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QUENTIN GRIFFITHS

THE NESLES OF PICARDY IN THE SERVICE
OF THE LAST CAPETIANS

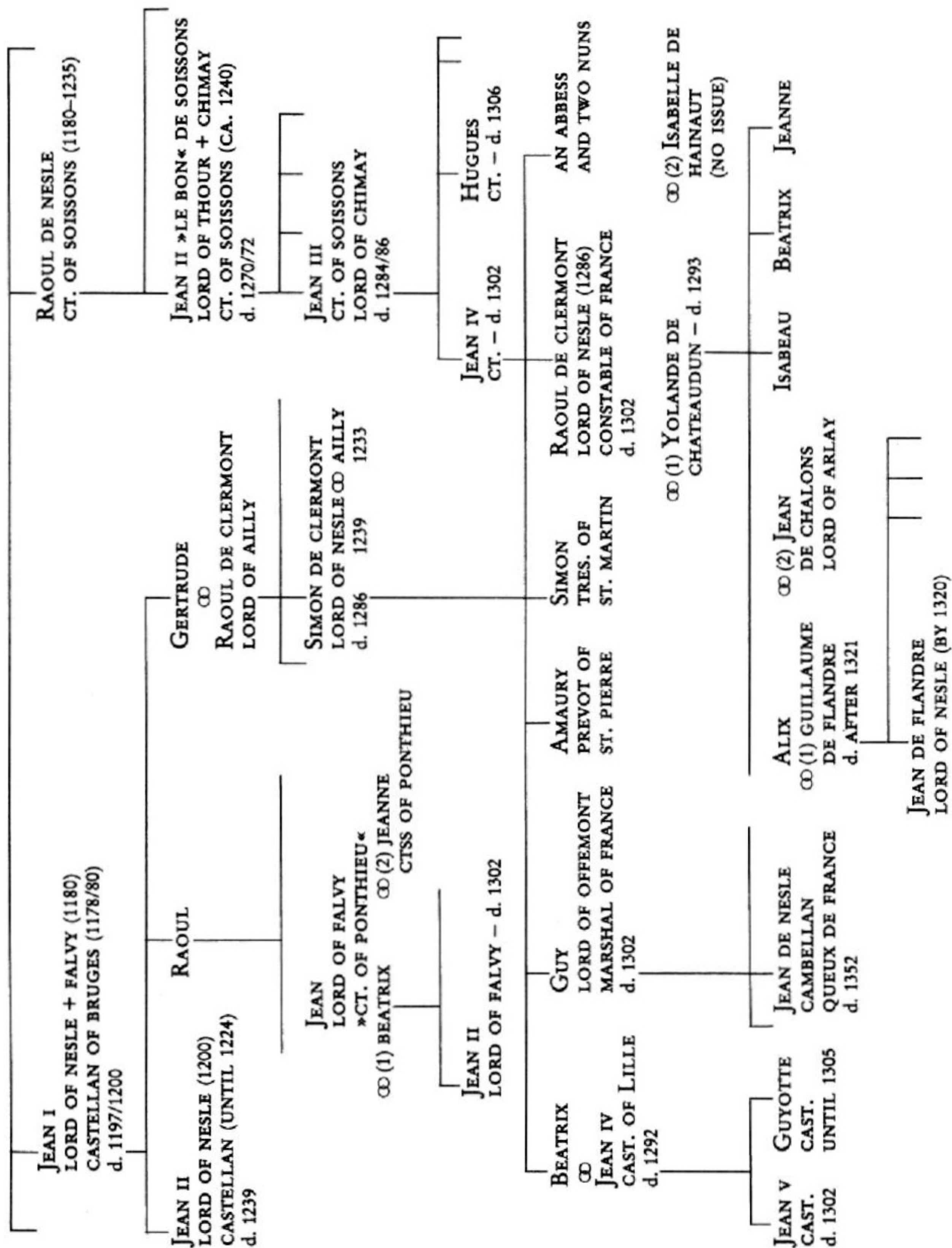
By the end of the twelfth century, the Nesles had become a powerful family, whose lands straddled the boundary between the French royal domain and the county of Flanders. Besides holdings in Vermandois and Artois (later known as Picardy), acquired recently by Philip Augustus, the lords of Nesle for two generations had been castellans of Bruges, held of the count of Flanders. With the reign of Louis IX, the family's history merged with that of the Capetian kings, and it is at this point that William Newman terminates his monumental documentation on the rise of this lordship¹. Ours is the story of the Nesles under the last Capetian kings: of a constable of France, of a marshal his brother, and of a lord and pastor of the collegiate church of St-Pierre of Lille – all working with their relatives to advance the royal cause against the relentless assertion of their liberties by the burghers of Flanders and their hapless counts.

At the beginning of the thirteenth century the lords Jean de Nesle, both father and son, had established a family tradition by siding with King Philip Augustus in his efforts to penetrate the county of Flanders after the death of Count Baldwin. But, after Philip's victory at Bouvines, Jean II became so unpopular in the Flemish court, both as a royal agent and as a regent for the widowed countess, that in 1224 he took the unusual step of selling the castellany of Bruges. Thereafter he devoted himself largely, as did his successor Simon, to his considerable holdings in Picardy, to important assignments in the royal administration, and to regular participation in royal assemblies like the Parlement. But the family's interests in the Low Countries were never forgotten, and it provided Philip the Fair at the end of the century with a convenient vehicle for reasserting control of Flanders.

These counselors of Louis IX were largely men of peace: knights and gentlemen of the law, rather than the sword, like the sainted king himself, if one excepts his crusades against the infidel. The same may be said of Simon's cousin Jean, count of Ponthieu, and the more distant cousin, the chivalrous Count Jean II of Soissons,

1 W. M. NEWMAN, *Les Seigneurs de Nesle en Picardie*, 2 vols., Paris 1971. An earlier version of this article was presented at a conference of the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association in April, 1991. I am indebted to the late John Benton for his help over the years, and to Giles Constable and Theodore Evergates for lending me Newman's unpublished notes. Many of these relate to junior branches of the Nesle family, whose unedited charters will be included in my article, *The Nesles of Picardy, a Regional Family in royal Service* (in preparation). I am grateful also for the suggestions of my *ancien professeur*, Bryce Lyon.

Family of the Lords of Nesle
Adapted and expanded from NEWMAN, Seigneurs de Nesle [1971]



though not of his *trouvère* brother Raoul and Simon's own heir Raoul; all four accompanied the king on the second of his fruitless crusades².

The third lord of Nesle, Simon de Clermont, was only once out of France, beginning in 1253, in an unsuccessful war in support of Countess Marguerite of Flanders against the count of Holland – whom he was accused of murdering according to the gossip of Philip Mouskès. Holland was allied with Jean d'Avesnes, who had been cut out of his Flemish inheritance in favor of his step-brother Guillaume de Dampierre, a French protégé³. It was no doubt for this support that Simon received from the succeeding Count Guy a *fief-rente* (or money-fief) worth 200 lb. (Tours) a year⁴. The defeat was only a temporary setback for Marguerite and her second husband, thanks to French interference. (Guillaume de Dampierre had been awarded the county of Flanders in the arbitration of 1246 by Saint Louis and Pope Innocent IV; it gave the lesser part of the Countess' domains, the county of Hainaut, to Jean d'Avesnes). Guillaume's brother Guy continued to play the role of French protégé in governing Flanders at the outset of the reign of Philip the Fair⁵.

The careers and marriages of the next lord of Nesle, Raoul de Clermont, and those of his brothers, sisters and daughters – the principal subjects of this paper – continued the family's support of the French crown, especially in the Flemish borderlands. Unfortunately Newman has not enumerated any feudal holdings Raoul inherited in Flanders, like those in Picardy, but these were probably considerable, if we judge from the donations made by his predecessors. To be sure, Raoul's first marriage in 1268 (the year of his knighting) to the viscountess of Chateaudun, had no connections with the Low Countries⁶. But the close relations with the new count of Flanders, Guy de Dampierre, which still existed at the outset of Raoul's career, are confirmed by the grant in 1280 of another *fief-rente*, and by the marriage in 1286 of his daughter Alix to the count's second son Guillaume⁷. His second marriage in 1296 would be to the daughter of the count of Hainaut, Jean II d'Avesnes. Pope Boniface gave them a dispensation from the prohibition against marriage within the fourth degree, and allowed them to choose their own confessor. The count financed Isabelle's dowry in part from grants made to him by his new ally Philip the Fair – some in anticipation of the forfeiture of the county of Flanders. The new bond

2 Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France, t. 20, Paris 1896–1904 (hereafter abbrev. HF), p. 307. Layettes du Trésor des chartes, t. 4, Paris 1863–1909, p. 433, n° 5674, dated 1269–70. See the genealogical table on the lords of Nesle.

3 Philippe MOUSQUÉS, Chronique rimée, in: HF (see n. 2) t. 22, p. 54, verses 28780–28810. He is accused with two others of killing him out of jealousy (under date of 1234). Henri PIRENNE, describing the Holland-Hainaut alliance against Flanders, says William II, after winning the battle in 1253, but losing the peace imposed by the French, was killed by the Frisians in 1256 (Histoire de Belgique, t. 1, Brussels 1929, p. 257–9).

4 NEWMAN (see n. 1) t. 1, p. 56, n. 5 (an undated act, between 1252 and 1258).

5 PIRENNE (see n. 3) p. 255.

6 This is our earliest information about him. NEWMAN (see n. 1) t. 1, p. 76, n. 53. E. BOUTARIC, Les Actes du Parlement de Paris, t. 2, Paris 1863, n° 1282, November, 1268. We do have an analysis of his property at his death (Inventaire-Arch. Dépt. du Nord, ser. B, t. 1: 2^e partie, p. 314). His father encountered protests by the inhabitants of La Remuée in Normandy for having to pay for the knighting: *pro filio primogenito facto novo milite* (E. WARLOP, t. 1/2, Courtrai 1965–66, p. 546, n. 526, citing Les Olim, t. I, p. 732, n° XXII).

7 NEWMAN, t. 1: p. 46–48 and p. 57, n. 3 & 4.

furthered royal diplomacy, as well as family interests, now that Jean's arch-rival, Count Guy of Flanders, had become the king's enemy, and King Edward of England, beaten in Guyenne, was trying to negotiate with France a truce in Flanders⁸.

Among Raoul's brothers, the eldest, Simon, was nominated by Saint Louis to the lucrative office of treasurer of St-Martin of Tours, a collegiate church at the king's disposal. He played no active secular role, but the appointment recognized his father's services. The next brother Amaury became prévôt of the church of Lille, and was an active partner with Raoul in furthering French interests in that area. Their brother Guy became a marshal of France and king's counselor, whose progeny produced a *Queux de France*, (Grand Cook – doubtless a respected office at any stage of French history) and a later king's lieutenant and marshal⁹. Raoul's eldest sister Béatrix married Jean IV, castellan of Lille, soon to be under French control. The youngest girls became nuns at the Franche Abbaye near Nesle, the recipient of frequent donations by the Nesles¹⁰.

The eldest brother, Raoul de Clermont, doubtless gained the confidence of the new king Philip III during the Tunis crusade in 1270, when he accompanied the senior members of the clan. He was made *chambellan* in 1278 (a chamberlain of the king's household ranking just below the Great Officer with that title). Advancement to constable, one of the five Great Officers of the crown, came in 1285, when Philip launched his »crusade« against Aragon, and Raoul, in an otherwise frustrating campaign, gained renown for anticipating an ambush by King Peter, and forcing his withdrawal¹¹. By 1286 he had succeeded to the lordship of Nesle. In 1292 he took possession of Aquitaine from the English, and in the following year was given special powers to invade Guyenne. He held Bordeaux against an English counter-attack, and later came to the aid of Charles of Valois, the king's brother. During this

8 A. WAUTERS, *Tableaux chronologiques des diplômes ...*, Brussels 1881–92, t. 6, p. 511, 676, and 708. *Registres du Trésor des chartes*, t. 1: Règne de Philippe le Bel, ed. GLÉNISSON and GERROUT, Paris 1958, n° 169, 4806, 5087, 5346 and 5276, between 1297 and 1301. *Registres de Boniface VIII*, Bibliothèque des Ecoles d'Athènes et de Romé, sér. 2:4, ed. R. FAWTIER, Paris 1931, n° 967 and 2687, in 1296 and 1298. Frantz FUNCK-BRENTANO, *Philippe le Bel en Flandre*, Paris 1896/7, p. 157.

9 His line preferred Nesle to Clermont »for some reason« (Holger PETERSEN-DYGGVE, *Trouvères et protecteurs de trouvères*, Helsinki 1942, p. 222). NEWMAN (n. 1), n. 56, citing *Recueil des historiens de France* (*Documents financiers*, hereafter *DF*), t. 1 (*Registres de Robert Mignon*), p. 327, n° 2549. Jean (*Queux de France* or *Grand Cook*, counselor, and king's knight) was lord of Offémont; he received from the king confirmation of a settlement of personal property in 1337, and an amortization in his favor in 1347 (*Registres du Trésor des Chartes de Philippe VI de Valois*, Paris 1978–84, n° 2275 and 2582).

10 Cf. the donation by the widow of Jean I de Nesle in 1202 (NEWMAN, t. 2, n° 102). In 1292 Raoul and another lord assent to the assignment of an income to it by his nephew, the castellan Jean V, then underage. In 1317, the abbey was assigned a rent by Guyotte as *châtelaine* of Lille (HAUTCŒUR, *Cartulaire de St-Pierre de Lille*, t. 2, p. 611, n° 865). See NEWMAN, t. 1, p. 76, n. 53, citing *Les Olim*, t. 1, p. 730, n° 14, for King Philip's endorsement of a gift of alms for the abbey. On the second marriage, see PETERSEN-DYGGVE (see n. 9) p. 220, citing the *Nouvelle Biographie Générale*, t. 38.

11 Guillaume de Nangis, *Vie de Philippe le hardi*, in: HF t. 20 (see n. 2) p. 534d, and *Continuation of the chronicle*, HF t. 20, p. 570c. HF t. 22, p. 215b–c. PETERSEN-DYGGVE (see n. 9) p. 219. NEWMAN (see n. 1) t. 1, p. 57, n. 1.

campaign, the king entrusted him with rewarding or recompensing certain noble persons and bourgeois for their service to the French cause¹².

Raoul proved his generalship again during Philip the Fair's Flemish campaigns. The French leverage in Flanders resulting from Grandfather Louis IX's arbitration was challenged when Count Guy de Dampierre, the erstwhile French ally, arranged a marriage of his daughter with the prince of Wales. This English heir-apparent with the artificial title would hardly have been as popular a next-door neighbor for the French as he was supposed to be for those rebellious Welsh. The count was imprisoned by Philip until the poor fiancée herself was allowed to take his place. Guy's appeal to Rome was countered by excommunications launched by the archbishop of Reims and the bishop of Senlis (both former counselors of the king). When Philip successfully invaded Flanders in 1297, Raoul was in command with his brother the marshal, under the Count of Saint-Pol¹³. »Across the river Lys ... they killed many, and took prisoner many German mercenaries.« Lille was besieged and occupied. (The constable's brother-in-law Jean had inherited the castellany of Lille just five years before.) Raoul and Guy accompanied Saint-Pol to Bruges to distribute royal largesses among the guilds, so that their attachment to the Leliaerts would be ensured; they were wined and dined in return. Thereafter Raoul's troops entered Damme and easily seized the English fleet. In November he was one of the envoys authorized to extend the truce with England, and, in January of 1298, a truce with Flanders. As the truce expired, Charles of Valois invaded the county again, and the old count turned over his authority to his son Robert de Béthune and joined the French army – only to be imprisoned for the second time, with his sons¹⁴.

Meanwhile, in contrast to Philip's dogged determination to subdue his vassal, the Flemish chronicler Gilles le Muisit, abbot of St-Martin of Tournai, insists upon the humanity displayed between July of 1298 through 1299 by Constable Raoul as the governor of Flanders: »... be governed very graciously.« The comment is consistent with the earlier description of Raoul as »pleasant and reasonable«¹⁵. At Bruges he opened the inspection of finances to all citizens, approved an ordinance ensuring the rights of the prison's inmates, and other reforms favoring both Flemish and French parties, like the agreement in 1299 to permit the free commercial intercourse among all towns. At the same time, as in Aquitaine, he was granting out manors, houses and rents (sometimes forfeited by Flemish partisans) to French supporters. His policy

12 The first of his father's executors in 1285, he was left 4228 lb. (Paris) (NEWMAN, t. 1, p. 76, n. 51, and t. 2, chartes n° 218 and 219). On the war: Nangis, in: HF t. 20 (see n. 2), p. 574e and 576a-d; Chronique de St-Denis, in *ibid.*, p. 661 d. On rewards: Registres ... de Philippe le Bel (see n. 8) n° 232, 1174, 80 and 1448 (the last two dated 1305 and 1311, confirming earlier actions).

13 Nangis (n. 2) Chronique, p. 579b and 664b.

14 HAUTŒUR, Histoire de l'église collégiale et du chapitre de Saint-Pierre de Lille, t. 2, Lille 1897, p. 13-14. FUNCK-BRENTANO (see n. 8) p. 162-64. WAUTERS (n. 8) t. 6, p. 595 and 605.

15 *Dimiserat dominus rex conestabularium, dominum de Neella, ad gubernandum partem Flandrie que sibi obedierat, qui multum gratiose eos gubernavit* (Gilles Le Muisit, Chronique, ed. H. LEMAÎTRE, Soc. de l'histoire de France, Paris 1905, p. 58). Gilles had probably met Raoul, as he did Count Jean of Hainaut and his son, and Raoul's young cousin Count Jean IV of Soissons, when, in 1297, they stayed at his monastery for several days (*ibid.*, p. 52). Cf. Guillaume Guiart regarding Raoul's appearance in Aragon; to be sure, it rhymed: »... s'atour plaisant et raisonnable, Gil iert de France connestable« (HF t. 22, p. 215b-k).

also responded to the recommendations of his brother, the prévôt of St-Pierre – in urging the release of the clerics accused of complicity with the count's politics¹⁶.

It was in the same year of 1301 that the king showed his regard for Raoul's performance with the funding on the royal treasury of Hainaut's gift to Isabelle. The king owed him more than perhaps he realized. Simply because of the royal favors extended to Bruges and other towns to reward their submission, should we give the king credit, as does Funck-Brentano, for inspiring the efforts carried out by Raoul to obtain the sympathy of the population¹⁷?

The next round of hostilities was provoked by the heavy-handedness of the new French governor. It led to the famous Matins of Bruges in 1302, for which the belfry gave the signal leading to a massacre of the French garrison. Flanders was invaded by a French army of 10000 knights and sergeants and 10000 bowmen under the prince Robert of Artois. Raoul joined it with his troops from Lille. They came to a disastrous end at Groeninghe, near the gates of Courtrai¹⁸. There, on July 11, the »flower of the French nobility« was slaughtered, including our constable and marshal, their nephew Jean V of Lille, their cousins Jean III of Soissons and Jean II of Falvy, and many more familiar figures like Philip's so-called Roman lawyer, Pierre Flote – notorious for his prosecution of Pope Boniface VIII and later the Templars. We are told that the pope roused himself in the middle of the night to hear an account of the battle. (His abduction by French agents was to come later that year.) Indeed, the defeat of Courtrai was blamed by contemporaries on Philip's treatment of the church, rather than on the traditional tactics of heavily armored cavalry against well-trained burgher infantry, in this instance protected by the natural obstacles of two brooks¹⁹.

Both contemporary and modern accounts credit Constable Raoul with counseling that the French lure the Flemings out of their advantageous positions, lest the knights be caught on the far side of the brooks, as they ultimately were. He doubtless counted on the success of his crossbowmen to harass the enemy. Some chroniclers assert that the cavalry charges were launched by the impetuous Robert of Artois, under pressure not to yield credit for a victory to the lowly foot-soldiers, and that Raoul's advice of caution was answered only with taunts. But Verbruggen's recent study asserts that Artois recalled the French foot because the knights could not support them. However decisive may have been the clash of personalities and motives, Raoul's left wing managed to get across the Grote Beek, though some horses fell in. He fell in the initial charge against the close-packed Brugeois pikes, lances and *goedendags*²⁰.

16 WAUTERS (see n. 8) t. 6, p. 626, 639, and 661. HAUTCŒUR (n. 14) t. 2, p. 14 and 15. FUNCK-BRENTANO (see n. 8) p. 312 and 315–17. On the grants see: WAUTERS, t. 6, p. 626–28, 635, 639, 643–44, 649, 658–59, 661, 665, 675, 678, 687; t. 7, p. 1186–87f. On finances see: *Les Journaux du Trésor de Philippe le Bel*, ed. Jules VIARD (Collection de documents inédits ...), Paris 1940, n° 238, 531, 844, & 4257; DF t. 3 (see n. 9) n° 2005 and 2078.

17 FUNCK-BRENTANO (n. 8) p. 312 and 318. Le Muisit (n. 15) p. 62. On the king's grants, see n. 8 above.

18 Kortryck, in Belgium, Western Flanders.

19 Le Muisit (n. 15) p. 68 and 69. PIRENNE (see n. 3) p. 349–350 & 423.

20 According to Guillaume Guiart, a contemporary if not an eyewitness, Raoul warned that no war-horse or mule could overcome the ditches, and that they should wait for the enemy to come out in the open. The count, who »excelled in *hardement* and *aigreté*«, rejected the advice (HF [n. 2] t. 22, p. 238a and j)

The French revenge came in 1304, in a narrow victory at Mons-en-Pévèle, in part because of new tactics. It was followed by more revolts until the Treaty of Athies was imposed for the moment on the new Count Robert. For fifty years from 1312, Lille and two other castellanies remained in the French royal domain; Lille itself had been ceded to the king in 1305 by the heiress Guyotte, Jean V's sister²¹. Although »the French language spread along the Scheldt river« to match French efforts to dominate the local princes, neither language nor king won over the hearts of the ordinary people of the towns and countryside. Pirenne concludes, »Philip had been able to seize Flanders, but he did not know how to hold onto it«²². But Raoul's brother Amaury continued to support royal diplomacy from his influential office as prévôt of the wealthy church of St-Pierre of Lille.

*

Philip the Fair took full advantage of his new control of Flemish collegiate churches, as had he and his predecessors in France, where royal patronage had meant from early Capetian times a right to nominate certain dignitaries, such as the dean or treasurer²³. In areas of Flanders under French influence he imposed himself in the count's role as patron and *gardien élu* of the collegiate churches founded by the first counts²⁴. Like those on the borderlands of the early French domain, these strategically-placed churches served as bases for expansion of Flanders' political power: as organs of administration, and as sources of local clerks, counselors and agents of the counts²⁵. Enjoying dignities at some *collégiales*, though still subject legally to the suzerainty of the count, we find members of the Parlement of Paris like Renaud Dy, the dean of Cassel, to the northwest of Lille²⁶. A later dean, royal collector of the tenth from 1323–5, was Jean de Fontaines²⁷. A contemporary of Amaury, the prévôt at Aire-sur-la-Lys, further west and even closer to the French border at the time, was another member of the Paris court in 1311²⁸. We also find in the Parlement the archdeacon of Ghent (the only major town to remain on the French side of the war)

– under pressure of some of his fellow-nobles, who were watching the advance of the *gens de pié* (Chron. anon., in: HF t.22, p.378c; Chron. de St-Denis, in: HF t.20, p.659a and c). A sixteenth c. view, quoting a Philippe Megerus, attributed the disaster to »mauvaise intelligence« between the French leaders, viz. Robert d'Artois and Rol de Nesle (J. B. SOUCHET, Hist. du diocèse et de la ville de Chartres, Chartres 1869, 3: 97). See J. F. VERBRUGGEN, Medieval Warfare, New York 1977, p.168 and 170; the English edition lacks source references.

21 VERBRUGGEN (n. supra) p. 180. NEWMAN (n. 1) t. 1, p. 77, n. 57.

22 »Philippe le Bel avait pu s'emparer de la Flandre, il ne sut pas le conserver« (see n. 3 above) p. 261–62 and 413.

23 QUENTIN GRIFFITHS, Les Collégiales royales et leurs clercs dans le gouvernement Capétien, dans: Francia 18/1 (1991) n. 4 and Tableau A.

24 HAUTCŒUR, Histoire (see n. 14) p. 42–43.

25 Henri-Jacques LEGIER, ... Ms. of master's thesis, Univ. de Paris-Ecole de Droit, p.144–155. My gratitude to Prof. Jean-Loup Lemaître for arranging to make this available.

26 He handled the *requêtes* of the French language as distinct from those of the Langue d'Oc (Paul LEHUGEUR, Philippe le long, roi de France, Paris 1931, p. 202, n. 5). BOUTARIC, Actes (see n. 6) 4490 B, where the dean is unnamed (December, 1316). Cassel: dépt. Nord, ar. Dunkerque.

27 Les Journaux du trésor de Charles IV le Bel, Paris 1917, n° 282, 283, 285, 286 – as collector of the *dîme*, prov. of Rouen; id., n° 8294 and 8308 – as collector-general of *dîme* in Reims (between 1323–1325).

28 BOUTARIC (n. 6) n° 3883; he is unnamed, but identified by church by Jean DU TILLET, Recueil des rois de France ..., Paris 1618, t.I, p.370. Aire-sur-la-Lys: dépt. Pas-de-Calais, ar. St-Omer. St-Pierre

and the archdeacon of Brabant (in the person of Guillaume Flote, son of the lawyer Pierre)²⁹.

At Lille the king had clearly been imposing his candidates for prévôt as early as 1283, when Philip the Fair's father issued an act of protection for St-Pierre³⁰. Amaury was preceded by a member of Parlement, Guillaume de Pouilly, and followed after his death by Robert de Courtenay, from a family with French royal blood³¹. In 1291, three years after assuming the dignity, Amaury received from Pope Nicholas IV authorization to retain this office, which involved the care of souls, without having received prior dispensation from the minimum age requirement, and a delay of five years in which to qualify for the priesthood. How he had spent the 800 lb. (Tours) left him by his father »pour leurs livres acater«, we are not told³². He could satisfy his residency requirements anywhere in the castellany of Lille, and they allowed him to get to Paris on occasions of royal business like that in 1292, when the chapter notified him, as it was obliged to, of the day chosen for electing a cantor³³. In return the king protected the dignitaries and the chapter from outside physical or jurisdictional threats, such as the magistrates of Lille in 1302 and 1316, either through the royal bailiffs or the king's court³⁴.

Amaury's authority in church matters was considerable, particularly in respect to the fabric and finances, but he also had direct charge of the souls of the clergy. Between 1288 and 1295, the division of rights between himself and the dean and chapter was clarified, an exchange of rents and property was agreed upon with the count of Flanders, and he seems to have worked smoothly with the chapter in other respects – even after the see of Tournai was occupied in 1292 by another royal counselor, Jean de Vassoigne³⁵.

But from 1297 Amaury's loyalties and diplomatic skills were severely tested. Family and origin tended to govern the loyalties of the canons of the chapter, and

d'Aire was founded ca. 1060 according to Pierre FEUCHÈRE, *La Question de l'Aria monasterio et les origines d'Aire-sur-la-Lys*, in: *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* 44–45 (1950) p. 1074.

29 The archdeacon of Ghent in 1298 is unnamed (Ch.-V. LANGLOIS, *Textes relatifs à l'histoire du Parlement de Paris ...*, Paris 1888, n° 117). Guillaume was in the church of Malines (Brabant) in 1307 or after, and was a master of the *Requêtes* of Languedoc (ibid. n° 124), but was probably working for the king in some capacity by 1303 (Franklin J. PEGUES, *The Lawyers of the Last Capetians*, Princeton New Jersey 1962, p. 208; Jos. PETIT, *Essai de reconstitution ... de la Chambre des Comptes* [Collection de documents inédits] Paris 1899, p. 210).

30 HAUTCŒUR, *Histoire* (see n. 14) t. 2, p. 9, n. 1, citing *Cartulaire* (n. 10) p. 499, 556 and 561.

31 ID., *Histoire*, t. 1, p. 444, 466 and *passim* for Guillaume; t. 2, p. 439 for Robert. Guillaume was prévôt from 1282; as prévôt and archdeacon of Sablé in the church of Le Mans (Sarthe) and »clerk of the illustrious king of France«, he approves a convention between the chapter and the town of Lille (ID., *Cartulaire*, t. 1, p. 498, n° 73 and 75). For his activity in Parlement, see LANGLOIS, *Textes*, n° 83, 86, 92 and 115 (from 1283 to 1296).

32 HAUTCŒUR, *Cartulaire* (n. 10) p. 538, n° 753 (*Registres de Nicolas IV*, Bibliothèque des Ecoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, sér. 2: 5, ed. E. LANGLOIS, Paris 1886–93, n° 5078 and 5210).

HAUTCŒUR, *Histoire* (n. 14) t. 1, p. 105, n. 1. See Simon's will in NEWMAN (n. 1) t. 2, n° 219.

33 HAUTCŒUR, *Cartulaire*, t. 1, p. 539, n° 757 and p. 540, n° 758; *Histoire*, t. 1, p. 104 and 108, n. 3.

34 ID., *Cartulaire*, t. 2, p. 577–79, n° 711; p. 580, n° 813; p. 604–5, n° 855.

35 HAUTCŒUR cites several instances in 1288–89, but especially: *Cartulaire*, t. 1, n° 45 (1290); n° 737; n° 739; n° 750 (1290/1); n° 751 (1290); n° 778 (1295); *Histoire*, t. 1, p. 398–400. See also *Bibl. Mun. – Amiens*, Ms. 1077, abbaye d'Arrouaise, f° 73v, n° 123 (March, 1289 ns). On Vassoigne, see GRIFFITHS (n. 23) *Tableaux C and D*.

most were Flemish. As a body they disregarded the interdict launched by the archbishop of Reims and bishop of Senlis, and then by Bishop Jean of Tournai, in order to force the obedience of Count Guy to the king. When, on the eve of Pentecost, the count's appeal to Rome was read in the church choir, in the presence of his son Robert, Amaury had slipped away, along with his sister's brother-in-law, the treasurer Raoul de Lille, and eleven other Leliaerts (probably including the canon Gautier de Nesle)³⁶. We have noted earlier his efforts and Raoul's under a royal amnesty to free some of the clerics imprisoned by the bishop for their pro-Flemish actions³⁷. Following the next hostilities and the incorporation of Lille in the royal domain in 1315, Amaury became more severe, and ordered action against the canons who took the side of the new Count Robert de Béthune: »Tout partisan sera excommunié ipso facto«³⁸. Meanwhile, he represented the interests of the widows of his brother Raoul and of Count Jean of Hainaut³⁹.

His loyalty was rewarded. As recently as 1298, he had received papal dispensation to cumulate one more benefice, besides his prévôté and canonries in Amiens, Noyon, Troyes, Ste-Marie of Nesle, and one under an exspectative grace in Châlon-sur-Marne. In 1299 he had been reimbursed for his travel and other expenses in the king's service. We learn that around 1305 the prévôt of Lille was one of several king's clerks for whom »provision« of a prebend was to be made in accordance with the grace granted the king by Pope Clement V; it was in the cathedral church of Beauvais⁴⁰. In 1308 the hôtel in Paris, built in the 13th century by a »sire de Nesle« (Simon) next to the »Tour de Nesle«, on the left bank opposite the Louvre, was sold by Amaury to King Philip for 5000 lb⁴¹. We hear nothing more of him after 1315, and he was probably dead by January of 1316⁴².

The house of Nesle (or more strictly Clermont-Nesle) on the male side had come to an end with the death of Raoul. The name Nesle continued to be used by the junior branches of the family, not only by the lords of Falvy and of Breteuil, but those of Offémont, royal counselors descended from Marshal Guy, and more properly Clermonts. The lordship of Nesle itself retained the Flemish connection in the family of Raoul's daughter Alix and Guillaume de Flandre, entrusted by the king with the castle of Courtrai in 1308, and they continued to support royal police until

36 HAUTCŒUR, t. 2, p. 10–11, citing the *Codex diplomaticus Flandriae*, p. 177. Gautier de Nesle was perhaps a younger son of Raoul by his second marriage with Isabelle de Hainaut; we know he had a sister Béatrix in 1317 (HAUTCŒUR, Cartulaire, t. 2, p. 611, n° 866). The treasurer Raoul was a brother of the castellan of Lille, Jean IV (WARLOP [see n. 6] t. 2/1, n° 130; HAUTCŒUR provides no biography in his Chronique, only a date of 1321 for his death (Histoire, t. 2, p. 461).

37 HAUTCŒUR, Histoire, t. 2, p. 14 and 15.

38 ID., Cartulaire, t. 2, p. 602, n° 748.

39 WAUTERS (see n. 8) t. 8, p. 98 (in 1303) and p. 201 (1306).

40 In 1298: Registres de Boniface VIII (see n. 8) n° 2693. In 1299: Journaux du Trésor de Philippe le Bel (see n. 16) n° 2095 and 2403. In 1305: PETIT (see n. 29) p. 150, app. XIII, n. 139. The request by the king is made of Archbishop Gilles Aycellin, another royal counselor.

41 The mansion was rebuilt in 1572, and converted to a mint by Louis XV; Philip IV added a quay along the Seine. The tower was actually the Tour Philippe Hamelin, part of Philip-Augustus' city walls (H. GÉRAUD, Paris sous Philippe-le-Bel, Documents inédits, t. 3, Paris 1837, p. 458; Michelin »Green Guide« to Paris, 2d English ed., Clermont-Ferrand 1976, p. 136).

42 NEWMAN (n. 1) p. 77, n. 55; HAUTCŒUR's date of 1328 is unsupported (Histoire t. 1, p. 466: Série chronique).

the death of their son Jean⁴³. They seem to have been in constant litigation with Guy's descendants, and with those of Isabelle of Hainaut – thus renewing the old enmities between the Dampierres and the d'Avesnes. Jean's men even engaged in violence against the »demoiselles«, his aunts Isabeau, Béatrix and Jeanne, and had to be restrained by an act of the Parlement of Paris; and he was in court with his stepfather, Jean de Chalon⁴⁴. Jean was killed in 1325, along with other partisans of the new Count Louis of Nevers, who was defeated by the »men of Courtrai, Bruges and others« in a protest against raising money for the peace with France⁴⁵.

Two other renewed ties of the larger Nesle family with the »Low Countries« was the marriage of Jean de Hainaut (Raoul's brother-in-law) to Countess Marguerite, daughter of Hugues of Soissons, and that of Jean's sister Marie to the king's chamberlain, Count Louis of Clermont-in-Auvergne, a descendant of Saint Louis⁴⁶.

What significance can be attached to the relations of the Nesle family with the later Capetians? No individual members had any demonstrable impact on events, except perhaps in a battle or two. They were not one of the old families closely identified with the Capetian monarchy, like the Beaumonts, Bourbons, Montmorencies or Sancerres who appear on occasion in royal assemblies, and who often served the crown with distinction. None of them were the so-called »new men« of the period, like Philip the Fair's Roman lawyers Enguerrand de Marigny or Pierre Flote – working their way up from the petty nobility or even bourgeoisie on the strength of their professional talents – although several of the Nesles displayed comparable talents, sitting alongside them in the Parlement or in other administrative capacities. None of them appear to have received particularly lucrative rewards for service to their king. A good reason was the abrupt end of five careers at Courtrai. Not even faithful Amaury got an episcopal appointment, like so many other clerical counselors of the king. Perhaps the Nesles felt well-enough endowed to observe the dictum *Noblesse oblige*. Yet it is clear from Philip the Fair's unwavering trust in its members, however modest their rewards, that the Nesles, with their continuing Flemish connections, played crucial roles as royal lieutenants and Leliaerts in French efforts to integrate Flanders into the kingdom.

43 See the genealogical chart. Guillaume and Jean were lords of Termonde and Nesle (Registres de Philippe IV [see n. 16] n° 757 in 1308; BOUTARIC [n. 6] n° 4958 in 1316, and n° 7324 in 1323; WAUTERS [n. 8] t. 9, p. 6). PETERSEN-DYGGVE (n. 9) p. 220, has traced the genealogy, but without documentation; Alix' second husband was from Chalon-sur-Saône, as we learn from a property settlement with the family of Guy the marshal in 1313 (Registres de Philippe IV, n° 1879, 1886 and 1888). I have been unable to fit in »Jean, castellan of Nesle«, and wife Mahaut, with any of the family branches; he was the first to carry the title, and was certainly a king's knight, and counselor in Parlement (HF [see n. 2] t. 22, p. 762d; DF [n. 9] t. 2: Comptes du Trésor, n° 41; Journaux du Trésor de Philippe IV [n. 16] n° 4877 – from 1287 to 1301).

44 To cite a few examples: Jean de Flandre vs. Jean the *cambellan* and *queux*, lord of Offémont (Registres de Philippe VI [n. 9] n° 2275). Jean de Flandre vs. his aunts »in full Parlement« (BOUTARIC [n. 6] n° 6217, 6251, 6259, and 6979, in 1321–22). Jean de Flandre vs. Jean de Chalon (BOUTARIC, n° 6186). Alix vs. Jean de Hainaut (BOUTARIC, n° 5887 in 1319).

45 HF (n. 2) t. 20, p. 630d. He had just been designated counselor by the new count (WAUTERS [n. 8] t. 9, p. 160).

46 Marie de Hainaut, married to Louis de Clermont (not shown on the chart), still owed reliefs to the king in 1324 for the grants made to Count Jean on the occasion of her sister Isabelle's marriage (Registres de Philippe IV [n. 16] n° 1107; DF [n. 9] t. 4, n° 14566).