and France suffered some of the worst threats brought against them during the entirety of the conflict. Richard II, unpopular for his perceived military weakness, was overthrown and replaced by his cousin Henry of Bolingbroke, who became Henry IV in 1399. In France, Charles VI was falling into insanity while John of Burgundy and Louis of Orleans engaged in an open conflict for power in the wake of the king's weakness. This culminated in the Burgundian occupation forces in 1418.

England under Henry V took advantage of Charles's weakness and the unstable political situation in France to form an alliance with the Burgundians in preparation for another attempt to claim the throne of France. In 1415, Henry sailed from England with an invasion force and after taking the city of Harfleur, conducted a raiding campaign but was forced into a confrontation with French forces. This was the Battle of Agincourt, where an outnumbered English force achieved victory through its superior use of archers against the mounted knights of the French. From 1417 to 1419, Henry retook Normandy and in 1419 he established a formal alliance with

the Duchy of Burgundy, which had by this time taken control of Paris. Henry met with Charles VI in 1420, where the Treaty of Troyes was established, which allowed for Henry to marry Charles's daughter Catherine and for Henry's heirs to inherit the throne of France.

However, Charles VI's son, Charles VII, fought against this and sought to retake his right as the heir and King of France. Initially, the war to reclaim this right did not go well for Charles VII, who lost several battles to English forces and saw morale plummeting. This reversed with the famous victory of Joan of Arc at the Siege of Orleans in 1429, raising morale and turning the tide of the war against the English. This paved the way for Charles to march into Reims, where he was officially crowned as Charles VII. Following Joan's execution by the English in 1431, the war took a more dramatic turn against the English, and in 1435 the Burgundians abandoned the English and swore loyalty to Charles VII, returning Paris to him the same year. Charles was able to centralize the state, reorganizing the army into a professional permanent army controlled by the state rather than a temporary force raised by feudal ties. With this army, Charles was able to successfully take Normandy in 1450, and in 1453, at the Battle of Castillon, French forces won a decisive victory that finally pushed the English out of most of France and ended what historians recognize as the Hundred Years War.

Lasting for over a century, this war had an undeniable impact on the lives of the people of both England and France and helped to shape and alter the two societies, bringing them out of the Middle Ages and into the next period of history. This thesis will analyze this impact and how exactly the societies of England and France were changed as a result of the war and the consequences associated with its progress. To do this, I will look at the three areas of society that both engaged in and were affected by the war.

The first area of society that will be analyzed is the monarchy and the nobility of both kingdoms. This thesis will examine the evolution of the monarchies of England and France as they underwent some of their most difficult challenges, how their authority gradually solidified, and how the institutions of both kingdoms evolved to reflect what they would become in the 17th and 18th centuries as a result of the war. In addition to the monarchs of England and France, the nobility and their shifting role within society will also be discussed. The thesis will look at how the nobility evolved from leading the war as chivalrous mounted knights to serving the king and state within administrative positions in the wake of new military technology, tactics, and the increasing importance of archers, infantry, and artillery over the cavalry that had been the domain of the nobility. This would serve as the foundation for the centralized states that would soon replace the feudal kingdoms of the Medieval period, and also brings up the next area of society that will be discussed, that being the soldiers that fought the war.

To begin with, this section will examine how the institution of the army itself changed over the course of the war. It will examine how the army was assembled, organized, and utilized in times of both peace and war, and how it would be used after the end of the Hundred Years War itself. Next, the leadership of the army will be discussed. Specifically, the thesis will be examining how merit came to take precedence over pedigree, and how those of comparatively low birth to other nobles came to be the most important leaders of the army. Following this, the common soldiers themselves will then be analyzed, focusing on how the soldier went from being a temporary position in times of need into a full-fledged profession, as well as how the common soldier became a much more vital aspect of the war effort. Lastly, mercenary companies and their effects on both the war and the societies of England and France will be looked at.

Specifically, they will be analyzed for how they contributed to the progress of the war, and how they served as a menace to the people that inhabited the kingdoms, especially France, due to the growing importance of war and soldiering as a profession. The destruction caused by mercenaries, as well as soldiers, was but one aspect of the war felt by the countless non-combatants that will be examined in the next section.

In the final chapter, the non-combatants of the war will be examined, focusing on how they both contributed to and were affected by the war, as well as how these affects served to transform society as the war continued and even after it ended. Those that were affected negatively by the war will be the first to be examined, as their suffering through pillaged or confiscated property, unbearable taxes, or a myriad of other painful consequences of war doubtlessly sowed the seeds of discontent that often leads to change, sometimes in the form of violent uprisings. After this, those that willingly contributed to the war, as well as those that benefitted from it, will be looked at. The thesis will look at how the increasing usage of people of various professions that could aid in the war made a more militarized society, as well as a more politically aware society that increasingly used their investment and contribution to the war, whether through services or taxes, to demand more rights. The church and its contribution to the war, sometimes as a negotiator of peace and other times as a source of propaganda, will also be analyzed. The concluding section will seek to examine the evolution of a sense of national conscience and nationalism that developed as a result of the war.

Regarding sources, the majority of primary sources for this thesis will come from the writings of Jean le Bel, Enguerrand de Monstrelet, and especially Jean Froissart. In addition to these, a variety of other primary sources will be provided by Christopher Allmand in his book

Society at War: The Experience of England and France During the Hundred Years War. As for secondary sources, the bulk of information will come from the above mentioned *Society at War*, along with Christopher Allmand's other book *The Hundred Years War: England and France at War*, David Green's *The Hundred Years War: A People's History*, Richard Kaeuper's *Chivalry and Violence in Medieval Europe*, and several other supplementary secondary sources. One limitation that this thesis faces that should be mentioned is that there are few primary sources that are directly attributed to common soldiers or peasants, or at least there are few that can be confirmed to come from such sources. The majority of the primary sources are written by, focus on, or are told with bias toward the nobility, and thus must be examined with care in order to achieve a full understanding of society during this time and the changes it faced as a result of the war. Also, it should be noted that while this thesis argues that the Hundred Years War was a catalyst for great change within English and French society, there were other circumstances and events during that time period that may also have contributed to societal change. Chief among these is the Black Plague, which had caused widespread depopulation that in turn led to higher wages and a consciousness among the common people to demand greater rights. Regardless, this thesis will seek to argue that the Hundred Years War and the actions undertaken to fight it were the primary cause of this change in the two societies.

Analyzing the Hundred Years War as an agent of change within Medieval society is not new to historians. The antiquarian Joseph Hunter in 1852 wrote a pamphlet on the character of Robin Hood, which will be examined further in this thesis, which described his tale as popular among the common people by the reign of Edward III and beyond, and served to reflect the shift of society's view of a hero from the chivalrous knight to the common man armed with the bow

that the soldiers of England had become so famed for, as well as reflecting some of the discontent felt by the people during the war. Much more recently, Christopher Allmand's *Society at War* looks very closely at the war, what its justifications were, how it was organized, led, and fought, and how it affected those who fought and the civilians who didn't. In many ways, Allmand is also analyzing how the war affected multiple areas of society and changed the kingdoms of England and France as a whole, and in many ways this thesis is complimented and supported by Allmand's research. The most recent secondary source included in this thesis, David Green's *A People's History*, also serves to support the argument made in this thesis. Green opens his book by stating that "The reach of government, the role of the monarch, the place of the Church, the relationships between rich and poor, noble and ignoble, and the very identities of both nations were refashioned by more than a century of war," and goes on to describe the period that saw the Hundred Years War as one of "vital, vibrant, brutal change." Thus, the argument that the Hundred Years War was a catalyst for societal change has been discussed and supported by historians for many years, and this thesis will attempt to contribute and support that argument through its analysis of three specific areas of society.

CHAPTER 2: THE KING AND THE NOBILITY

The Hundred Years War saw a change in both the monarchy and the nobility of the English and the French. In their own ways, the monarchies of England and France became stronger and more solidified within their respective countries, each taking on a clearly defined and recognized aspect within society, which would evolve into the 17th and 18th century concepts of England as a constitutional monarchy that was limited by the Parliament, and France as an absolute monarchy. In this way, the King of England was beginning to be seen as part of the political community, answerable to the laws that governed his kingdom, while the King of France began to be seen as possessing a divine right to rule, given to him by God, and was therefore above the law itself. Both monarchies also began exercising more power over the state as a whole, most notably in the creation of an army which was raised, not through feudal obligation, but through contracts and payment, which allowed the king to be at its head and thus increase his power. This war also served to alter the military expectations and roles of the monarchs of the two realms, transforming them from chivalrous knights that fought on the front lines to leaders who delegated the fighting to those more qualified, or at least those that would bring victory. The king was not the only one who was losing his chivalric, knightly demeanor. The knights themselves saw their dominance on the battlefield reduced as mounted combat became increasingly ineffective against infantry that were better trained and equipped than they had been in previous centuries. Advances in other weapons, such as artillery, in addition to an overall change in tactics as the war progressed, further reduced the importance of the mounted knights. The almost religiously important concepts of valor, prowess, and chivalry that the knightly class, and by extension the noble class, used to distinguish and define themselves was

thus put in jeopardy, as there was less opportunity for the nobility to prove that they possessed these traits through battle. Because of this, the nobility had to seek other areas in which they could distinguish themselves. This came in the form of serving the crown in law and administration of their kingdoms and, in the case of England at least, of the newly conquered territories. The nobility began to see service in these areas in society as equally acceptable to service in combat in order to prove their worth and justify their existence, and eventually the concept of seeking glory in battle that had been a staple of chivalry and knighthood gave way to serving the country for the collective good. The military became part of this concept of the common good, and thus merit and experience gained an advantage over bloodline when it came to positions of authority.

Kings

This war saw five English kings and five French kings battle one another for the throne of France, and the war had a profound impact on the monarchies of both kingdoms that served to strengthen them and define their roles within their respective nations. This is not to say that the war was entirely beneficial or even friendly to the monarchies of England and France, nor that this change was painless. This was a period in which monarchs of both kingdoms were placed under a great amount of strain, as kings both shaped and were shaped by the conflict. This war witnessed and led to the deposition of three English kings (Richard II being deposed in 1399, and Henry VI and Richard III being deposed in 1461 and 1485 respectively as a result of the Wars of the Roses which were caused by dissatisfaction felt with the English monarchy at the end of the Hundred Years War) and saw a mad Charles VI nearly destroy France.¹ Both kingdoms saw their

¹ David Green, *The Hundred Years War: A People's History*, (London: Yale University Press, 2014), p. 104.

monarchs undergo challenges to their authority and even have that authority taken away with the king being supplanted by some form of usurper.

England's Richard II was considered by many a disappointment compared to his militarily successful grandfather Edward III, and grew in unpopularity throughout his reign, spending lavishly on court life and entertainment and effectively ruling without a Parliament. This culminated in his deposition by his cousin Henry Bolingbroke, who was crowned Henry IV.² Henry VI also suffered from unpopularity due to his perceived weakness in seeking peace and was blamed for the territorial losses in France, which in part caused the uprising known as Cade's Rebellion in 1450.³ His unpopularity and the ultimate loss of the war during his reign would contribute to the beginning of the civil war known as the Wars of the Roses and his deposition by Edward IV.

In France, when the kingdom had come under the rule of Charles VI, the king seemed to be slowly slipping into madness. Froissart describes this madness, relating it to the Biblical King Nebuchadnezzar, and claiming that he had drawn his sword and wildly began swinging at his pages and nobles.⁴ As his madness continued, the Duke of Orleans took control of the court and effectively ruled France in the king's stead. Both of these instances show an increasing threat to royal authority as the war continued, albeit with each country treating an unpopular king in different ways.

But despite these setbacks and challenges, this period marked a time of strengthening royal power and a change in the relationship between ruler and ruled within the two nations.

² Jean Froissart, Peter Thompson (trans. and ed.), "Chronicles of Jean Froissart", from *Contemporary Chronicles of the Hundred Years War: From the Works of Jean le Bel, Jean Froissart, and Enguerrand de Monstrelet*, (The Folio Society Ltd, 1966), p. 247.

³ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 62.

⁴ Froissart, "Chronicles," 218-219.

Even the coronation and anointing ceremony gives a glimpse at the changes within the monarchies and the differences between French and English kings. In France, the coronation of a king was far more than just a political act, as it was “little less than a beatification,” granting the king almost divine status within his realm.⁵ The coronation gave the king spiritual authority, and in addition to the close relationship that France had long had with the ecclesiastical community, the French king was seen more like a Christian Roman emperor, with all the unrestricted power that such a title would entail. This laid the foundation for what would be the absolutism that defined the French monarchy in the early modern era. In contrast, English kings were never seen as having this image of divine rule, though not for lack of trying. This limited the power of English kingship, and the oath taken by English kings of this period clearly reflects this. A part of the oath states that the king must “maintain and keep the laws and rightful customs which the community of the realm shall choose, and defend and enforce them to the honour of God, to the best of his ability.”⁶ This implied that a new and different contract had been formed between the king and the people, an expansion of what constituted the “community of the realm,” and that the king was now answerable to his people.⁷ While it is unlikely that the English kings of the Hundred Years War gave much thought to the peasantry, this oath was a step towards realizing the importance of a widening political community that would begin to emerge and express itself as the war progressed. The continuing conflict also required the creation of a “war state,” which built on earlier constitutional foundations to create “a realm in which the king was bound by the

⁵ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 109.

⁶ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 109.

⁷ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 110.

law and ruled with the assent of Parliament.”⁸ This did not mean that the English king was weaker than his French counterpart however, as the support of Parliament provided the king with substantial resources, but it did create a political structure in which the king operated within the law rather than above it.⁹ For the French king, who possessed both legal rights and divine authority, there was protection against rebellion and deposition at least in theory, as those that opposed the will of the king would be labeled as sacrilegious and thus the monarchy was generally not threatened within its own territory. The English king, as has been shown, did not have this protection because he was not viewed as holy but instead, while at the apex of the political community, was an intrinsic part of it and subject to its principles, and therefore also subject to the punishment for violating those principles.¹⁰ Two Frenchmen commented on this difference in the views of a king and the loyalty he is owed. Jean Juvenal des Ursins wrote in 1444, “They have a way in England of not thinking twice about changing their kings when it seems convenient, to kill them or evilly bring about their death,” and forty years later, Jean de Rely commented that the deposing of their king was “something which the good and loyal people of France have never done.”¹¹ The fact is, however, that the English are not disloyal to their king, as literature of the time will attest to. The story of Robin Hood, believed to have been written during the reign of Edward III, describes the titular character famed for robbing corrupt nobility as extremely loyal to his king. Upon hearing that the king has invited Robin to an audience in Nottingham, Robin expresses that “I love no man in all the worlde so well as I do my

⁸ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 118

⁹ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 119.

¹⁰ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 113.

¹¹ Kenneth Fowler, *The Age of Plantagenet and Valois: The Struggle for Supremacy 1328-1498*, (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1967), p. 29.

kynges,” and upon meeting him kneels in acknowledgement and asks for his mercy.¹² This perfectly reflects the differences in perceptions of loyalty and kingship between the two countries. The French are loyal to their king as they are loyal to their faith, as the king represents this faith and is in many ways akin to the pope, while the English are loyal to the king so long as he upholds and obeys the laws that he represents.

The importance of the king in society can be seen throughout the war, including in the military strategies used to fight it. The primary strategy used in the early stages of the war, that of the chevauchees, or raids which entailed the pillaging and burning of enemy territory, was an attack against royal authority. This strategy was meant to target the king as well as his land, undermining his power and authority by violently showing that he cannot fulfill one of his primary roles as a king, that being to protect his people from attacks.¹³ The English under Edward III used this strategy to great effect in the beginning stages of the war. Reims, the traditional coronation city of the kings of France, was targeted twice during the war because of its importance in the crowning of kings. It was first attacked in the first phase of the war, when Edward III and one of the largest and best equipped English expeditionary forces to date laid siege to it in 1359. This was after the capture of France’s John II at Poitiers, so Edward may have been galvanized by this and his previous victories to the point where he believed he could take the city and secure the French throne. The siege failed however, putting a halt to English ambitions for a time. Reims was also the target of Joan of Arc in 1429, and was at that time controlled by Burgundian forces. However, after the French victory at Patay in the same year, the

¹² Joseph Hunter, *The Great Hero of the Ancient Minstrelsy of England, “Robin Hood.” His Period, Real Character, etc. Investigated and perhaps Ascertained*, (London: Tucker, Frith Street, Soho Square, 1852), p. 34.

¹³ Christopher Allmand, *The Hundred Years War: England and France at War 1300-1450*, (Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 55.

city was able to be taken by the French and allowed for Charles VII to be crowned King of France.¹⁴ It can be argued that it was the taking of Reims and the subsequent coronation of Charles VII that boosted the morale of French forces and aided in their ultimate victory in the war, clearly showing the importance of the role and ceremony of kingship.

Coronation of English kings was no less important to the nation and to the war effort. Following the death of Edward III, Froissart writes that “England could not be long without a sovereign, and that it would be good for the whole kingdom that they should as soon as possible have [Richard] crowned.”¹⁵ As the English were preparing to crown Richard, French forces had begun raiding the coast, and Froissart writes that the people were declaring that “We must hasten to crown our king, and then set off against these French before they do further damage.”¹⁶ This reflects just how important the office of king was at this time, as retaliation against the French seemed to almost require it before proceeding, even if the king was young and soon to be unpopular.

The Hundred Years War saw the monarchs of England and France acquire an important power, that being the right to raise a permanent and general taxation. In France, the financial demands of the war greatly extended the demands the king could make upon his country. Perhaps the most crucial incident that contributed to this was the ransom that was needed to pay for the captured John II, which led to a tax that was made permanent over a period of years, even in peace time, to meet the demands of the ransom and the war in general.¹⁷ In addition to the ransom, the period of 1359-1369 saw Companies, mercenary bands, ravage the countryside of

¹⁴ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 110.

¹⁵ Froissart, “Chronicles,” 174.

¹⁶ Froissart, “Chronicles,” 175.

¹⁷ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 104.

France. These attacks resulted in the need to raise funds required to build defenses, and required the king's permission to do so.¹⁸ This regular raising of funds for defense against mercenaries, in addition to raising money to go towards the royal ransom and support of the war, made people grow accustomed to permanent taxation and even considered them as meant for the public good. Later, under Charles VII, this practice was continued and can be seen in the tax known as "the Fourth," which placed taxes on the sale of wine for the benefit of "the royal purse."¹⁹ The case in England was much the same, as from 1362 to 1369, Parliament continuously voted to continue a tax on wool that was meant to raise funds for defenses in Calais and Aquitaine and to "save the king's estate and honour".²⁰ In both countries, the king began to gain the power to implement a permanent tax, even in peace time, for the public good as well as his own power.

Another way in which the Hundred Years War strengthened the monarchies of both kingdoms is that it saw the creation of a permanent national army that the king was able to control directly. Building on the military improvements of John II, the establishment of a stable tax system, the military requirements of the war, and the support of a large percentage of the nobility, Charles V was able to create a permanent army that was centralized and organized by the king's officials.²¹ Granted, this permanent army did not survive his death and it was not until the reign of Charles VII that a permanent army under the king's command was created once again. This began in the mid-1440s when Charles VII organized major reforms with the intent of asserting the right of the king to appoint military commanders and to make the army an

¹⁸ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 105.

¹⁹ Enguerrand de Monstrelet, Peter Thomson (trans. and ed.), "The Chronicles of Enguerrand de Monstrelet", from *Contemporary Chronicles of the Hundred Years War: From the Works of Jean le Bel, Jean Froissart, and Enguerrand de Monstrelet*, (The Folio Society Ltd, 1966), p. 344.

²⁰ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 105.

²¹ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 133.

instrument of the state controlled by the king.²² In addition to appointing commanders and raising troops through contracts between the king and his captains, the kings of both England and France became an integral part of the new national army through providing weapons, including artillery that was almost exclusively held by the king.²³ The king was able to maintain control of the army through economic sanctions, as reflected in the system of muster and review of soldiers. A 1424 set of orders for an English commander state that a review of soldiers was necessary to ensure that they were properly equipped and disciplined, and must be carried out “[with the intention of] bringing these into the obedience of our lord the king.”²⁴

This creation of an army under the king’s control, in contrast to the past where defense was generally a local matter, made it where the king came to be seen as the protector of the entire realm, and he must be consulted with all matters related to its defense. An incident in Dieppe in 1440 reflects this, as the people there sought permission from Charles VII before issuing a tax meant to pay for the town’s fortifications, emphasizing that they would not do so without his permission.²⁵ Thus, local defense was seen in a wider context of the defense of the country as a whole, and should be controlled by the crown. This development, in addition to the creation of a national army, meant that war was becoming a matter of state.

While both English and French kings made it a point to be at the head of the rising national armies, this period saw a change in the definition of a king when it came to engaging in battle, at least for the French. Prior to the Hundred Years War, and even at its beginning, a king

²² Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 72.

²³ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 99.

²⁴ John, Duke of Bedford, French text in *Letters and Papers*, ed. J. Stevenson, from Christopher Allmand (ed.), *Society at War: England and France During the Hundred Years War*, (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1998), p. 60-61.

²⁵ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 103.

would be judged by his prowess in battle and his skill as a knight. Chivalric literature such as *The Marvels of Rigomer* portray a good king as being a brave and noble knight, and indeed in war a king was a knight as well as a king and thus shared in the practice of chivalry.²⁶ The chivalric idea of valor had been central to what made a good king, and thus a prosperous nation. Going through Biblical and classical texts, Froissart lists cities and civilizations such as Nineveh, Jerusalem, the Persian Empire, and the Roman Empire, claiming that “valour” moved from one to the other, leading not only to their creation but also to their prosperity and continuation.²⁷ He goes on to explain that “valour” had come to England during the reign of Edward III, the chivalric deeds of him and his son, Edward the Black Prince, having brought it into England where it may aid them against France, or it may return to France as it once did.²⁸ This concept of “valour,” and of the necessity of the king to possess it, reflects the beginning stages of the war where the king was closely associated with knighthood, chivalry, and the honorable combat that those entail.

But as the war continued, this view began to change. In France, which had long been on the losing side of the war, national military success became far more important to the people than the king’s own personal prowess. John II’s capture at the Battle of Poitiers and its ramifications were still fresh in the minds of the French, and in a war where infantry and missile weapons were proving more effective against chivalrous mounted knights, the risk of the king being on the front lines of the battlefield was recognized as being too great, and thus it was acceptable for him

²⁶ Richard Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence in Medieval Europe*, (Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 94.

²⁷ Froissart, “Chronicles,” 90.

²⁸ Froissart, “Chronicles”, 90.

not to participate directly in order to simply prove his skill.²⁹ The court author of Charles VI, Christine de Pizan, even made it a point to state that the military successes of Charles V were not compromised by his limited personal involvement, and emphasized prudence over prowess as the key virtue of kingship.³⁰ By the time of the reign of Charles VII, bravery and skill in battle were no longer requirements for the French throne, nor were they required in order to be perceived as a good king even in times of war, as his title of “The Victorious” demonstrates.

England, however, maintained its view that a true king must prove himself through skill and victory in battle. Failure in military ventures or perceived passivity helped lead to the deposition of English kings during the war. Both Richard II and Henry VI show how perceived weakness and lack of military skill can lead to loss of respect and authority within England, even leading to the deposition of a king. By contrast, kings like Edward III and Henry V were respected greatly for their military successes and were able to use this to further their authority both at home and abroad.³¹ The writing of this period also reflects this, as Froissart, Chandos Herald, and Thomas Walsingham all placed great value on the martial prowess of the king.³² While other writers, such as John Gower, saw the main role of the king as “governor not warrior,” this seems to be the opinion of the minority.³³

But even if chivalry and the concepts of knighthood deteriorated to the point where the king did not engage in direct combat, it was still a useful tool to gain power. The concept of chivalry was a prime way of luring men into fighting for and serving the king, and the founding

²⁹ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 116.

³⁰ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 116.

³¹ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 117.

³² Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 117.

³³ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 117.

of chivalric orders like John II's Order of the Star and Edward III's Order of the Garter were created to serve the purposes of the monarch that founded them and their successors.³⁴ The Order of the Star specifically, despite it not lasting long following the defeat and capture of John II, was intended to bind the French nobility to the Valois monarchy and its knights were not permitted to be a part of any other order.³⁵ In the later stages of the war, as reforms were being undergone for the creation of a permanent army under the king's command, the chivalric search for glory was redirected into service toward the king, who "represented the public good and honour of a nation or people."³⁶ Chivalry thus began to take on a slightly different meaning, one in which those that practiced it were servants to the ruler, and this only continued as the war progressed and the nobility came to be seen as acting protectors of society.³⁷ This allowed for greater control over the nobility and greater power for the king.

By the end of the war, the monarchies of England and France had a clear distinction in that the English king was still at least in part defined by chivalry and knightly prowess while the French king was defined by religion and sacramentalism. But just as the king had to undergo a change in what chivalry and knighthood meant for him, the knights of the nobility too had to cope with a change in their worldview and concept of chivalry.

Knights and Nobles

The Hundred Years War saw a change in the role of the nobility, which had long held dominant positions on the battlefield as mounted cavalry. For the nobility, chivalry and knighthood had long been vital to their identity and behavior. In chivalric literature such as

³⁴ Fowler, *Age of Plantagenet and Valois*, 144.

³⁵ Fowler, *Age of Plantagenet and Valois*, 145.

³⁶ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 72.

³⁷ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 45.

Lancelot do Lac, prowess is given credit as the originator of nobility, as the strong and the valorous were needed to combat evil once it had entered the world.³⁸ Two centuries later, Froissart would echo this when he wrote “as firewood cannot burn without flame, neither can a gentleman achieve perfect honor nor worldly renown without prowess.” Jean Froissart also wrote that “just as the four Evangelists and the Twelve Apostles are nearer to Our Lord than all others, so are valiant Knights nearer to Honour held in higher esteem than all other men.”³⁹ He reasons that this is because knights, and therefore nobility, win honorable titles through honorable combat and are thus rightly superior to other men. Chivalry, prowess, and honor were all linked in the minds of the nobility, as the practice of one produces the others. Chivalry was the honor of the nobility, and that honor was earned and protected through prowess in violence and combat.⁴⁰ Perhaps even more than that, chivalry and the concept of prowess became almost like a religion, virtually worshipped by those that practiced it. Froissart says that Edward the Black Prince, just prior to the battle at Najera in 1367, uttered a prayer to God: “True, sovereign Father, who hast made and created us, as truly as Thou dost know that I am not come here save for the maintenance of right, and for prowess and nobility which urge and incite me to gain a life of honor, I beseech Thee that Thou wilt this day giard me and my men.”⁴¹

In this prayer, the Black Prince looks to God as a supporter, perhaps even the father, of prowess and honor, indicating the almost religious fervor that chivalry and its associated concepts inspired. All of the nobility, no matter how different in wealth or standing they may have been, were united by their shared dedication to chivalry and their ability to fight as mounted

³⁸ Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence*, 130.

³⁹ Froissart, “Chronicles”, 89.

⁴⁰ Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence*, 8.

⁴¹ Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence*, 52.

knights.⁴² Thus, since conflict was a prime means of attaining honor through prowess, war was seen as the greatest chivalric opportunity. The mid-14th century French warrior and theoretician Geoffroi de Charny even declared war as the ultimate chivalric enterprise.⁴³ For the nobility, war and conflict justified their existence as a privileged class just as chivalry and prowess did. Even this war at its outset was shaped by the concepts associated with knighthood, such as demands of honor, demonstrations of prowess, and demands of loyalty.⁴⁴ The first phase of the war, as chronicled by Froissart, very much seemed to focus on the acts of the knightly nobility. Froissart wrote that “Many gallant deeds of arms were performed, many knights and squires on each side were unhorsed and then pushed back into the saddle,” making the war sound much more like a tournament than an actual war.⁴⁵ This is seen again when Froissart is describing the Battle of Poitiers, writing that “There you could see a great assemblage of the finest armour, of rich blazonry, banners and pennons, and noble knights and squires, for all the flower of French chivalry was there,” again making the war seem more akin to a tournament filled with pageantry and performance than a war.⁴⁶

But as the war progressed, the knighthood saw their importance on the battlefield significantly reduced. It came to be seen that success in battle depended on infantry, archers, and eventually gunpowder artillery, rather than the once overwhelming mounted aristocracy.⁴⁷ It should first be noted however, that mounted cavalry was not completely made useless by this war. The early stages of the war saw the use of the chevauchees with great effect, and there are

⁴² Fowler, *Age of Plantagenet and Valois*, 24.

⁴³ Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence*, 161.

⁴⁴ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 24.

⁴⁵ Froissart, “Chronicles”, 95.

⁴⁶ Froissart, “Chronicles”, 103.

⁴⁷ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 126.

records of heavy cavalry successfully defeating infantry. An example of this can be seen in an account of the Battle of Castillon in 1453, detailing how the English lord Talbot and his mounted men destroyed a group of four hundred French archers.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, this war would see countless more instances where cavalry suffered crushing defeats at the hands of infantry and ranged weapons. The first great example of this was at the first great battle of the conflict at Crecy in 1346. Despite being tired and running low on supplies, English forces were able to decisively defeat the French cavalry through a combination of dismounted men-at-arms and archers, securing victory for England in the battle and causing Philip VI and his forces to flee.⁴⁹ Similar results occurred at the Battle of Poitiers in 1356 and most famously at Agincourt in 1415.

As the war progressed, mounted combat began to lose its importance and this is reflected in the writings of Monstrelet, who never mentions the type of pageantry or knightly combat described by Froissart early in the war and often only mentions mounted knights in the context of being ineffective. For instance, in his description of the Battle of Agincourt, he describes how the French knights had cut their lances in half to make them more effective and how “Most of the [knights] and all their horses were driven back among the vanguard by fear of the English archers,” showing not only how the weapons of mounted knights were increasingly losing relevance but also how devastating simple archers were to cavalry.⁵⁰ Even the expensive armor that knights proudly wore contributed to their defeat, as at the battle “this weight of armour and the softness of the sodden earth, as has been said, held them almost immobile,” which severely

⁴⁸ Thomas Basin, *Histoire des regnes de Charles VII et de Louis XI*, from Christopher Allmand (ed.), *Society at War: England and France During the Hundred Years War*, 112.

⁴⁹ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 15.

⁵⁰ Monstrelet, 278.

restricted their effectiveness.⁵¹ It was after Agincourt that English military strategy shifted from the chevauchee raids to siege warfare, further reducing the importance of knights in the overall scheme of the war.⁵² It simply came to the point where chivalrous methods of warfare reduced the efficiency of the war effort, and it simply focused too much on glory rather than results, possibly impeding victory.⁵³ The focus on courage and skill in hand-to-hand fighting had to give way to more efficient methods of leadership, to true generalship and staying away from the front lines if the nobility hoped to hold their position as military commanders.

It wasn't just the nobility's role as valuable cavalry that was threatened during the Hundred Years War. Their very existence and role in society came into question, especially in France. The nobility of France was blamed for not fulfilling its role in society of protecting the people from enemies. In 1357, the author of *De miserabili statu regni Francie*, reflecting on the loss at Poitiers, praised King John II as courageous but condemned the nobility as failures and cowards who had failed their obligation to France.⁵⁴ This view of the nobility in having failed in its military obligation was one of the causes of the Jacquerie revolt in 1358, which will be discussed further in Chapter 4.⁵⁵ The nobility had to find a way to prove themselves and regain their honor, and this came in the form of service to the nation.

Other opportunities aside from direct military action were made available to the nobility during the Hundred Years War, allowing them to serve in different ways while still maintaining their place in society and even achieving honor. The war led to an expansion of government and

⁵¹ Jean de Waurin, *Recueil des Croniques et Anchiennes Istories de la Grant Bretagne*, [1399-1422], from Christopher Allmand (ed.), *Society at War: England and France During the Hundred Years War*, 107.

⁵² Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 29.

⁵³ Fowler, *Age of Plantagenet and Valois*, 149.

⁵⁴ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 43.

⁵⁵ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 43-44.

encouraged participation in the developing bureaucracies and assemblies, which the nobility participated in and vied for favor with the king.⁵⁶ The nobility, with their great local influence, were vital in the role of military organization and recruitment, enlisting their tenants and virtually anyone associated with them.⁵⁷ Service in the king's council or, in England, Parliament also gave ample opportunity for the nobility to contribute to the war effort and advance the cause of their country.⁵⁸ And of course, for the English at least, the conquering of new territories required members of the nobility to act as administrators of said territories in the name of the king. This transition was fairly easy considering that chivalric ideas were not against serving the king loyally and in any way possible, and even if the idea of chivalry was against being paid a wage for that service, it is doubtful that the nobility minded.⁵⁹ In the era of increasingly effective infantry and ranged weaponry that made chivalry on the battlefield difficult, service in law and administration were publicly acknowledged as noble and became more acceptable for the nobility to engage in.⁶⁰

Through this service to the nation as a whole rather than personal glory, chivalry began to give way in favor of patriotism.⁶¹ The chivalrous knight was becoming a soldier, and honorable single combat was abandoned in favor of a sense of fighting together as a nation in support of said nation. In this emerging world of soldiers, the aristocracy still held on to leadership roles, but merit and military experience was quickly becoming a far more vital requirement than highborn descent.

⁵⁶ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 114.

⁵⁷ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 64.

⁵⁸ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 65.

⁵⁹ Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence*, 110.

⁶⁰ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 40.

⁶¹ Fowler, *Age of Plantagenet and Valois*, 181.

CHAPTER 3: SOLDIERS AND MERCENARIES

The Hundred Years War witnessed a change in what constituted an army, how an army was organized, and what it meant to be a soldier. The kingdoms of England and France reorganized their armies according to their own needs, with England creating an army that was ready and willing to invade and conquer territory and France creating an army that was capable of defending that territory. Both kingdoms set about replacing the feudal method of raising a temporary army in favor of a permanent and professional force of paid soldiers with a defined chain of command, thus turning the practice of war into an organized profession. The end result for both kingdoms was a national standing army, although there was one distinction in that the French army was centrally commanded by the monarch rather than through a system of contractual obligations that defined the English indenture system. Those that led the army also began to change during this period. As mentioned at the end of the last chapter, the militaries of both kingdoms were beginning to recognize and promote those of proven skill to important military commands rather than granting them these positions based purely on their noble bloodline. While those of peasant birth rarely ascended to the heights of military command, it is still notable that those members of the lesser nobility and even captains of mercenary bands were elevated to such high positions because of their recognized military acumen. The ordinary soldier, and the concept of a soldier itself, evolved as well. Again, as stated in the previous chapter, knights and cavalry were slowly losing their importance on the battlefield during this war. The common infantry, and especially the archer, became vital to the outcome of numerous

battles and to victory in the war itself. The artillery and siege engines operated by non-noble soldiers became more and more important as the war progressed, and as the two kingdoms reorganized their armies into a permanent national force, the profession of being a soldier developed and became a life-long career. Some of these that took the profession of soldier joined the ranks of mercenary companies, some of which fought for one of the two kingdoms while others operated independently and ravaged the countryside for no one's gain but their own. The emergence and strength of these companies reflects the political turmoil that was prevalent during this time, especially in France, and their actions largely contributed to the non-combatant facing the worst effects of the war.

Army Organization

The reorganization of the armies of England and France from forces raised ad hoc based on feudal obligations to national standing armies of paid soldiers is perhaps one of the greatest changes brought about by the Hundred Years War. The institution that was the army changed, and various reforms and methods of organization were undertaken in order to create this new form of permanent military. Each kingdom underwent changes that had the goal of making them more effective in their relative positions in the war, making the English army a more effective invading and garrisoning force and making France a more effective defensive force and eventually a force of reconquest.

In England, the practice of raising troops by feudal levy had all but stopped, and a system of indenture through which men would choose to serve in return for pay or reward had taken its

place.⁶² Indentures could be either written or oral contracts, and stated the strength and rank of the forces to be raised, specified the period and place of service, and set the rates of payment.⁶³ A good example of an indenture can be provided by looking at the 1397 indenture contract between John of Gaunt and Nicholas de Atherton. The contract states that “Nicholas is retained and bound towards the said duke [John of Gaunt], to serve him both in time of peace and in war.”⁶⁴ The contract then goes on to specify the amount of payment per year and the stipulations for any profits of war taken. The division of plunder was an important aspect discussed in most such contracts, and special men known as butiniers were appointed to collect and assess the value of taken spoils and to ensure an equitable and lawful division of spoils.⁶⁵ It is important to note that the terms in the contract mention service in times of both war and peace, meaning that from this form of contract a permanent force could be raised and maintained without the need for an actual conflict. However, it should be noted that this retaining of services in times of peace could also have been part of what has been called “bastard feudalism,” which was essentially a weak shadow of the fading practice of feudalism, wherein a relationship based on feudal loyalties was replaced by payment for service to a patron.⁶⁶ It is also important to clarify that this contract, and many similar indentures, is not merely limited to one man serving another, as it also includes the

⁶² Christopher Allmand (ed.), *Society at War: England and France During the Hundred Years War*, (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1998), p. 44.

⁶³ Kenneth Fowler, *The Age of Plantagenet and Valois: The Struggle for Supremacy 1328-1498*, (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1967), p. 93.

⁶⁴ “Indentures of Retinue with John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, enrolled in Chancery, 1367-1399,” from Allmand, *Society at War*, 57.

⁶⁵ Christopher Allmand, *The Hundred Years War: England and France at War 1300-1450*, (Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 128.

⁶⁶ P. R. Cross, “Bastard Feudalism Revised.” *Past & Present*, no. 125 (1989): 27.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/650860>.

households, allies, and soldiers of both parties that are all swearing to abide by the contract and serve or fight as requested.

The indenture mentioned above discussed the payment that Nicholas would receive, but it was not just captains such as him that were paid. These contracts stipulated that all those in service to the contractor, and to an extent the king, received payment. In regards to this, payment was given based on rank. A 1424 text describes an indenture that listed the payment as “for a knight banneret, captain of men-at-arms, four shillings sterling a day in English money; for a knight bachelor, likewise a captain, two shillings sterling; for a mounted man-at-arms, twelve pence sterling a day; and for each archer, six pence a day,” showing that the entire army was under a system of payment in return for service.⁶⁷

The English also instituted the system of muster and review in order to ensure military readiness and effectiveness, which also served as a method of maintaining control over the army through the use of economic sanctions should the review deem the soldiers ill equipped or disciplined. A set of orders from John, the Duke of Bedford and regent of France in the name of Henry VI, given in 1424 describe the purpose of these musters as “bringing [the soldiers] into obedience of our lord the king,” and ensuring that all the soldiers were properly equipped and organized.⁶⁸ The fact that the orders stipulated that the muster and review was meant to bring soldiers into proper obedience of the king clearly reflects the organization of an army controlled by the state, although perhaps not as directly as the French army. This desire of the army to be obedient to the king, and to be disciplined, was of paramount importance when it came to the

⁶⁷ *Letters and Papers*, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 59.

⁶⁸ Orders given for the siege of Guise, 1424, *Letters and Papers*, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 61.

organization of the army. Ordinances issued by Henry V in 1419 recognized the existence the indiscipline and attempted to control it by ordering that:

All maner of men beyng wyth in our hooste, what so euer degree, state, condicion, or countrey he be of, that he be lowely obedient to our constable & marshal in All lawefull And honest things, vnder payne of forfaying body and goodes. Also we comaunde that All [soldiers], And All suche that reseue wages of vs And oure Realme, be lykewyse obedient vnto theyr immediatt captaynes And maisters.⁶⁹

This ordinance charged both the officers and the common soldiers to obey the chain of command on penalty of loss of wages or other goods, thus presenting a serious attempt to prevent indiscipline in the army by creating a clear chain of command, with soldiers obeying their immediate superiors and captains obeying the constable and marshal, and punishments for those that disobey it. The constable and marshal had authority delegated to them to try in military courts any soldiers that engaged in crimes such as desertion or broke the rules of discipline.⁷⁰ It is perhaps notable to point out that the captains had to obey the constable and marshal instead of directly obeying the king. Granted, it is assumed that the constable and marshal acted on behalf of the king, but it is still interesting to point out that in this specific ordinance the king is not directly in command of the army. This is due to the fact that, as the aggressor throughout the war, the king could afford to give his commanders more freedom to act, resulting in an organized but not centrally commanded army.⁷¹

A system of providing provisions also had to be established along with the creation of an army. Living merely off the land, especially in foreign territory, could prove difficult and lead to

⁶⁹ 1419 ordinances by Henry V of England, *The Essential Portions of Nicholas Upton's De Studio Militari, before 1446*, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 94.

⁷⁰ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 50.

⁷¹ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 95.

both indiscipline and poor relations with the civilian population. A 1418 letter between Henry V and the Aldermen of London perfectly reflects the needs of the army for provisions and the method by which it was delivered. In the letter, Henry V writes that the Aldermen should “in all the haste that ye may, ye will [cause to] ariue as manie smale vessels as ye may goodly, with [provisions] and [especially] with drinke,” stipulating that “for the which vessels ther shal be ordeigned suffisant [escort],” thus providing protection for the vital supplies.⁷² Keeping the troops well supplied not only kept them prepared for battle, it also kept them happy and less likely to pillage the countryside and spread indiscipline and disorganization within the army. With enough food and drink, the soldiers were likely more willing to obey orders.

In speaking of provisioning, it is important to take a moment to mention the growing importance of the navy that came as a result of the Hundred Years War. While neither side made many innovations in naval warfare, there was no creation of a permanent navy, and there was not much in the way of fierce determination to control the sea, it was still important in military terms as a barrier and as a vital route to transport men and supplies to the various theaters of war. One of the opening conflicts of the war, that of the Battle of Sluys in 1340, was in fact a naval battle. This battle saw the French king Philip VI attempt to stop Edward III’s invasion fleet, but ended with the English destroying the French fleet and gaining control of the English Channel, thus allowing for multiple invasion forces to cross into France. Both Edward III and Richard II impressed large numbers of ships for the purpose of defense, and at times these defensive fleets employed almost as many soldiers as a field army, thus requiring a great expense and showing

⁷² 1418 letter from Henry V to Mayor and Alderman of London, *Memorials of London and London Life in the XIIIth, XIVth, and XVth Centuries*, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 71.

the growing sense of importance when it came to the navy.⁷³ Naval forces were even sometimes used in conjunction with land forces, especially in sieges, as can be seen in the siege of Calais by the English in 1347 and the siege of Harfleur by the French in 1416.⁷⁴ Utilizing the sea as a method of disrupting trade and engaging in coastal raids was also seen during the Hundred Years War. The French engaged in this in 1377 when they pillaged and burned the coastal town of Rye in Sussex County.⁷⁵

The army of England also had to change as the goals of the war changed. Under the reign of Henry V and Henry VI, the short campaigns of pillage and plunder were no longer the goal of the crown. Instead, the goal had become conquest and the defense of that conquest, which facilitated the need to reorganize the army from a constantly moving, pillaging body into an occupation and garrisoning force to secure the conquered land.⁷⁶

In many ways, France developed its army in much the same fashion. France, even early in the war, began issuing pay for soldiers based on rank. This can be seen in an ordinance issued by John II in 1351, detailing that “one banneret will receive in wages forty shillings a day; a knight, twenty shillings,” and so on.⁷⁷ This same ordinance also called for a muster and review, ordering that “close attention shall be paid to see whether he is riding the horse which was listed, and whether he is properly armed, as he ought to be.”⁷⁸ Should any of the soldiers reviewed be found lacking in their numbers or equipment, their pay was thus withheld as a fine. In this way,

⁷³ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 86.

⁷⁴ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 86.

⁷⁵ Jean Froissart, Peter Thompson (trans. and ed.), “Chronicles of Jean Froissart”, from *Contemporary Chronicles of the Hundred Years War: From the Works of Jean le Bel, Jean Froissart, and Enguerrand de Monstrelet*, (The Folio Society Ltd, 1966), p. 174.

⁷⁶ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 96.

⁷⁷ April 1351 ordinance by John II of France, *Ordonnances des Roys de France de la Troisieme Race*, from Christopher Allmand (ed.), *Society at War: England and France During the Hundred Years War*, p. 45-47.

⁷⁸ April 1351 ordinance by John II of France, Allmand, *Society at War*, p. 45-47

both discipline and military effectiveness could be maintained. Once again in the same ordinance, other methods of maintaining effectiveness and discipline were utilized, such as ordering that any group of soldiers that are without a commander to be assigned one by the Constable, Marshal, or Master of the Crossbowmen, as well as providing replacement horses for knights whose mounts were killed or lost.⁷⁹ This is not to say that the system was completely efficient from the outset. The ordinances of 1351 and 1374 reveal that captains and troops were defrauding the king, mustering officers and paymasters willingly gave false information, bribes were accepted, and wages were withheld and pocketed.⁸⁰ In addition, the French were still not a fully organized and disciplined force at this time. Jean le Bel describes the French force at the Battle of Crecy as being “one in front of the other without any order,” as opposed to the careful and ordered position of the English, which he suggests contributed to their defeat.⁸¹ These issues would be all but rectified by the time of Charles VII.

Despite this example of early steps towards the creation of a royal army, France had not completely abandoned the *arriere-ban*, or the general call to arms, that was the staple of feudal methods of raising a military. A 1369 proclamation by Charles V utilized the *arriere-ban* to order the people of Rouen to “be duly armed and mounted, and those who cannot reasonably procure shall [at least] be adequately armed...so as to resist our said enemies, and do and carry out what you think best for the proper defense of our kingdom.”⁸² This reflects that France still had not completely abandoned the old feudal practice like England had and that national defense

⁷⁹ April 1351 ordinance by John II of France, Allmand, *Society at War*, p. 45-47.

⁸⁰ Fowler, *Age of Plantagenet and Valois*, 133.

⁸¹ Jean le Bel, Peter Thompson (trans. and ed.), “Chronicles of Jean le Bel”, from *Contemporary Chronicles of the Hundred Years War: From the Works of Jean le Bel, Jean Froissart, and Enguerrand de Monstrelet*, (The Folio Society Ltd, 1966), p. 70.

⁸² Froissart, *Chroniques*, XVIII, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 48.

and military action was still on a somewhat local level at this time. However, it should be noted that this was likely done out of emergency, as France was on the defensive at this point during the war and likely was too engaged in other areas to send a sufficient professional force. Essentially, the defensive needs of France meant that the more traditional feudal method of raising an army would survive longer than it would in England.⁸³ England did not face the problem of enemy invasion and thus did not need to call for its citizens to take up arms in their own defense or issue any sort of feudal call to arms.

In spite of his use of the *arriere-ban*, Charles V continued to organize the army with his own ordinances. The ordinance issued in 1374 attempted to take measures to stop desertion, as well as implemented measures to establish proper military units controlled by officers that acted on behalf of the king. This is made most clear when the ordinance states that “none shall be a captain of men-at-arms in our service...without our letters and authority...under penalty of forfeiting horses and equipment, and all moveable possessions and land.”⁸⁴ This could perhaps be seen as a step taken to curb mercenary problems by punishing them for commanding troops without the king’s permission, but more importantly it is an example of the growing organization of the army and the concepts of discipline and order that would define the army that was commanded by the king. Charles V continued in his attempts to create a national army, made up entirely of volunteers bound to the king through *lettres de retenue*, a concept similar to English indentures, and commanded by officers that were appointed by and firmly controlled by the king

⁸³ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 93.

⁸⁴ 1374 ordinance by Charles V of France, *Ordonnances des Roys de France de la Troisieme Race*, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 49.

in order to establish a force that could effectively achieve the goal of reconquest.⁸⁵

Unfortunately, the death of Charles V and the Constable Bertrand du Guesclin in 1380, which led to the crowning of the mentally unstable Charles VI and growing political disorder, led to the decline of the French army as an effective force until the reign of Charles VII.

This idea of discipline brought about by a paid professional army was very much appealing to the leaders of France, just as it was to the leaders of England. Philippe de Mezieres, a councilor of Charles VI who urged his king to issue changes in the French army, expressed this when he stated that “a good number of first-rate soldiers fighting with your gallant and royal majesty will...bring you greater victory than would a large crowd of your subjects, some of whom will have come voluntarily, others through the *arriere-ban*, but all of whom will lack discipline,” reflecting a growing belief that it is better to pay for soldiers that will fight professionally and with a sense of order rather than a mob of quickly and temporarily raised troops.⁸⁶ A professional army of disciplined troops began to be seen as being superior, even against a numerically superior enemy, and thus more desirable to all areas of society.

The evolution of the national army reached its zenith under the reign of Charles VII, who established an army with the organization and discipline to finally put an end to the war and expel the English. Charles VII issued these ordinances with the purpose of asserting the authority of the crown to appoint military commands and to make the army an efficient weapon of the state that was controlled by the king.⁸⁷ A chronicler by the name of Mathieu d’Escouchy writes that Charles VII organized the army under fifteen captains who were chosen by him, each of

⁸⁵ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 95.

⁸⁶ Philippe de Mezieres, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, 1389, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 50.

⁸⁷ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 72.

whom would have one hundred lances under his command, with each lance consisting of six persons: three archers, a man armed with a dagger, a man-at-arms, and a page. Each of these captains and their troops would be assigned to different towns in different provinces throughout the kingdom in order to effectively defend the kingdom as a whole.⁸⁸ These reforms seemed to take a firm hold within the army, as the chronicler Monstrelet noted that “All these soldiers were paid regularly each month, and during the campaign none of them would dare to make any prisoners or ransom any horse or other beast, unless they belonged to the English and their allies, nor to seize provisions anywhere without paying for them, again unless they were in possession of the English engaged in warfare, for they could lawfully seize only these latter.”⁸⁹ Perhaps most importantly, Charles VII issued an ordinance in 1448 that established the francs-archers, a group comprised of one man from each parish in France that was charged with always keeping himself ready and equipped for war. Charles declared in this ordinance that “it is right and proper that we should establish and ordain in our kingdom a certain number of men for its defense, men of whom we can make use in our service in time of war without our having to employ others than our own subjects for this purpose,” thus forming the nucleus of a permanent, national army.⁹⁰ Much as in England under Edward III, these archers were charged with practicing on all feast days and holidays so that they remained prepared in case of war, and in addition to their pay of four francs per month, they were also exempt from all taxes, all but ensuring that those chosen as francs-archers should have been more than willing to continue to keep themselves prepared as they were ordered to. This system of payment and benefits in exchange for

⁸⁸ *Chronique de Mathieu d'Escouchy*, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 53.

⁸⁹ Enguerrand de Monstrelet, Peter Thomson (trans. and ed.), “The Chronicles of Enguerrand de Monstrelet”, from *Contemporary Chronicles of the Hundred Years War: From the Works of Jean le Bel, Jean Froissart, and Enguerrand de Monstrelet*, (The Folio Society Ltd, 1966), p. 337.

⁹⁰ *Ordonnances des Rois de France de la Troisieme Race*, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 55.

disciplined and professional military service is a perfect example of how the French national army developed and operated. While Charles VII justified this act of establishing a permanent army by citing the external threat of England and the internal threat of mercenary companies ravaging France, the army was maintained long after both threats had subsided.

The chief difference these changes in France and the changes in England is that the changes in France were spearheaded by the king, who served as a symbol of unity to France during the trying times of invasion and defeat that was the Hundred Years War.⁹¹ The process of creating a national army in England developed swiftly, while in France the development was slow and experienced periods of stasis or regression, but by the end of the war Charles VII had outdone his English counterpart.⁹² The end result was an army that was directly controlled by the king rather than through a system of delegation, thus creating an army that was truly an instrument of the state.

The Soldiers

For these new national armies, a new kind of military leader was required. No longer did the upper echelons of the nobility hold a monopoly over the heights of military command. Instead, military commanders were chosen based on proven skill and ability, and some of the most famous and successful commanders of the Hundred Years War came from the ranks of the lesser nobility. This type of social advancement was seen even in the early years of the war, as Thomas Grey noted in the late 1350s when he wrote that “many [men began their careers] as archers, then becoming knights, and some of them captains,” showing that merit and skill were

⁹¹ Allmand, *Society at War*, 44.

⁹² David Green, *The Hundred Years War: A People's History*, (London: Yale University Press, 2014), p. 130.

being rewarded with advancement even at the wars beginning.⁹³ Perhaps the single greatest example of this early practice of advancement through merit was the appointment of Bertrand du Guesclin as Constable of France, the single highest position of military authority outside of the king himself, in 1370. Froissart wrote that du Guesclin responded to the appointment by saying that “it is very true that I am a poor man of low birth,” and that he was not worthy of this position.⁹⁴ Regardless of his supposedly humble refusal, Charles V still insisted that he and his council had deemed du Guesclin was indeed worthy of this position, and du Guesclin’s service as Constable has been seen as the pinnacle of the power and prestige of the office.

As the war continued, the concept of nobility having an unquestioned right to high military command began to be challenged, especially in France. The *Quadrilogue invective*, written by the Norman Alain Chartier in 1422 as his homeland had been overrun by the English, questioned whether nobility was awarded by virtue of birth or by recognition of merit, thereby questioning whether birth warranted high military office or if said offices should be given to those of experience and merit in times of war.⁹⁵ This question was more or less answered over the course of the war, as leaders of proven skill were sorely needed on both sides of the conflict. Strong leaders that commanded respect based on their accomplishments were instrumental in maintaining discipline and order within the growing national armies of both England and France, and the ability to lead became increasingly associated with personal qualities and skills which then earned nobility and renown.⁹⁶ Charles VII furthered this recognition of merit with his military reform ordinances, where he appointed military leaders and gave promotions based on

⁹³ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 133.

⁹⁴ Froissart, “Chronicles,” 142.

⁹⁵ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 44.

⁹⁶ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 50.

ability rather than having nobles take positions through the “right” of their birth.⁹⁷ These qualities and this growing sense of skill and merit earning nobility paved the way for the creation of the military academies of the 16th century.⁹⁸

Even the captains of mercenary companies, if they proved themselves capable commanders, were able to achieve positions of authority during the Hundred Years War. Arnaud de Cervole was in and out of French royal appointment and was appointed royal chamberlain in 1363, Amiel de Baux held office and a military position under the French crown in 1371, and Hugh Calveley and Robert Knolles both also served as mercenary captains before serving the English king.⁹⁹ Even the famed Bertrand du Guesclin was himself a Breton mercenary captain before he served the French crown as Constable.

Perhaps the most famous military commander of the Hundred Years War, and certainly one of most unusual individuals of this time to be placed in charge of troops, is undoubtedly the Maid of Orleans, Joan of Arc. There is debate as to the extent of Joan’s actual role within the military, whether she fought and directly commanded troops or gave advice to noble commanders or simply served as a symbol for the army to rally behind, but it is known that she received explicit permission from Charles VII, who was known to directly choose his military commanders, to attempt to do what she claimed she had been ordained by God to carry out, that being the lifting of the siege of Orleans and the expulsion of the English from France, despite the skepticism and hostility shown to her at court.¹⁰⁰ Even if her role was limited to serving as a

⁹⁷ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 73.

⁹⁸ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 53.

⁹⁹ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 75.

¹⁰⁰ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 33.

symbol, far from the battlefield, the fact that Charles VII encouraged her and allowed her within the army at all is a testament to the changing landscape of the French army.

With the advent of artillery and siege weapons such as serpentines and culverins, which were deemed “unchivalrous” as compared to cavalry by the nobility and thus not generally commanded by them, new positions of authority and importance were made available to those who could prove proficient in their use. For instance, an account of the Battle of Castillon in 1453 describes that “There was then in the king of France’s service, as superintendent of all these machines [artillery] and of all the other material of war, a certain Jean Bureau, a citizen of Paris, a man of humble origin and of small stature, but of purpose and daring who was particularly skilled and experienced in the use and exercise of weapons of this sort,” and goes on to say that Jean Bureau had even served in a similar capacity to the king of England.¹⁰¹ This shows that extensive knowledge and expertise in the use of artillery, not high birth, was the requirement for such a high position of authority, and perfectly represents the growing sense of promoting merit in all aspects of the military.

For the English, knights of the lower aristocracy such as Sir Thomas Dagworth, Sir Robert Knolles, and Sir Hugh Claveley, achieved fame and authority in the late 14th century through their skill rather than their birth, relying on their reputations and their successes for support.¹⁰² These English knights of comparatively lower social status but long years of service were further elevated in the 15th century, as the number of knights in the English army had begun to decline, and the vast numbers of territories in France that needed to be protected and garrisoned required the presence of authority in the form of one of these lower aristocratic

¹⁰¹ Thomas Basin, *Histoire des regnes de Charles VII et de Louis XI*, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 111.

¹⁰² Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 71.

knights.¹⁰³ However, comparatively speaking, England could not boast as many individuals of such humble origins like du Guesclin serving in such high positions of authority like constable or marshal.¹⁰⁴ This could in part be explained due to the high success rate of the upper echelons of the English nobility during the war, as opposed to the typically poor record of military performance of the French royalty and nobility. The French found themselves with a much greater need for effective military commanders in order to reverse their losses and defend the land that was slowly being swallowed up by the English, and thus were more open to accepting the comparatively lower members of the aristocracy into powerful positions of military authority based on their skill and merit if it meant that they would provide the French with a greater chance for victory.

But while the leaders of armies are no doubt important, one must not forget that wars are won by soldiers, and the Hundred Years War saw the development of skilled and professional soldiers. As noted in the previous chapter, mounted knights engaging in cavalry charges were gradually losing importance in warfare as new weapons, better trained infantry, and shifting objectives during the Hundred Years War caused them to become less important in achieving victory. The common soldier, especially the archer, came to replace the heavy cavalry as the most important unit in war, even if they still were not as respected as the mounted nobility. The infantryman and the archer continuously grew in importance as the war progressed, and soldiering for many became a profitable lifetime career due to the new methods of army organization that provided ample enticements for those who would serve.

¹⁰³ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 72.

¹⁰⁴ Fowler, *Age of Plantagenet and Valois*, 120.

The recognition of the importance of the archer developed fairly early in the war for England, likely as a result of their heavy contribution to English victory in the battles of Crecy and Poitiers. Jean le Bel wrote that at the Battle of Crecy, “The arrows of the English were directed with such marvelous skill at the horsemen that their mounts refused to advance a step,” thus largely contributing to their victory.¹⁰⁵ Froissart in turn wrote that during the Battle of Poitiers “the English archers were an inestimable advantage to their comrades, and struck terror into the hearts of the French, for the rain of arrows was so continuous and so thick that the French did not know where to turn to avoid them, with the result that the English kept gaining ground.”¹⁰⁶ Later, in 1363, Edward III made a point to address the lapse in the practice of archery throughout England, and ordered that “all able-bodied persons within your county should, on feast days, when there is a holiday, practice with bows and arrows, and with crossbows and bolts in their games, so as to learn and exercise the art of archery,” even going so far as to threaten imprisonment if they should engage in other activities than these.¹⁰⁷ The importance of archery to the English military cause is clearly shown in this, but what is also shown is that Edward III ordered that “all able-bodied persons” should engage in the practice of archery, meaning nobles and non-nobles, which could be interpreted as a recognition of the contribution and importance of the non-noble soldier in terms of serving the state. In this regard it is important to point out that archers and infantrymen were drawn from the ranks of the peasantry and yeomanry, not the nobility, and yet formed the backbone of the English army both numerically and tactically.¹⁰⁸ The importance of archers and regular infantry on the battlefield was again shown during the

¹⁰⁵ Jean le Bel, “Chronicles of Jean le Bel”, 70.

¹⁰⁶ Froissart, “Chronicles,” 112.

¹⁰⁷ *English Historical Documents. IV: 1327-1485*, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 98.

¹⁰⁸ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 127.

Battle of Agincourt in 1415. An eye-witness account states that the English arrows “fell so thick and fast that no man dared to uncover himself nor even to look up,” wounding many of the French troops before the armies could close the gap between each other, and continues by stating that after sending the French cavalry into disarray, the English archers then took up their melee weapons and proceeded to kill the disorganized French forces without mercy.¹⁰⁹ Thus it was that the longbow became the backbone of the arsenal of a successful army, due to its proven success on the battlefield, its penetrating power, its range, and its ability to be utilized by a lightly armed foot soldier, mounted as part of a light cavalry force, and during the sieges that came to play a more important role in the later stages of the war.¹¹⁰ The longbow almost became a symbol, especially to the class of people that utilized it, as it was the weapon that was overturning the military hierarchies and laying waste to the previously dominant force that was the knightly cavalry. It is no surprise that Robin Hood, the only English literary hero prior to the modern era that was a commoner and not a noble, was famously armed with a longbow.¹¹¹

In speaking of Robin Hood, whose story was popular by the time of the reign of Edward III and which continued to grow in popularity throughout the war, there is much to be said of what the new and formidable soldier looked like. Essentially, Robin Hood was no different than any man except that he was skilled with a bow, and while this made him quite formidable, it was not beyond the power of the common man and the common soldier to be as Robin Hood was.¹¹²

It is also important to note that most of Robin’s enemies and the victims of his attacks were

¹⁰⁹ Jean de Waurin, *Recueil des Croniques et Anchiennes Istories de la Grant Bretaigne*, 1399-1422, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 108-109.

¹¹⁰ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 61-62.

¹¹¹ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 64.

¹¹² Joseph Hunter, *The Great Hero of the Ancient Minstrelsy of England*, “Robin Hood.” *His Period, Real Character, etc. Investigated and perhaps Ascertained*, (London: Tucker, Frith Street, Soho Square, 1852), p. 4.

barons or knights, symbolizing the overthrow of the noble caste of warriors by the common infantryman, or perhaps even the superiority of the infantryman over the noble knight.¹¹³ It does seem that the archer, as personified by Robin Hood, had become a far more effective unit on the battlefield than the mounted knight.

Other units and types of soldiers aside from archers also contributed to the war effort more than heavy cavalry. In addition to the increasingly dismounted men-at-arms, engineers and specialists in siege and artillery weapons along with sappers with simple picks and shovels formed essential elements to a victorious army as the conflict continued into later years, especially as sieges became more common and strategically important.¹¹⁴ Nor were archers invulnerable, as was shown during the siege of Calais when a group of “common soldiers” attacked a group of English archers stationed in a nearby tower and succeeded in killing them.¹¹⁵ But again, due to their effectiveness and versatility, archers remained the backbone of the evolving army.

It is especially important to note that Charles VII’s 1448 ordinance that essentially created the first permanent military force in France, the francs-archers, was made up of archers rather than knights or any other form of mounted force. Their value in war over the heavily armored and mounted knight was recognized in this ordinance, and their skills were deemed vital enough to require that they practice on all holidays and feast days so that their skills would remain honed. This clearly shows that the more common and low-born infantry had secured a place of supreme importance within the new permanent and professional army that would

¹¹³ Hunter, “*Robin Hood*”, 13.

¹¹⁴ Richard Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence in Medieval Europe*, (Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 172.

¹¹⁵ Jean le Bel, “Chronicles of Jean le Bel”, 77.

continue to emerge and develop in the coming centuries. Thus, infantry had evolved from a secondary role behind the noble cavalry, primarily utilized in a defensive manner, into a widely used and important component of a professional army as both an attacking and defending force.¹¹⁶

One of the main causes that facilitated the rise of skilled and professional soldiers was the declining practice of military service based on feudal obligation, and the transition to voluntary military service based on the enticements placed before soldiers to make them serve the cause of the king. Thus, wars had come to be fought by men dedicated to the profession of arms and military values, where war for them had become a business.

As noted earlier in the chapter, soldiers had begun to be paid from the king's treasury for voluntary service in war. This is perhaps the greatest and most obvious form of enticement that was utilized to swell the ranks of the armies of England and France. Far more men would be likely to volunteer, and be far more likely to listen and obey orders and regulations, if they are being compensated with wages. The promise of regular and reliable wages, no matter how small, would have been hard for many to resist. And with this development of paid service, along with the development of permanent national armies, war and soldiering became a business just as any other, with men dedicating their lives to its practice.

Once again returning to the francs-archers, we see another example of the new benefits offered that so enticed men to serve as professional soldiers. In addition to their pay of four francs a month, Charles VII added that "in order that they shall be better able and more anxious to keep themselves prepared in the above mentioned state and condition, we have ordered, and

¹¹⁶ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 128.

now order by these presents, that each and every one shall be free, quit and exempt not only from all direct and other taxes which may be imposed on our behalf on the kingdom, [but also] from the duty of maintaining our soldiery, from [all] guard duty, and all imposts whatever,” with the exception of the salt tax.¹¹⁷ This demonstrates the exceptional quality of the benefits available to those that chose to serve as professional soldiers in a permanent force, and demonstrates what may be the peak of the methods of enticement that helped to grow this new class of soldiers.

Other forms of enticement were also presented to prospective soldiers. Pardons for various offences and the opportunity for promotion and social advancement was one such form.¹¹⁸ In England, especially during the reign of Henry V, another form of enticement was introduced in order to gain more volunteers to serve in France. This was the granting of land and titles to those that served.¹¹⁹ Not only would this draw more soldiers to his cause, it would also help solve the problem of maintenance and administration of the newly conquered territory. It should be noted though that it is highly unlikely that those of non-noble origins would have been granted such a prize.

In addition to the regular paid wages issued by the king and his officials, pillaging and the spoils gained from it was an integral part of the earnings of a soldier.¹²⁰ Pillaging was an officially recognized, legal, and even encouraged practice in both England and France, and was regulated and organized just as paid wages were. A 1419 ordinance by Henry V gives a look into how pillaged goods were divided: “All maner of captaynes, knyghtes, squyers, men of Armes, Archers, what so euer they be, shall be bounde to paye parte of All theyr gayness in warre

¹¹⁷ *Ordonnances des Rois de France de la Troisieme Race*, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 56.

¹¹⁸ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 131.

¹¹⁹ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 32.

¹²⁰ Allmand, *Society at War*, 77.

faithfully, And wyth owte fraude, to theyr imediate captayne or maister, in payne of lesing the hooll principall somme so gotten.”¹²¹ Essentially, the pillaged goods were collected and, once their monetary value had been assessed, were then distributed according to rank, with the higher echelons of the army receiving the lion’s share. This means that no matter how much booty a common soldier or archer secured, the majority of it would go to his superiors. Regardless, the common soldier, even one that had not managed to secure booty, was still entitled to a percentage of the value of the pillaged goods, albeit a relatively small percentage, and this along with the promise of wages was enough to entice men into military service. Thus war, especially success in war, came to be seen as a profitable business.

Indeed, these benefits were so pleasing that many wished for the war to continue so that they may continue to receive them. Froissart recorded such feelings in 1390 when he wrote “Others, too, who favoured the [continuation of the] war were the less well-off knights, esquires, and archers of England, who appreciated its comforts and, indeed, maintained their status through war.”¹²² This not only shows how important and how valuable the benefits and enticements of service in war were, but it also emphasizes that war had become a profession and a method of achieving wealth and status for even the relatively lower sections of society.

However, this system of benefits, especially the system of paid wages, was by no means perfect or infallible. Wages were rarely generous to the lower ranks of soldiers and often were paid erratically, and sometimes not at all.¹²³ Jean le Bel claimed that this was the case for the

¹²¹ *The Essential Portions of Nicholas Upton’s De Studio Militari, before 1446*, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 82.

¹²² Froissart, *Chroniques*, XIV, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 31.

¹²³ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 166.

French soldiers during the reign of Phillip VI, having written that they had to spend their own money and even sell their horses and arms while waiting to be paid from the king's treasury.¹²⁴

This led to many problems, with the soldiers attempting to make up for their lost wages with even greater and more disorderly pillaging that greatly hurt civilian populations. Granted, organized and regulated pillaging is still pillaging, and was still seen as dishonorable and abusive by those that suffered from it. For this reason, soldiers came to be seen as a menace, with Honore Bonet summing up the thoughts of many civilians when he wrote "the man who does not know how to set places on fire, to rob churches and usurp their rights and to imprison the priests, is not fit to carry on war."¹²⁵

Appatis, a form of protection money, was another method for soldiers to gain more wealth at the expense of the townspeople in order to keep marauding soldiers from simply pillaging them.¹²⁶ An example of the use of the appatis can be seen in the 1437 agreement between the city of Reims and the soldiers under the command of Guillaume de Flavy for the price of 300 pounds to keep de Flavy and his soldiers from robbing the city.¹²⁷ These abuses worsened as the war continued, especially once the focus of the war became the garrisoning and the guarding of towns, castles, and other strategic points. This limited the engagements with the enemy, which limited the opportunities for obtaining a fortune in plunder, which in turn caused many soldiers to turn to robbery and ransom.¹²⁸ Because of these instances of abuse and violence

¹²⁴ Jean le Bel, "Chronicles of Jean le Bel", 58.

¹²⁵ *The Tree of Battles of Honore Bonet*, 1387, translated by G.W. Coopland, , from Allmand, *Society at War*, 40.

¹²⁶ Allmand, *Society at War*, 85.

¹²⁷ *Guillaume de Flavy, capitaine de Compiegne*, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 86.

¹²⁸ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 132.

against civilians, many came to see soldiers as no better than the mercenaries that were so prevalent during the Hundred Years War.

Mercenaries

When speaking of the Hundred Years War, it is important to discuss the prevalence of mercenary companies that were active, especially in France, over the course of the war. These mercenary companies were in large part responsible for most of the atrocities committed on the land and people of France, and in many ways were a catalyst for social change.

Freelance mercenary bands were typically made up of former soldiers, formed from the frequent failure of armies to regularly pay their soldiers, leading to a failure to maintain firm discipline and for disaffected soldiers to be lured by the easily gained riches of plunder.¹²⁹ The majority of these companies were active in France, likely due to the tide of war usually being against France and the fact that nearly the entire war was fought in France. While men of English and French origins were undoubtedly part of these bands, men of other national origins also made up a percentage of mercenary companies. Froissart made several mentions of “men of the German nation” that actively worked as mercenaries in 14th century France, and even named one mercenary captain active in Limousin and Languedoc as a German man named Bacon, and another named Crockart who was active in Brittany.¹³⁰ Rodrigo de Villandrando and Francois de la Surienne both hailed from Spain, Castile being the home of the former and Aragon the home of the latter.¹³¹ And as noted earlier, prior to his appointment as Constable, Bertrand du Guesclin was a mercenary captain of Breton origins.

¹²⁹ Allmand, *Society at War*, 87.

¹³⁰ Froissart, *Chroniques*, V, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 88.

¹³¹ Fowler, *Age of Plantagenet and Valois*, 170.

Froissart gives an account of the typical activities of mercenary companies, detailing that they “captured towns and castles, and gathered around themselves a considerable number of similar sorts of people, bearing arms,” and Froissart continues that they would “take the richest citizens as prisoners, in addition to the very towns which they had captured, and ransom them to the people of the district, or even to the very townsfolk whom they had expelled.”¹³² This was by far not the worst these bands could do. A record of the actions of a mercenary group known as the Flayers describes how, in addition to robbing and burning homes, these men would severely beat those who refused to pay ransom, and in at least one instance murdered them by throwing them from the top of a high tower after they refused to pay.¹³³ Robbery, arson, murder, and rape were the typical activities of a mercenary group.

These mercenary bands were formed because of a weak government and a state of almost constant warfare that left France in disorder and its people all but defenseless. But it is perhaps because of the actions of these marauders that contemporaries began to look for solutions and to institute the changes that have been discussed earlier in this thesis. The problem of mercenaries was thought to be caused by indiscipline and the inability to regularly pay soldiers, and thus these issues were rectified in the manner as mentioned above, leading to the development of the paid professional army.¹³⁴ Mercenaries themselves were groups that were paid for military service, and this may have influenced the decision for royal armies to be based on payment. Also recall that Charles VII’s creation of the francs-archers, a permanent national army that benefitted from regular pay and tax exemption, was in part justified by the marauding bands of mercenaries

¹³² Froissart, *Chroniques*, V, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 88.

¹³³ A. Tuetey, *Les Ecorcheurs sous Charles VII*, 1444, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 91.

¹³⁴ Allmand, *Society at War*, 78.

that threatened France. Indeed, after their creation, Monstrelet wrote that “no robbers or brigands dared to infest the roads,” and that travelers were no longer threatened by mercenary groups like the Skinners now that there was a permanent military.¹³⁵ This shows that the presence of mercenaries was a direct cause for the establishment of a permanent national army.

In addition, highly successful mercenaries can be credited as furthering the advancement of military merit replacing high noble birth as the criteria for military positions. Aside from the obvious mention of du Guesclin and the previous mention of Arnaud de Cervole, Amiel de Baux, Hugh Calveley, and Robert Knolles earlier in this chapter, there are other known examples of this. The man named Bacon mentioned by Froissart served Philip VI and John II as inspector of arms and was well off for the rest of his days.¹³⁶ The command that certain mercenaries had over their men, and sometimes the simple fact that they controlled strategically vital areas, also made it to where kings found it foolish or even impossible not to give them advancement.¹³⁷ Mercenaries may even in part be responsible for the rise of the most unusual of military commanders during the Hundred Years War. It was during a series of mercenary attacks along the Meuse that Joan of Arc had begun hearing the supposed “voices” that led her to aiding to turn the tide of the war.¹³⁸ Perhaps Joan was simply tired of mercenaries and soldiers threatening her home, and their violence inspired her to action.

Perhaps most of all, mercenaries represented that war had become a business, a profession through which men could make a profit and even find great wealth. It is important to note that many men became mercenaries because they had been soldiers and, during the pauses

¹³⁵ Monstrelet, “The Chronicles of Enguerrand de Monstrelet”, 344.

¹³⁶ Froissart, *Chroniques*, V, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 89.

¹³⁷ Fowler, *Age of Plantagenet and Valois*, 171.

¹³⁸ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 176.

of peace, they could not practice what had become their trade and thus could not make a living.¹³⁹ Thus for many, truce and peace came to mean unemployment for soldiers, who would in turn become marauding mercenaries in order to continue to make money. This can be especially seen in the 1350s and 1360s when there was little “official” fighting between England and France but a growth in the bands of former soldiers that pillaged the countryside.¹⁴⁰ Froissart wrote that by the end of Crokart’s career, he was worth “60,000 ancient ecus.”¹⁴¹ Merigot Marches was said to have collected more than 20,000 florins from the use of the appatis, and Geoffrey Tete-Noir supposedly put thirty leagues of countryside to ransom from his base in Ventadour.¹⁴² This shows that there was money to be made in war, even if it wasn’t as an official soldier. The ability to wage war became a profitable profession that men dedicated themselves to, even if it meant pillaging their own country.

But while the presence of mercenaries may have led to positive social change, their damage to the countryside and their abuse to the civilian population cannot be forgotten. Most of the worst abuses carried out by mercenaries, and overall some of the most negative effects of the war, were suffered by the non-combatant. The sufferings of the non-combatant, as well as their successes, will be discussed in the next chapter.

¹³⁹ Allmand, *Society at War*, 163.

¹⁴⁰ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 20.

¹⁴¹ Froissart, *Chroniques*, V, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 89.

¹⁴² Fowler, *Age of Plantagenet and Valois*, 170.

CHAPTER 4: THE NON-COMBATANT

This thesis has thus far discussed the nobility and the soldiery that actively fought in the Hundred Years War, but this chapter shall be looking at the group that was perhaps the most affected by the war, that being the non-combatants. For the sake of clarification, I shall define the term “non-combatant” as one who did not partake in the actual fighting of the war, but contributed to or was affected by the war and its outcome, so that the term may include those that served in the military in a non-combat role. This means that the term includes those that contributed to the war, willingly or unwillingly, through providing some good or service other than direct military service as a soldier. The first group of non-combatants that will be examined is the group comprised of those unfortunate enough to suffer the most negative aspects of the war, such as the peasant farmers who became the primary target for the armies and mercenaries of both kingdoms throughout the course of the war. Especially in France, loyalties became divided as the land was constantly shifting hands as the war progressed, putting enormous strain on those who simply wanted to live peacefully without suffering under whoever controlled their land at the time. The almost constant raids by both armies, as well as by independent mercenary companies, along with the increasing demands the nobility placed on the peasantry to continue the war, led to several incidents of uprisings that saw a demand for the rights of the peasantry. This increasing demand for change could be seen as a positive effect of the war, but regardless there were non-combatants that greatly benefitted from the war through their contribution to its continuation. Merchants and professionals such as carpenters, blacksmiths, etc., were in great demand during the war. The fact that they were paid for their services meant that they became

invested in the war, seeing it as something that affected them rather than just a squabble among the nobility, and also meant that society was becoming more militarized, with some merchants and professionals hoping to prolong the war as much as possible in order to keep profiting from it. This investment in the war, along with the increased political awareness and social mobility caused by the war, began the process of an ordinary peasant becoming a citizen with defined rights in the following centuries after the conclusion of the war. The Church also managed to play an important role as a non-combatant, most typically as a voice of peace and serving as a mediator between the two warring nations, often participating in truce and treaty talks between England and France. But the Church did its share of prolonging the conflict as well, with clergymen serving as mediums for propaganda in support of whichever kingdom held his loyalty. Considering that the Great Schism took place during the later years of the Hundred Years War, it is feasible to argue that the clergy within England and France each became more biased towards their respective nations considering they were on opposite sides of the Schism, meaning that they came to serve more as tools of support and divine justification rather than neutral parties promoting peace among God's people¹⁴³. They would thus serve as one catalyst for the growing sense of nationalism that was one of the results of the Hundred Years War.

Those Who Lost

The non-combatant was the group most negatively affected by the Hundred Years War, suffering the worst consequences through having their lands pillaged, their property seized, and their people killed by both foreign and domestic enemies. The vast majority of the non-combatants that suffered during the course of the war were the civilians of France, but the

¹⁴³ A good example of clergy who took a more active, and violent, role in serving their kingdoms can be seen in the crusade of Henry le Despenser, the Bishop of Norwich, in 1383. For more information, see Norman Housely, "The Bishop of Norwich's Crusade, May 1383," *History Today* 33:5 (1983):15-20.

atrocities committed against these civilians were carried out by the English and the French in roughly equal measure.

Throughout the war, it was the non-combatant that was the primary target for the armies of both England and France. As discussed in previous chapters, non-combatants were targeted because they were relatively less risky to attack, yielded plunder that few soldiers or nobles could resist, served to take away a source of production from the enemy, and served to symbolically attack the authority of the king and demoralize his subjects. While the reason for attacking non-combatants is militarily sound, it does not take away from the suffering that this caused to those targeted by these attacks. The French cleric Honore Bonet wrote that “in these days all wars are directed against the poor laboring people and against their goods and chattels,” and declared that this was not a just war but was rather an act of robbery on a massive scale, thus condemning its practice and expressing sorrow for those non-combatants.¹⁴⁴ Froissart described these attacks in an account on an English raid along the French coast in the earliest years of the war, writing that “The archers and foot soldiers advanced along by the sea-coast, robbing, pillaging and stealing everything they found,” and later in the same account wrote, “The English did what they pleased in the town and castle, but finding that they could not conveniently hold them, burnt and destroyed both, and then forced the inhabitants to embark on their fleet, and to go with them, as they had done to those in Barfleur, Cherbourg, Montebourg and all the neighboring towns on the sea coast which they had captured and plundered.”¹⁴⁵ This account not only shows that the non-combatants lost their valuables, but also their homes as they were burnt

¹⁴⁴ Honore Bonet, *The Tree of Battles of Honore Bonet*, [1387], trans. G. W. Coopland, from Christopher Allmand (ed.), *Society at War: England and France During the Hundred Years War*, (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1998), p. 40.

¹⁴⁵ Froissart, *Chroniques*, IV, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 105-106.

by the invaders simply because the English could not maintain control over it, and were then forced to accompany their conquerors as prisoners. It is also important to point out that Froissart states that this same practice had already been used on multiple occasions prior, and considering that these were committed during the early years of the war, it shows that the non-combatant was suffering the negative effects of the war from its very beginning and, as this chapter will show, would continue to suffer until its end.

Even once the focus of war shifted from chevauchees to siege warfare, civilian non-combatants were still the group that suffered the most. Froissart details an early siege during the campaigns of Edward the Black Prince, writing that once a section of the city's walls were destroyed "the pillagers on foot were all ready to damage property and to run through the town killing men, women, and children according to orders they had received," with the entire city itself being summarily pillaged and destroyed.¹⁴⁶ The fact that these soldiers had specifically been ordered to kill civilians, even women and children, shows the extent to which the innocent non-combatant could suffer during this war. John Page, a soldier who served under Henry V, described the six month siege of Rouen and the plight of the civilians, who were helpless and suffering throughout the entirety of the siege, thus showing that even the soldiers who were committing these acts realized the extent of the hardship that was being inflicted on civilians.¹⁴⁷ In Rouen, and in many other such towns that were subject to siege warfare in the later years of the Hundred Years War, the people inhabiting the towns were given the option to surrender, which often included the giving of hostages and paying a fine, or face pillage and death once the

¹⁴⁶ Jean Froissart, Peter Thompson (trans. and ed.), "Chronicles of Jean Froissart", from *Contemporary Chronicles of the Hundred Years War: From the Works of Jean le Bel, Jean Froissart, and Enguerrand de Monstrelet*, (The Folio Society Ltd, 1966), p. 139.

¹⁴⁷ Christopher Allmand, *The Hundred Years War: England and France at War 1300-1450*, (Cambridge University Press, 1988), 51.

invading army entered the city. In either case, the non-combatants ultimately suffered the most. Even should the city repel the attacks, the misery of enduring a siege can surely be counted among the sufferings inflicted upon non-combatants.

The French, in turn, also targeted English non-combatants on English soil, though not to the same extent and usually through coastal raids. The 1370s in particular saw the French attack and plunder towns and villages located on the south coast of England, the lives and livelihoods of the fishermen who resided in those villages suffering as a result.¹⁴⁸ Froissart wrote of an incident shortly before the coronation of England's Richard II, in which, "the French landed at Rye, a port in the county of Sussex, near the borders of Kent, a fair-sized town of fishermen and sailors. They pillaged and burnt the whole town, then took to their ships."¹⁴⁹ This shows that the French were more than willing to engage in the same strategy of attacking non-combatants as the English, with English civilians suffering the consequences. However, the French were not able to do it as often or to the same extent due to the war taking place almost entirely on French soil, and the obvious difficulties of organizing a naval expedition to engage in coastal raids, which was likely viewed as secondary to defending French territory. Thus the French engaged in the practice of plundering and the targeting of non-combatants just as the English did, though the majority of said plundering took place in France rather than England.

As was often the case of the Hundred Years War, the non-combatants of France suffered the greatest and the most often. This was certainly true when it came to armies who were often

¹⁴⁸ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 23.

¹⁴⁹ Froissart, "Chronicles of Jean Froissart", 174.

required to live off the land, which more often than not meant pillaging civilians for supplies.¹⁵⁰ Froissart gave an example of this when he wrote of the expeditions of the Black Prince, writing that “when they entered into a town and found it stocked with food they refreshed themselves for two or three days and then departed, destroying what remained, staving in barrels of wine and burning fields of wheat and oats so that the enemy might not have the use of them.”¹⁵¹ This shows the destruction caused to civilians while armies “lived off the land,” and again illustrates how the goods and properties of the non-combatant served as a primary military target in order to deprive the enemy of resources. The need for an army to live off the land was indicative of an invading army, thus it was often the English who robbed French civilians for supplies, however it should be noted that it is plausible that the French did much the same to civilians within French territories under the control of England when attempting to retake their lost lands. As noted in the previous chapter, monarchs like Henry V attempted to reduce the need for living off the land, thus reducing attacks on civilians for supplies, but these attacks still occurred nonetheless, much to the dismay of the non-combatant.

Even when not directly attacked, non-combatants still suffered greatly at the hands of the soldiers and mercenary companies that roamed the countryside. This can be most clearly seen in the *appatis*, which as discussed in the previous chapter, was a form of protection money that sometimes meant a town was given military protection, but oftentimes was paid in order to simply keep the soldiers from burning the town.¹⁵² Citing once again the example of the 1437 agreement between the city of Rheims and the company under Guillaume de Flavy, a payment of

¹⁵⁰ Christopher Allmand (ed.), *Society at War: England and France During the Hundred Years War*, (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1998), p. 69.

¹⁵¹ Froissart, “Chronicles of Jean Froissart”, 92.

¹⁵² Allmand, *Society at War*, 85.

300 pounds *tournois* was paid “so as to be spared the pillaging and robbery which [Guillame’s] men might have carried out upon this city and the surrounding countryside.”¹⁵³ The statement continues that it was only through the generosity of the citizen Jean Gibour that the city was able to raise the funds to pay off the soldiers, indicating that the sum required of them was quite substantial, and likely had negative effects for the citizens of the town for some time after. Any town that did not pay, or refused payment once it was agreed upon, was known to suffer harsh consequences. Such was the case with a town near Poix, where English forces under Edward III made an agreement in which the town would pay a sum to prevent the army from burning their town. The townspeople refused to pay the agreed upon sum when they realized that the army had left, only for some soldiers to return and kill the townspeople and set the town ablaze.¹⁵⁴ Thus it came to be that soldiers didn’t necessarily even have to attack to cause non-combatants to suffer, for the simple fear of attack was enough to cause civilians to pay whatever cost to keep from being killed.

Another aspect of the Hundred Years War that the non-combatant needed to fear was that, even once territories were secured for one kingdom or the other, eliminating or at least reducing the threat of attack, non-combatants were still faced with the problem of loyalty and the consequences of swearing or not swearing it. Oftentimes, the confiscation of estates became the political and economic price for being on the wrong side at the wrong time.¹⁵⁵ During the reign of England’s Henry V, any in French lands controlled by England who refused to recognize his claim as the ruler of France were stripped of their lands and forced into “a form of internal exile

¹⁵³ *Guillaume de Flavy, capitaine de Compiègne*, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 86.

¹⁵⁴ Jean le Bel, Peter Thompson (trans. and ed.), “Chronicles of Jean le Bel”, from *Contemporary Chronicles of the Hundred Years War: From the Works of Jean le Bel, Jean Froissart, and Enguerrand de Monstrelet*, (The Folio Society Ltd, 1966), p. 63-64.

¹⁵⁵ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 130.

within France.”¹⁵⁶ Indeed, often the policy of English occupation forces during his reign was to deliberately displace populations in order to replace them with more trustworthy, as in English, settlers.¹⁵⁷ Thus a non-combatant simply caught up in the events of the war and attempting to survive it often faced many hardships due to his loyalties or lack thereof. An example of this can be seen in the misfortunes of one Jean Guerard, who fled English-allied Paris with his pregnant wife and ended up captured and ransomed multiple times by both French and English forces, faced an almost constant threat of incarceration, and struggled to provide for his family as his goods were stolen by soldiers.¹⁵⁸ Granted, Jean Guerard received a pardon in 1425 from Henry VI, recognizing him as a subject of the English king, but his tribulations highlight the struggle that many non-combatants faced when it came to who they claimed to be loyal to.

As territory shifted hands, especially those following truce agreements, many non-combatants who had lived in a territory that, perhaps for generations, had been a part of one kingdom but now was the domain of another, found themselves having to swear their loyalty to what was perceived as a foreign, perhaps even hated power, or be forced to abandon the lands that they had called their home. Such instances were not uncommon as land in France constantly shifted between the English and the French throughout the course of the war. This shifting of lordship could sometimes erupt in violence as the population of the area that was changing hands may not wish to accept a new lord. This can be seen in 1394 when the population of Aquitaine that had been ceded to France rose up in support of the English crown.¹⁵⁹ But above all, these instances caused the most suffering to those who had settled in that land and made it their home

¹⁵⁶ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 29.

¹⁵⁷ David Green, *The Hundred Years War: A People's History*, (London: Yale University Press, 2014), p. 157.

¹⁵⁸ Pardon granted by Henry VI, *Paris pendant la domination anglaise (1420-1436)*, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 157-158.

¹⁵⁹ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 26.

for themselves and their children. Henry V gave land to soldiers as reward for their service, and many of them married French wives and had children in these lands.¹⁶⁰ These people had made a livelihood in these lands that were granted to them, and these livelihoods were thus lost when the English conquests couldn't be maintained. Perhaps the best example of this comes from the pleas of the inhabitants of the county of Maine, which had been an English territory since the reign of Henry II, in 1452 to Henry VI as they were forced to leave as part of an agreement between the kings of France and England. The inhabitants of Maine declare their loyalty to Henry, finding it deplorable that they should be in obedience to the king of France, who has long been seen as their enemy, and they lament that they are forced to abandon their lands, possessions, and titles with virtually no compensation and thus a majority are left "in a state of beggary," despite their loyal service to the English crown.¹⁶¹ This is perhaps the only aspect of the Hundred Years War where English subjects suffered more than their French counterparts, as lands that had been loyal to England since the beginning of the war, and indeed lands that had been English for centuries prior, were now lost and those that remained were either forced to swear loyalty to another or to abandon a land that may have been home to them and their families for generations.

Non-combatants who were nowhere near the fighting or who didn't have to worry about loyalties being questioned once land passed from one hand to another still faced hardships such as their properties being requisitioned for military purposes, not infrequently to the loss of the owners. A good example of this is the requisition of merchant ships for use in place of a regular navy, especially by the English. A 1378 Commons petition explains that "the said fleet has been

¹⁶⁰ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 32.

¹⁶¹ 1452 petition of the citizens of county Maine to Henry VI, *Letters and Papers*, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 174-176.

very frequently requisitioned for many expeditions to France and elsewhere; as a result of which, the owners of the said fleet have suffered very excessive losses and expenses, both by the loss of ships and boats, and by the depreciation and wastage of masts, chains, anchors, cables and other forms of gear, without obtaining any form of compensation.”¹⁶² Even other goods that were paid for, such as bread, meat, beer, and wine, were often bought below the market price of the day and paid for in a way that often made it difficult for the seller to obtain the money that he was owed.¹⁶³ This shows that loss of property and revenue through requisition was just as possible as the loss of property and revenue through pillaging, and the non-combatant was the victim in both situations.

In addition to suffering attacks from enemy armies and suffering the consequences of divided loyalties once conquered, the non-combatant also suffered from the constant harassment of the mercenary bands, or routiers, and brigands that plagued the countryside of France during the war. The typical abuses that the non-combatant had to suffer at the hands of a mercenary company included having their house or entire town set on fire, having whatever valuables they had stolen, and having their wealthy citizens and even their entire towns taken and then ransomed back to them, the people that the mercenaries had just expelled.¹⁶⁴ Of course, far more violent acts were also committed by mercenaries against non-combatants, including murder and rape. Monstrelet writes that in 1438, “bands of Frenchmen known as the skimmers were operating on the borders of Burgundy, where they were causing considerable damage by taking castles, seizing prisoners, killing men and ravishing women of all classes, just as if they had been the

¹⁶² 1378 Commons Petition, *Rotuli Parliamentorum*, III, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 161.

¹⁶³ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 99.

¹⁶⁴ Froissart, *Chroniques*, V, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 88

enemies of France.”¹⁶⁵ It is interesting to note that a substantial amount of those counted among the mercenary and brigand bands were civilians whose farmlands or homes were either destroyed or taken as a result of the war.¹⁶⁶ Thus, these non-combatants had suffered so much and become so desperate that they themselves became part of the cycle of violence that affected other non-combatants. This was the case in the 1360s for a man named Jean le Jeusne, who claimed he turned to brigandage because the lawless activities of soldiers and thieves were such that “no laboring man, or any other subject in [France], dared venture securely or go about their business in the district for fear of being killed or taken for ransom.”¹⁶⁷

During the brief periods of peace that followed the end of each stage of the war, the non-combatant was still not safe from the now unemployed soldiers and mercenaries, as well as the thieves and brigands that continued to thrive in the aftermath of each stage of the war. A text detailing an account following the Treat of Bretigny in 1360 describes how in the aftermath of the truce, “Robbers and thieves grew in power along the highways and roads and in the woods. They attacked wayfarers more fiercely than ever before, not only robbing them, but even cutting their throats without mercy,” and later describes how a dispute between one John of Artois and the town of Peronne led to John pillaging, burning, and “slaying many of the inhabitants” of the town, along with many neighboring towns.¹⁶⁸ This shows that even during times of peace, non-combatants were still under threat and there was no way to effectively protect them and enforce the peace that should have put a stop to the abuses they suffered.

¹⁶⁵ Enguerrand de Monstrelet, Peter Thomson (trans. and ed.), “The Chronicles of Enguerrand de Monstrelet”, from *Contemporary Chronicles of the Hundred Years War: From the Works of Jean le Bel, Jean Froissart, and Enguerrand de Monstrelet*, (The Folio Society Ltd, 1966), p. 323.

¹⁶⁶ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 124

¹⁶⁷ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 159.

¹⁶⁸ *The Chronicle of Jean de Venette*, trans. J. Birdsall, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 173.

After suffering much of the hardships of the war through direct violence or the loss of land, property, or revenue, it is hardly surprising that popular discontent grew among the non-combatants and sometimes escalated into bloody revolts. The Jacquerie revolt of 1358 is the most well-known of the uprisings in France, and was caused by the failure of the French nobility in battle, the inability of the French government to stem the tide of marauding mercenaries, and the increasing demands for taxation to fund the war.¹⁶⁹ The fact that the rebelling peasants blamed the aristocracy for the losses of the war and for the miseries that the war had inflicted on the peasants reveals that this was a social and political uprising that may have been attempting to break down or alter the social hierarchy that had been in place for centuries. The Jacquerie uprising took place in the Beauvaisis, Ile de France, Picardy, Brie, and Champagne, and soon afterwards galvanized revolts in cities such as Amiens, Caen, Rouen, Montdidier, and Meaux, but the revolt was suppressed after two weeks of violence.¹⁷⁰ Another revolt in June of 1382 in Rouen was caused at least partially by the fiscal demands of the French crown, and was similarly suppressed.¹⁷¹

Similar revolts were also arising in England. The 1381 Peasants' Revolt was an uprising against the English government due to the financial strains of the war and the inability, or the perceived unwillingness, of the government to defend southern England against increasing attacks by the French, which in many ways reflects the Jacquerie revolt in France.¹⁷² The demands of the rebels, as stated by their leader Wat Tyler, were revolutionary for their time. The demands included readdressing wages, rents, and land ownerships, disendowment of the Church,

¹⁶⁹ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 43-44.

¹⁷⁰ For more information on this event, see Chapter 2 of *The Hundred Years War: A People's History* by David Green.

¹⁷¹ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 24.

¹⁷² Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 24.

an end to serfdom, and an end to all lordship save that of the king.¹⁷³ This revolt not only showed a growing political awareness of the peasantry, which will be discussed later in the chapter, but also displayed an attempted breakdown of central authority and the barriers between social boundaries as these rebels demanded more rights while at the same time attempting to reduce the power of the nobility and clergy. This again shows a similarity to the Jacquerie revolt in France. The 1381 Revolt was soon suppressed by Richard II, although only after much violence, including the murder of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and after Richard had broken his word to the rebels, and nothing came of these demands for the time being. A similar revolt, and the last English revolt of the Hundred Years War, occurred in May 1450 and was known as Cade's Rebellion, its supporters once again citing unfair taxes and corrupt nobles who had caused the recent losses in France.¹⁷⁴ This revolt was brought down in much the same way as the 1381 Revolt, with Henry VI making promises and seeming to concede to the demands of the rebels until they disbanded and were hunted down. Regardless of the lack of success for these various revolts, both English and French, they still reflect a sense of awareness among the civilians that led them to demand rights as citizens. The Hundred Years War would be the catalyst that began the process of altering the social hierarchy in Europe and the peasants becoming true citizens of the early modern period, though more immediate benefits for the non-combatant were also being provided as a result of the Hundred Years War.

Those Who Gained

Despite these sufferings, not all aspects of the Hundred Years War were negative for the non-combatant. War offered opportunities for profit, with some non-combatants building their

¹⁷³ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 61.

¹⁷⁴ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 62.

entire business around war and becoming relatively wealthy as a result. The war even gave some non-combatants a chance for social advancement, as the profits gained by the war and the blurring social boundaries allowed for poor peasants to become respected citizens and perhaps, though rarely, even attain a title within a few generations. It was these benefits of the war, and even some of its sufferings, that brought the greatest benefit to the non-combatant, that being a growing political awareness and an increasing sense of importance in society that led to the beginnings of defined citizenship and rights.

The invasions and campaigns of the Hundred Years War required more than soldiers or ships. Armies needed weapons, food, drink, and countless other supplies in order for it to be an effective force. Thus, especially for the invading English, peasants with professions such as cooks, fletchers, tailors, blacksmiths, etc. found themselves in high demand. When English war policy shifted from raids to occupation and garrisoning, the need for peasant specialists was in even higher demand as soldiers stationed in France would require a constant source of supplies, material, or craftsmen to construct the much needed fortifications required to hold the territory they had conquered. Non-combatants taken to assist in raiding campaigns could add as much as 50 per cent to the numbers of the invading force, while an occupation army could double in size with the amount of non-combatants brought along to assist through their various professions.¹⁷⁵ In addition, siege warfare and the weapons and strategies that defined it also required skilled non-combatants to assist the army. Monstrelet writes that at the siege of Orleans, “by arrangement with certain of the local merchants [the wagons] were laden with provisions and artillery and other necessaries to be taken to the English,” showing once again that non-

¹⁷⁵ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 132.

combatants with various professions were brought in to assist in the war effort and thus became invested in the conflict and informed of its progress.¹⁷⁶

The French were no different in their need for non-combatants to assist with and contribute to the war.¹⁷⁷ There is evidence of muster rolls in French forces that include “carpenters, masons, quarriers, thatchers, pioneers and waggoners” that were given payment in exchange for their assistance to French forces at the siege of Cherbourg in 1378.¹⁷⁸

If the non-combatant did not contribute through his professional services, he would certainly contribute through his money. As noted in the previous chapters, a system of taxation with the goal of waging war and eventually maintaining an army was growing in use. The kings of both England and France used the excuse of defending the common good and supporting the realm to justify taxation to fund armies and campaigns, and it was the civilian or peasant non-combatants who paid the majority of these taxes that supposedly were meant to benefit the kingdom as a whole. In France, as early as the reign of John II, a system of raising money through local representative bodies was put in place. A French text describes that the system was instituted in order to fund an army to combat the English and to raise the money to ransom the captive John, and states that it included a “levy of 8 pence in the pound on all merchandise and commodities; [in addition to this], the salt tax...for up to one year; a tax on wine at certain times, as formerly; 2 shillings in the pound on all income from immovables.”¹⁷⁹ This request puts an

¹⁷⁶ Monstrelet, “The Chronicles of Enguerrand de Monstrelet”, 296.

¹⁷⁷ The research for this thesis turned up surprisingly little direct evidence for the French use of non-combatants in the army. This may be due to the fact that England had non-combatants in both England and occupied areas of France who were utilized, and thus there is more documentation available. Further research may be required, but it is safe to assume that the French acted in a similar capacity as the English in their use of the non-combatant as the provided example shows.

¹⁷⁸ Allmand, *Society at War*, 64.

¹⁷⁹ Allmand, *Society at War*, 135.

emphasis on the duty of the community to aid in the funding of national defense, thus bringing the common civilian into the national consciousness and all but declaring them a vital part of it.

Through these contributions, the non-combatant could indeed make a profit, and in some cases were able to become wealthy and even titled as a result of contributing to the war. Some of the great examples of this include William de la Pole in England, whose family rose from commoner to duke in four generations.¹⁸⁰ In France there is the case Jacques Coeur, who attained great wealth by acting as an arms dealer to Charles VII, or Pierre Baille who rose from a shoemaker's assistant to become the treasurer of Maine.¹⁸¹ Other benefits were offered to the non-combatants through the tragic sufferings that the war brought on others. The depopulation caused by the war meant that the power of the landlords diminished, wages increased while prices fell, and a redistribution of wealth and blurring of social boundaries developed.¹⁸² It should be pointed out that this depopulation and the subsequent societal changes had other contributing factors, including natural disasters, climate change, and disease such as the Black Plague.¹⁸³ This however does not take away from the importance that the war played in this process of depopulation and change within society.

In both kingdoms, the people had become generally accustomed to paying regular taxes for one reason or another thanks to the war.¹⁸⁴ But because they had become accustomed to it, they also began to realize their place in the social order, an important place at that, and some were willing to take advantage of that. With all of the contributions made by the non-combatant

¹⁸⁰ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 130.

¹⁸¹ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 130.

¹⁸² Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 59.

¹⁸³ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 58.

¹⁸⁴ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 105.

both material and monetary, as well as an understandable concern and interest for anything that may bring him profit, it is not difficult to argue that the non-combatant might feel that he had a right to have a say in how his contributions, namely the taxes he paid, were used.¹⁸⁵ After all, it was his money that was being spent to supposedly defend the kingdom and certainly to further the ambitions of the nobility, so why shouldn't he try to assert that right? Those peasants who rose in the revolts discussed previously in the chapter certainly seemed to believe so. They were rebelling because they had come to recognize that those in the higher rungs of the social hierarchy were failing to fulfill their duties while the peasants themselves were contributing more through their taxes than ever before, and yet were still the group that suffered the most through the years of war. They wanted the system to change and for their importance and rights to be recognized in the revised system. Most of these changes in the peasant non-combatants, both the rebellions and the positive social mobility, were the result of an increasing politicization of the peasantry that was caused by the war.¹⁸⁶ The peasants were the taxpayers, many may have had relatives who were soldiers, and they were subject to the propaganda of the war, which will be discussed later in the chapter, which kept them informed and thus invested in the success or failure of each campaign. From this awareness of the peasants comes the first written evidence of the character of Robin Hood¹⁸⁷, the first non-noble main character in English literature, representing the feelings of the peasantry and symbolizing the changing balance of economic power and the blurring social boundaries between the upper rungs of the peasantry and the lower

¹⁸⁵ Allmand, *Society at War*, 131.

¹⁸⁶ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 61.

¹⁸⁷ More on Robin Hood's popularity during this time and the section of society can he represented can be found in *The Great Hero of the Ancient Minstrelsy of England, Robin Hood: His Period, Real Character, etc. investigated and perhaps ascertained* by Joseph Hunter.

rungs of the nobility.¹⁸⁸ Just as with the nobles and the soldiers, social lines were becoming less defined and the peasantry was becoming more aware and invested in both the war and the nation as a whole, slowly beginning the process that saw their role change from simple serfs who worked the land into true citizens who had a voice in how their nation was ruled.

The Church

Aside from the civilian professional or merchant, the Church also served as a non-combatant that affected and was affected by the war. Serving as both peace makers and as biased supporters of one kingdom or the other, the Church would serve an integral role in the Hundred Years War and would see its power reduced as nations came to view clergymen with suspicion and kings came to limit the rights of all within the Church hierarchy.

Given their status as men of God, and of His Son who is called the Prince of Peace, it makes sense that churchmen acted as mediators and negotiators in peace talks throughout the Hundred Years War. The clergy acted in this manner from the earliest years of the war, as can be seen when Pope Clement VI called representatives of England and France to a Conference in Avignon in 1344, though the talks ended with neither party satisfied and a continued escalation of the conflict.¹⁸⁹ This can also be seen in the papal envoys who pleaded for peace just before the Battle of Poitiers in 1356, supposedly “bowing very low to [John II], in all humility, and with his hands joined as if in prayer, begged him, for the love of Almighty God, that he should delay and hold back for a while.”¹⁹⁰ Clergy and papal envoys would continue to serve at peace talks throughout the 1370s and 1430s.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁸ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 63-64.

¹⁸⁹ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 14.

¹⁹⁰ Froissart, *Chroniques*, V, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 164-165.

¹⁹¹ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 34.

While the clergy did notably serve as mediators hoping for peace between the two kingdoms, many men of the cloth also served to directly support the war effort of one of the two kingdoms, often serving as sources of propaganda and divine justification. The door of the parish church often served as a communal notice board, displaying genealogies and verses to stress the birthright of whoever claimed to be the rightful king of France.¹⁹² Edward III did this for years, ordering clergymen to preach his reasons for going to war and his legitimacy to the throne of France.¹⁹³ The practice of reminding people of great victories was also used, as shown when Henry V ordered a chapel to commemorate the anniversary of his victory at Agincourt, thus using the church to remind his subjects of his victory supposedly won through divine will.¹⁹⁴ More than simply posting written propaganda, the clergy served in a more direct role. This often meant that clergy engaged in patriotic sermons delivered from the pulpit for all the church-going civilians to hear.¹⁹⁵ The Church thus became a mouthpiece for the king and a source of divine legitimacy for his actions and conquest, and some would view this change with contempt.

Even the act of prayer itself, directed by priests, was seen as a way to contribute to the war through asking for peace or victory. In 1412, the citizens and clergy of Paris from various parishes organized processions of prayer and penance dedicated to bringing peace to France.¹⁹⁶ Similarly, in 1443 the Bishop of Hereford, under orders of Henry VI, ordered prayers and processions dedicated to bringing victory for the English against the French.¹⁹⁷ It is interesting to note that the case of the Bishop of Hereford was organized by order of the king, rather than by

¹⁹² Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 137.

¹⁹³ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 67.

¹⁹⁴ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 138.

¹⁹⁵ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 139.

¹⁹⁶ Allmand, *Society at War*, 143.

¹⁹⁷ Allmand, *Society at War*, 144.

any known desire of the Bishop, or the people themselves. This could reflect a growing sense of subservience and obedience of the English clergy to the king, which will be discussed in greater detail in the next section of this chapter.

Due to various incidents during the late 14th and early 15th centuries, most of which were directly or indirectly caused by the Hundred Years War, the Church became significantly weakened and faced having its power reduced to a secondary role under the European monarchs. In 1378, the Great Schism saw two popes elected and two centers of papal authority established, one in Rome and the other in Avignon, splitting the western Church and polarizing increasingly strong attitudes to the Hundred Years War, as England and France were on opposite sides of the Schism.¹⁹⁸ France and England thus sought to gain advantage in the Hundred Years War by securing the papacy for their respective candidate, and the churchmen of the two kingdoms increasingly found themselves in a position where they were forced to choose between the demands of the “universal” Church and the demands of their kings.¹⁹⁹

Many clergymen saw their reputation suffer as a result of the Schism and the Hundred Years war, facing criticism for their involvement in and failure to end either conflict.²⁰⁰ This called into question the authority and competence of the Church in matters political or ecclesiastic, impeding and even setting back the progress made by popes in previous centuries to impose Church authority in temporal matters. The wealth of the clergy was also reduced, as both

¹⁹⁸ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 24.

¹⁹⁹ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 65.

²⁰⁰ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 66.

England and France took substantial sums in direct taxes from the Church in order to support the costs of the war and local defense.²⁰¹

As noted before, clergy came to be viewed with suspicion, often viewed as propaganda machines and even spies. This can be seen in France in 1432 when the abbess of Saint Antoine in Paris and some of her nuns were imprisoned when she was accused of plotting to betray the city, and can also be seen in England in 1373 when the Commons in Parliament requested that no French prior live close to the coast as “they are French in their bodies and from time to time spy upon the secrets and ordinances at parliaments and councils; and they send their spies and messengers to their abbots and superiors in the realm of France.”²⁰² This view and suspicion of the clergy as tools of the kings increased the already unfavorable opinion of many lay people, thus reducing the power and influence of the Church even further. It is not hard to understand why this view of suspicion was held by so many, as clergymen were often used after conquest to legitimize a claim and stabilize an occupied territory. The English did this extensively, as Henry V did in Normandy when he ensured that the local clergy were well treated in an attempt to use their influential status to shape the political and social attitudes of the communities and act as a stabilizing force.²⁰³ This was again used during the occupation of Paris by English and Burgundian forces when priests of every rank within the Church swore oaths of allegiance in order to sustain the presence of the Anglo-Burgundians in the capital and control the political behavior of the populace.²⁰⁴ With their seemingly constant shifts in loyalty and their perceived status as political tools of monarchs over the course of the Hundred Years War, the view of the

²⁰¹ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 169.

²⁰² Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 171.

²⁰³ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 71.

²⁰⁴ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 71.

Church as a “universal” organization that could be completely trusted was diminished, and this loss of trust and respect can be seen in the increasing attacks on churches and monasteries from soldiers on both sides.²⁰⁵ In the process of this loss of power and influence, the English Church in particular became divided from the rest of Europe. The character of worship, along with the political and spiritual orientation of the English clergy began to change, with the churchmen having to decide if their loyalty was ultimately to the pope or the king.²⁰⁶ This would be the beginning of the process through which the Church of England would be established during the reign of Henry VIII, separate from the Catholic Church and subject to the authority of the king. This would be just one of many long-term effects of the Hundred Years War, which will be further discussed in the concluding chapter.

²⁰⁵ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 72.

²⁰⁶ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 72.

CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION

The Hundred Years War left a strong and lasting impact on the societies of England and France. The scars left by the Hundred Years War would either heal or fester depending on which country is examined. France, despite enduring the overwhelming majority of the war's destruction, emerged as a stronger and more unified nation following its ultimate victory. England, in contrast, was severely affected by the sting of defeat and fell into a civil war that put a new house on the throne. In both countries, the war helped to give rise to a sense of nationalism; a feeling of being separate and different from one another.

France

The majority of the war took place on French soil, and as a result France suffered the worst physical effects of the war. However, it seems that France may have emerged from this conflict stronger and more united than it had been previously. Conflict, especially conflict on such a large scale over such a long period of time, inevitably unites people. This was assuredly the case in France as it suffered from threats both within and without and was in dire need of a solid, united defense that could push back those threats. This defense came thanks to the efforts of the kings of France, who more and more frequently employed the "inclusiveness" of the word "Francia" to describe the whole kingdom instead of just those areas under royal authority, in addition to promoting the idea of a motherland with the king at its head promoting the common good.²⁰⁷ The threat of external attack helped France begin to face said threats in a communal way, and aided in the king's establishment of the standing army, which was discussed in previous chapters, along with the national fiscal system needed to support that army. The army

²⁰⁷ Christopher Allmand, *The Hundred Years War: England and France at War 1300-1450*, (Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 147.

owed its organization, pay, and above all its loyalty to the king, but was seen as a defender of the French as a whole, making it an instrument of state and a symbol of French unity.²⁰⁸ It was with this army that the English were all but pushed out of France, with only Calais remaining in English possession until 1558, and it was because of this ousting that the Valois monarchy was able to expand its power into the “natural” geographical area of France,” and establish direct royal control.²⁰⁹ Charles VII did much to further this, as his victories, conquests, and political and administrative successes were seen as being divinely inspired, extending the power of the French kingship and paving the way for the concept of ruling by divine right that would constitute the power of future French kings.²¹⁰ Thus, through these institutions, the French king was able to secure more power over the French state as a whole and pave the way toward the absolute monarchy of the early modern period.

England

In the end, despite its successes in the most famous battles of the war, England lost the war along with most territory on the mainland of France. Above all it was the English monarchy that appeared to lose the most because of the war, its claim to rule France repelled and its prestige in the eyes of the English people severely weakened.²¹¹ It was because of this that many in England, especially those that had served in France, supported the ambitions of Richard, Duke of York in his bid to be king. This series of conflicts over the English throne came to be known as the Wars of the Roses, and although the English defeat in the Hundred Years War was not the

²⁰⁸ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 148.

²⁰⁹ David Green, *The Hundred Years War: A People's History*, (London: Yale University Press, 2014), p. 21.

²¹⁰ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 232.

²¹¹ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 164.

only cause of the civil war, there is no doubt that it was a major factor.²¹² This civil war would eventually end with the establishment of the Tudor dynasty, a dynasty that may not have taken power were it not for the Hundred Years War and its outcome. Following this, the English were forced to accept that the Angevin Empire was lost forever, and new imperial ambitions had to be sought within the British Isles and, eventually, the New World.

While the monarchy of England did enjoy a certain upsurge in power as a result of the war, especially after the bloody and exhaustive civil war that followed it, it was not on the same scale as the French and was tempered with the eventual increase of the power of Parliament. This was especially true of the Commons in the Parliament, who became increasingly aware of the power and authority they possessed, and their ability to influence royal policy through the money that Commons could grant for said policy.²¹³ Thus, England began to shift more and more towards the limited monarchy that would characterize it in later years. England, just as France, was beginning to resemble the nation that would be seen in the early modern era.

Nationalism

The Hundred Years War, in many ways, was a family squabble, Edward III believing that his familial relations gave him a right to claim the throne of France. Given the history of the rulers of England being descendents of the Duke of Normandy, a French nobleman, it could be argued that for many centuries there was some semblance of unity or common ground between the two nations, at least among the nobility. Following the Norman Conquest, Henry IV was the first king of England who spoke English as his first language as opposed to French, and Henry V

²¹² Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 21.

²¹³ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 250.

was promoting the use of English for “political and nationalistic purposes,” so there were clearly some commonalities for some time.²¹⁴

It is then quite ironic that as the war went on, differences between the two kingdoms were being pronounced and praised by their respective supporters, separating the opposing kingdom as “them,” who are inferior to “us.” For instance, there was a popular verse in which the English mocked the Flemish, who were French allies, which in one section states “And therefore, ye Flemmynges, that Flemmynges ben named,/ To compare with Englissmen, ye aught be ashamed!”²¹⁵ Similarly, a French text which takes the form of a debate between an English and a French herald, claims that the English only succeeded in achieving “great conquests” because they attacked when the future Charles VII was still a child. But once Charles had grown, the tract claims, he defeated and outperformed the English seemingly at every turn, “conquering in one year all that [England] and your king Henry conquered in thirty three.”²¹⁶ Other evidence can be seen in the French claiming the English as being “arrogant” and had come to France to steal the French crown under false claims, while on the English side the French were seen as deceptive, “stiff-necked people,” who had usurped said crown.²¹⁷ The language of these accusations, especially those detailing the battles of the war, is quite different from the language of Froissart or other chivalric writing traditions, as it gave little credit or honor to the enemy, and blanket statements and beliefs, such as the English being king-killers or the French being effeminate,

²¹⁴ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 168.

²¹⁵ *The Brut*, 1436, ed. F. W. D. Brie, from Christopher Allmand (ed.), *Society at War: England and France During the Hundred Years War*, (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1998), p. 154.

²¹⁶ French text in *Le Debat des Herauts d'Armes de France et d'Angleterre*, 1455, from Allmand, *Society at War*, 155.

²¹⁷ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 140.

damned an entire nation in the eyes of another.²¹⁸ In this way, a sense of separateness and characteristics of one people being different from one's own became recognized and fostered a sense of national consciousness.

In later texts especially, one can see the growth of this national, united consciousness. Charles VII's conquest of Gascony was described by Monstrelet as a re-conquest of a territory "occupied by the English since time immemorial," thus giving a clear sense that there was a French national identity that was in part determined by territorial location, which must be united with the rest of the nation through Charles's conquest.²¹⁹ It was also during the Hundred Years War, in 1422 to be exact, that the term "Mother France" was coined by Alain Chartier, which served as a symbol of a single community made up of Frenchmen and women.²²⁰ Similarly in England, St. George became a symbol and rallying point for the English people, representing all those that served the nation in any capacity.²²¹ Under these two symbols, the peoples of England and France fought against one another and came to see themselves as distinct through borders both physical and ideological, each one claiming superiority over the other.

In terms of historical analysis, nationalism may not be a discussed topic until a few more centuries into the history of England and France, but it is difficult to deny that the roots of nationalism within these two countries come from the Hundred Years War. Nationalism was becoming "an increasingly positive sentiment which thrived upon war, and upon the feeling of common commitment which war could generate," and as was discussed previously, war came to encompass nearly every area of society to the point where everyone, no matter what their station,

²¹⁸ Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 140.

²¹⁹ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 232.

²²⁰ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 233.

²²¹ Green, *The Hundred Years War*, 233.

was in some way caught up in the war.²²² Nationalism was thus a mark of cohesion; of uniting behind the war effort and supporting those that people felt were their family, being born from the same “Mother” country, to fight against the enemy, the foreigner.

Conclusion

The Hundred Years War had an undeniable impact on English and French societies. The monarchies of both kingdoms shifted and evolved to reflect a constitutional monarchy for England and an absolute monarchy for France. In addition, the nobility of both kingdoms saw their position within society as the primary military commanders and frontline cavalry soldiers slowly erode as infantry came to dominate the battlefield and merit outweighed noble birth, but at the same time opened up new opportunities to serve the state through administrative means. With this increased emphasis on military experience and the benefits of a strong infantry, the social hierarchies of England and France became less rigid as those of the lower nobility or higher peasantry achieved status and riches based on their performance in battle. The classic medieval army raised ad hoc by feudal obligations was all but abandoned in favor of a paid, professional, and in the case of France, permanent army, which was outfitted with ever improving military equipment that opened up even more opportunities for non-nobles to achieve distinction based on their profession. War had become a profession, and the prevalence of mercenary companies during this period helps to prove that, while also contributing to some of the worst atrocities faced by the non-combatants. These non-combatants endured raids, murder, requisitions, and taxes due to the war, and this in part led to a growing sense of importance that led to their demanding of greater rights, sometimes through armed rebellion. But the non-

²²² Allmand, *Society at War*, 190.

combatant did not always suffer during the war, with some indeed prospering through their professions serving the military in a non-combat role or through the selling of their wares to aid in the war effort. Society thus became militarized and united in the conflict as every member was involved in the war or aware of its progress. This in turn led to a growing national consciousness among the populations of England and France that continued to grow after the war's conclusion and shape the two nations into the entities that would be seen in the early modern period following the end of the Middle Ages.

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