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In Relation: Marguerite De Provence and Her Many Roles, 1221-1295

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IN RELATION: MARGUERITE DE PROVENCE AND HER MANY ROLES, 1221-1295

by

Cristina Dawn Moody

A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of the Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts
Department of History

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
August 2007
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Dr. Robert F. Berkelofer III, my thesis adviser, for taking me on as a student and providing me with his knowledge and expertise in matters of teaching, historical method, and for his limitless patience.

Thanks to the rest of my committee: Dr. James Palmitessa of the History Department for pointing me towards letters as a source and giving me such excellent feedback; and Dr. Molly Lynde-Recchia of the Foreign Languages Department, for her able assistance with Old French and how to properly edit transcriptions and translations.

Thanks to Dr. Judith Stone for kindly offering feedback on my thesis prospectus, and for sharing with me her knowledge of historiography and all gendered and feminist matters.

Thanks to the Graduate College of Western Michigan University for providing me with the funds for researching Marguerite's letters housed in the National Archives of Great Britain.

Thanks to Bridget, Dine, Jessica, Joel, and Patty for taking the time to nag me about grammar, style, and common sense.

Thanks to Dr. Jane Elkington Wohl for believing that I can do it.
Thanks to my father, Elmer C. Moody, for never stopping me from trying.

Thanks to my mother, Doris Arlene Brown Moody. Never having graduated from high school, Mom was ecstatic when I earned my High School degree and didn't stop telling perfect strangers about her smart, college-educated daughter until the day she died. So this is for her. Of course, all errors and lapses of good judgement remain my own.

Cristina Moody
IN RELATION: MARGUERITE DE PROVENCE AND HER MANY ROLES, 1221-1295

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Western Michigan University, 2007

This thesis uses a body of letters between Marguerite de Provence, a thirteenth-century French Queen, and others to discuss her role as a link between several European courts, assisting the French crown to be free of major wars in this period. It investigates Marguerite's attempts to reverse the will of her father, which gave Provence to her youngest sister, Beatrice. Marguerite's life speaks to a variety of topics and themes, including but not limited to, queenship, monarchy, political discourse, letter-writing, and the social construction of gender. Since relatively little work has been done on her life, this thesis seeks to explore Marguerite’s life and actions further.
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Introduction

"Marguerite of Provence was one of France's most interesting queens."
- Duc de Castries, The Lives of the Kings and Queens of France

"Une des plus gracieuses figures de l'histoire de France est celle de Marguerite de Provence, femme de saint Louis."
- Etienne Boutaric

"Un des noms que l'histoire de ce siècle a environné de l'éclat le plus doux et le plus pur est certainement le nom de la reine Marguerite de Provence..."
- V. Leclercq

As one of four sisters who became queens in thirteenth-century Europe, Marguerite de Provence, born in 1221 to the last Count of Provence by natural succession, has captured the attention of many. She has been the subject, however, of only one biography and little substantive academic attention, despite who she was, when she lived, and where. Marguerite married Louis IX of France (Saint Louis) in 1234 and gave birth to eleven children in seventeen years. Her younger sisters became, respectively, queens of England, Germany, and Sicily: Eleanor of Provence married Henry III of England in 1236; Sanchia married Richard, Duke of Cornwall and future king of Germany and the Romans in 1241; and the youngest, Beatrice, wed Charles of Anjou, Louis IX's youngest brother and later king of Sicily, in 1246.\(^1\)

Before their father died in 1245, he drew up a will declaring his youngest daughter his heir. For his eldest three daughters he designated monetary inheritances, most of which they never received. This lack proved the catalyst

\(^1\) Names have been standardized to the most common, Anglicized usage. Hence, "Alienor" or "Elinor" is the more common "Eleanor."
for Marguerite's attempt, after her sister Beatrice died in 1267, to protest against
her brother-in-law's rule in Provence. Eleanor of Provence shared her sister
Marguerite's distaste for Angevin rule in their homeland, but nothing remains to
explain what the sisters intended to do if their attempt had been successful.

Letters, and affection, flowed between the English and French courts
while Marguerite was alive. Even after Marguerite and Eleanor died, their
children kept the connection, both as sovereigns and cousins. But despite
renewed interest in Eleanor's life, and her role as queen, corresponding work has
not been done on Marguerite, as this thesis will demonstrate. Therefore, I have
three goals: first, to translate the unpublished letters and sources relevant to
Marguerite's life and queenship; second, to investigate her life in the context of
thirteenth-century French and English politics; and third, to thereby contribute to
the growing need for a more complete history of medieval French queenship.

In many ways, this thesis will begin to bridge the gap between the
conclusions of older work on medieval government and politics and more
contemporary conclusions. Although traditional political histories in the vein of
Marc Bloch or Joseph Strayer once dominated study of the middle ages, in the
last forty years scholars have pushed forward into the fields of women's and
gender history. We might say that queenship, for example, belongs properly in

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political history, but until the late 1960's very little substantive work had been done on queens. As women's movements began to fill bookshelves with biographies on these queens, we still lacked a key component to really analyze these women's lives. That component would turn out to be new frameworks and conceptual language given to the field by feminism and an understanding of gender as fluid, not binary.

At the beginning of this forty year period, Marion F. Facinger's classic work on early Capetian queens (1968) examined the official roles of those queens from 987-1237. It was an overview of the office of queenship in the medieval period, which had not been attempted previously. In Facinger's estimation, 1237 signaled the end of significant queenly involvement in government, at the apex of Capetian monarchy. In his view, the burgeoning "nation-state" rendered queens no more than wives or mothers, relegated to a private, though not powerless, role.\(^3\) There are several troubling elements to this conclusion. First, it presupposes that the only activity worthy of study is official, or that only official correspondence has something to offer the historian. Letters may be seen as political, but not letters by queens. Second, the article's content does not entirely fit the title. Facinger includes the many queens of Philip II, but barely mentions Blanche of Castile or the queens who followed her. French medieval queens did not cease to exist after Blanche of Castile, nor did Capetian queens. Facinger was also, to some degree, short-sighted about the

degree of a queen's involvement in governance. As a result, this was more a study of early Capetian queens than an overview of Capetian queens in the medieval period. Therefore, the article represents an incomplete consideration of Capetian queenship.

Facinger's essay, however, as well as Wemple and McNamara's "The Power of Women Through the Family in Medieval Europe" (1988), have sparked development in the field of women's history. Both of these works posit that women, royal and otherwise, lost power after the twelfth century partially due to the growing centralization of the Capetian State. Wemple and McNamara argue that aristocratic women wielded considerable power through the family in the early middle ages. The article was originally published in 1973 and comments upon the developing "impersonal machinery for government" which lead to the exclusion of queens and other aristocratic women from public life. Facinger's thesis partly rests upon this removal of the queen from the sphere of the king, and thus her figurative removal from the political stage. Recently, Miriam Shadis, seeking to correct Facinger, uses Blanche of Castile as an example of a Capetian Queen who was politically active after 1237, the terminus date for Facinger's study. Aristocratic women did not, in fact, disappear from the

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historical record. Some historians have wondered if our view of power has blinded us to the real power women held.  

As this historiographic issue developed, queens and queenship experienced an upsurge in popularity among scholars. John Carmi Parsons' 1993 *Medieval Queenship* and Kathleen Nolan's 2003 *Capetian Women* have expanded our frame of reference. Both collections extensively use non-traditional sources (hagiographies, for example) alongside traditional political records. By doing so, new work on French queenship has transcended Facinger. This work has also capitalized on certain other historiographic trends, such as the work of the *Annalistes* in France and feminist and gender theory from several countries.  

Parsons in particular spoke of a need for more work on queenship, on a territorial level and through more comparative anthologies. Some of this work has been produced: for example, Theresa Earenfight's 2005 *Queenship and Political Power in Medieval and Early Modern Spain*. Nevertheless, the suggestions for continuity, the possibility that power became "private," and the ideas that could come out of more comparative work on queenship provide the realization that despite the groundbreaking work of the last forty years, some subjects have not been give their fair due.

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9 Examples include Georges Duby's studies on the family, which lead to collections such as *A History of Private Life*, eds. Georges Duby and Philippe Ariès (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2003), as well as *A History of Women in the West*, ed. Christine (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2000).
The difficulties surrounding a well-informed consideration of queenship, be it French, English, Spanish, or other, have generated excellent scholarship on the subject.\textsuperscript{11} For some, including Earenfight, the goal is not to write more histories of queens, but to reframe the history of rulership with gendered boundaries. Current work has turned less towards biographies, though several excellent biographies have been published recently\textsuperscript{12}, and more towards actions and attempts at a gendered revision of the political landscape.\textsuperscript{13} Gender as a category for analysis, introduced by Joan W. Scott and much used and contested since then, has changed how medievalists and others study aristocratic women. Parsons, for example, uses the idea of socially constructed gender to demonstrate how we can understand more about men by knowing more about women, which is an intriguing reversal.\textsuperscript{14} Gender has also inspired new work on governance by problematizing women's role.\textsuperscript{15} As far as the category of women's history is concerned, both Gérard Sivéry and Parsons comment that aristocratic women, in this case specifically queens, do not share in women's lot in life.\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{11} See, for example, Louise Olga Fradenburg, ed., \textit{Women and Sovereignty} (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1992).
\textsuperscript{12} See, for example, Margaret Howell's biography on Eleanor of Provence.
\textsuperscript{13} See, for example, \textit{Gendering the Master Narrative: Women and Power in the Middle Ages}, eds. Mary C. Erler and Maryanne Kowaleski (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003).
\textsuperscript{15} See, for example, Judith M. Richards, "Mary Tudor as 'Sole Quene'?: Gendering Tudor Monarchy," \textit{The Historical Journal}, 40, 4 (1997): 895-924.
Marguerite herself has been the subject of a scholarly biography by Sivéry in 1987. He explores how she was involved with the Montfort problem, how she attempted to win back her 'inheritance.' as well as most of the major verifiable and significant portions of her life. Marguerite de Provence certainly fulfilled traditional female roles as wife and mother. Yet, by failing to consider the gendered nature of her roles, Sivéry's work fails to succeed as anything other than a biography.

Sivéry makes his work's incomplete source coverage transparent. First, though he used letters that are located in the British National Archives, he only used the printed and flawed editions. Using the original sources of these letters would have strengthened his work. This was particularly odd in the case of the letters between Marguerite and her brother-in-law Alphonse de Poitiers, since those letters were located in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France and were therefore easily accessible to Sivéry. Second, further research has revealed that there are a number of unprinted letters that he did not use for this biography. Third, he missed an important secondary work in his research. Cox's 1974 *Eagles of Savoy* studies the rise and fall of the powerful Savoyard family of Northern Italy. Cox' research uncovered further evidence that Marguerite and Louis helped her relatives out with some loans, but Sivéry appears to have been unaware that these documents existed.

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17 SC 1/17/129, 139, 140, 142, 145, 148. All citations to unpublished documents will be to their physical location.
Most tellingly, as is often the case in biographies of famous queens, Sivéry's Marguerite is viewed primarily through the lives of the famous men who surrounded her. As much of the biographical detail we possess originates in works on her saintly husband, we see an over-reliance on authors such as Jean de Joinville, the best known of Louis's biographers/hagiographers. The purpose of Louis' Vie, however, was to glorify him, if not to delineate his holy status. As such, though much of the detail on Marguerite was subordinated to this purpose, it would appear more fruitful to consider Joinville as a moderately hostile historical witness. Sivéry relies very heavily on Joinville, both for the rich personal details of Marguerite's personality, but also to some degree for his biographical framework. For example, Sivéry frames his understanding of the relationship between Blanche of Castile and Marguerite with the short, seemingly melodramatic clashes between the two queens, as described by Joinville. It may serve work on Marguerite better to question these longstanding assumptions, rather than to take them as simple truth.\(^{18}\)

On the whole, Sivéry's work has the limits of any biography. But if we are to do anything else with Marguerite's life, particularly as it informs late thirteenth century French queenship, biographies will not help the situation. Biographies inherently force subjecthood by presuming to label the unconscious factors which created the biography's subject. In a sense, this act objectifies the subject of a

\(^{18}\) See, for example, William Chester Jordan, \textit{Louis IX and the Challenge of the Crusade} (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979), 5. Jordan states that "it is evident from a wide variety of sources that a gradual stiffening developed in their [Marguerite and Louis'] relationship." Unfortunately, he only cites a secondary source as evidence and any other evidence of this, from for example a chronicle other than Joinville, is not readily evident.
biography. Sivéry asks whether or not Marguerite was the thirteenth century Marie-Antoinette, a question both anachronistic and ridiculous. This reveals his cultural and modernist prejudices and does nothing more than undermine the positive aspects of his work. Yet it is intriguing that he chose to compare her to arguably the most debated French queen in the history of the office.

Part of this may be explained by complications inherent in biography, a favored type of work on women. Denise Riley describes 'woman' as an "unstable category" because of violent cultural, social, and chronological fluctuations in the meaning of the word.\footnote{Denise Riley, "Am I That Name?: Feminism and the Category of 'Women' in History (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 5.} The past few decades have produced work that demonstrates that gender is not a fixed category, but a social construct.\footnote{See, for example Joan Wallach Scott, Gender and the Politics of History (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999) Introduction and Ch. 1.} New work on queens, such as Dena Goodman's collection on Marie-Antoinette, plainly states that this new scholarship does not seek to produce biographies. To counteract the tendency to write biographies, Goodman suggests that we consider our subjects of study as "historical sites."\footnote{Dena Goodman, ed., Marie-Antoinette: Writings on the Body of a Queen (New York: Routledge, 2003), 2.} I am curious about what would come out of considering Marguerite de Provence, a queen and a part of the social elite in nearly every way, as both elite and part of the subaltern.

As a woman, Marguerite may be identified with the sex that lost power, so many historians would say, in the medieval period. But Judith Butler, in "Contingent Foundations: Feminism and the Question of 'Postmodernism,'"
speaks of how identities can be just as exclusive as they are inclusive.\textsuperscript{22} Political history has treated women as either neutral figures with no gender, or not at all. Thus Marguerite appears as part of a “peculiar temporality of ‘women,’”\textsuperscript{23} a temporality where she lives the dynamic struggle between being a part of the nobility and being a ‘woman.’ Like the women studied in Jo Burr Margadant’s \textit{The New Biography} (2000), she is not just any woman, but a woman who enjoyed rights, responsibilities, and comforts not shared by others.\textsuperscript{24} But for all that, Margadant’s women of the social elite, and Marguerite de Provence, stretch into and out of privilege, depending on how we look at their actions.

Keeping all of this in mind, Earenfight’s article “Political culture and political discourse in the letters of Queen Maria of Castilla” suggested how I might focus this thesis. As she points out, analyzing letters to shed light on a queen’s actions and life has been done. But what is too present in the historiography is the common perception of a monarchy based on now old-fashioned ideas of gender. Earenfight also suggests that historians reevaluate which letters can be considered political, rather than private, documents.

This thesis will consider Marguerite’s letters as a group. Forty-one letters by Marguerite de Provence have been positively identified. Originals of six unpublished letters were obtained from the National Archives of Great Britain at


\textsuperscript{23} Riley, in \textit{Feminists Theorize}, 121.

Kew. Twenty-seven are available in printed document collections which include the *Layettes du Trésor des Chartes*, Rymer’s *Foedera*, Shirley’s *Letters*, and *Lettres des rois, reines, et autres personnages des cours de France et d'Angleterre*. Seven additional letters appear in the *Correspondance Administrative d'Alfonse de Poitiers*. They also survive in Bibliothèque Nationale ms no. 10918, ff. 18, 19, 20 and were partially transcribed by E. Boutaric in 1897. Twenty of the letters are in Old French, twenty-eight are in Latin, and the remaining letter is too badly damaged to determine the language.

Collectively, Marguerite’s letters were not precisely a literary enterprise, no more than they are exclusively political. Previous more traditional political histories have emphasized the close relationship between the English and French royal houses without expanding much upon that topic. Why were they so close? What larger impact did that close relationship, if it existed, have on the course of thirteenth-century Europe? We should remember that, for more than one reason, Louis IX of France fought no major wars with a European nation. Marguerite wrote many letters to her brother-in-law. Some appear on the surface to be casual missives, only asking after the health of the English royal family. But can we read these letters as more than that, in light of the larger context of thirteenth-century political history? I believe that we can and should,


26 See Appendix A for a complete list of Marguerite’s letters.
in order to contribute to a better understanding of the British and French monarchies and how they developed in this crucial period.
Using medieval letters as primary source materials creates certain problems. Often, we only possess one side of the conversation (when it is indeed a dialogue) and there would appear to be no way to gauge how the recipients read the letters. We also have to ask who physically wrote these letters and what that may mean. A whole “chain of intermediaries” would have contributed to the existence of the letters, a chain in which Marguerite was a key link.  

As a result, some medievalists exhibit a dismissive attitude towards letters, seeing them as a necessary evil with very little to recommend them as an independent source.  

And yet historians have used extant letters with some frequency, and a small but respectable secondary literature exists on the subject. The manner in which this thesis will define “letter” lays somewhere between how two seminal works, by Giles Constable and Pierre Chaplais respectively, have done so. Giles Constable wrote the definitive handbook on the subject of letters titled *Letters and Letter-Collections* (1976). In a brief sixty-six pages, Constable swiftly guides

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27 Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Use of Images as Historical Evidence* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 13. Clearly, Burke is referring to the “chain” involved in the creation and dissemination of art, but the similarities to letter-writing are evident.


the reader through the key points of *ars dictaminis*, or the art of formal letter-writing. He defines letters as “self-conscious, quasi-public literary documents,” produced with “future collection and publication” in mind. At the heart of this pamphlet, we see Constable repeatedly remind us that of two key facts: one, calling any medieval letter “private” is difficult and possibly incorrect; two, medieval letter-writers did not make a distinction between letter-writing as art and letter-writing as production of a historical or political document.

Pierre Chaplais, on the other hand, in his *English Diplomatic Practice in the Middle Ages* (2003), writes not on the art of letter-writing, but on the particulars of English diplomacy, in which letters play a part. Subtle differences should be understood between the study of letter-writing and diplomacy. Diplomacy is the study of international relations, and although some medieval letters, in particular the ones used in this thesis, do pertain to these matters, all letter-writing uses “the forms, formulae and practices of international relations.” We should, however, understand that in certain contexts letters could fall under a general heading of “diplomatic correspondence,” particularly when kings (or queens) exchanged letters, as Pierre Chaplais has noted. No mention is made of letters by queens, in this instance or any other by Chaplais. Marguerite’s letters were many things, but they may not have been categorized the same as letters by Louis or Edward, though it may seem logical that they

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would belong in similar categories. Marguerite's letters may be considered diplomatic correspondence (or even literature) by a modern audience, but no evidence exists that her contemporaries considered her correspondence as such. Letters may have been, however, the perfect way to communicate "private" information with foreign kinsmen, and Marguerite's correspondence frequently fits in this category.34

In addition, the formal definition of "letter" also presents difficulties. For the current purposes, three types of letters are significant: close, patent, and missive. Letters close are sealed. Letters patent may be sealed or not, but they are defined by their nature. These particular letters are generally open (patent comes from the Latin "patere" for "to be open, to stand open") and they have the sense of a letter issued from a government or monarch. "Letters patent are constitutive in that they convey or confirm something on the authority of the author's seal."35 If any of Marguerite's letters are letters patent or close, it may be difficult for modern historians to judge, but to some degree, any seal makes a letter "official."36 At least nine of her letters were sealed in some manner, or so Bréquigny noted when he first transcribed them from the originals.37 Bréquigny, however, did not specify in which manner all were sealed, if at all. These nine examples are letters sent from Marguerite to Edward.

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37 See *Lettres des rois, reines, et autres personnages des cours de France et d'Angleterre*, J.J. Champollion-Figeac, ed. v.1 (Paris: 1839-1847), 123, for one example. [Subsequently C-F].
Around 1280, in an example of a sealed letter, Marguerite requested that Edward give amnesty to Gaston de Bearn, a cousin to both of them. This piece of correspondence is in Latin and Bréquisty copied it from the original document. Bréquisty specifies that the remnants of wax from the seal are evident on the back of the document. Wax on the back indicates that this letter was sealed close, not patent. If sealed patent, the remaining wax would be on the front of the document, not the back. No mention is made of seals in the printed editions of Marguerite's letters to Alphonse de Poitiers. As for her unpublished letters, their current physical status, which will be discussed later in this chapter, does not allow us to determine whether or not they were ever sealed, which prohibits any determination of their close or patent status. Most of Marguerite's letters should have been sealed, if only to certify that they came from the queen of France, but no evidence remains to verify that all of Marguerite's letters had seals.\(^{38}\)

Thus, it would be best to consider Marguerite's letters in general as letters missive, a more open, though still problematic, categorization. As Constable states, "we call those letters 'missive' which confer no authority, convey no legal right, [or] occasion no necessity, but which express and declare only the intention of the sender and the recipient," though a missive can carry "great authority."\(^{39}\) Though Marguerite's correspondence may certainly fit into any number of categorizations, both medieval and modern, as literature or diplomatic


correspondence, there are other aspects to focus on in this area. For example, even in the definition of what is or is not a "letter," uncertainty lays between what may be defined, then or now, as public, official documents and private, unofficial letters. Constable sees "no clear line of demarcation between public and official 'documents' and unofficial and private 'letters' in the Middle Ages." If even apparently light, friendly letters from an aunt to her nephew had a political and social function, then we must question the degree to which letters could be trusted to carry serious information.

For example, we have a 1278 letter concerning Wales. Edward asks that his aunt excuse him for his inability to "help [them] concerning [their] need in Provence" as he had promised, "on account of the obstacle which has come upon [him] in Wales." Marguerite graciously forgives her "very beloved nephew," assuring Edward that she trusts him completely. She believes that he will turn back to the Provence matter once he has dealt with the "damage" wrought by the Prince of Wales, and counsels her nephew to not forget the lessons of the de Montfort affair which so plagued his father. Bréquigny makes no reference to a wax seal in his footnote to this letter, and based on that absence the natural conclusion might be to take this letter as "unofficial," without any particular "authority" or "occasion". And yet, the subject matter here carries a certain weight. Marguerite both firmly reminds her nephew of "la

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40 Constable, Letters, 22-3.
41 Chaplais, English Diplomatic Practice, 81.
42 C-F, v.1, no. 150, p. 186
43 C-F, v.1, pg. 187.
bonne promesse que vous nous avez tojors fete" and feels comfortable enough
to give Edward political advice.\textsuperscript{44} Though a seal might be expected on a letter in
which a queen discusses political matters and gives advice to a king, it may be
inappropriate to assume that this letter was sealed in some manner, which is
why Marguerite's letters may be categorized as "missives" though some certainly
carried authority.

Marguerite's letters can, however, be easily categorized by several
themes, though some overlapping exists. Some letters are letters of affection,
requests for information on matters such as health and family. Nearly all of the
letters to Edward and Henry contain this element, even if they fit more properly
into other categories. Other letters are requests for assistance with a property or
a religious organization. A third group deal with Marguerite and Louis' assistance
with the Simon de Montfort matter. Henry III had long resisted full compliance
with the Magna Carta, first signed by his father King John. Simon de Montfort
was one of the barons who forced Henry's hand, which set off the Baron's War.
The last category concerns the inheritance of Provence.

Some have suggested that other letters regarding these matters may yet
remain hidden in European archives, unseen and unknown.\textsuperscript{45} This possibility is
quite valid, if a bit naïve. Letters, unlike charters or rolls, were not generally
considered documents worth preserving.\textsuperscript{46} The fact that so many of

\textsuperscript{44} "the good promise that you have always made to us," C-F, v.1, no. 150, p. 186.
\textsuperscript{45} V. LeClercq, et al. eds., \textit{Histoire Litteraire de la France, Vol. XXI.} (Paris: Imprimerie nationale,
\textsuperscript{46} Constable, \textit{Letters}, 55.
Marguerite’s, and Eleanor’s, letters exist today may be attributed to the fact that English record-keeping kept them safe.\(^{47}\) Few of Marguerite’s or Eleanor’s letters remain in European archives, however, possibly due to destruction caused by warfare.

When faced with a quantity of letters as source material, a historian should quite naturally ask some familiar questions: how, why, and when? How were these letters written and disseminated? Why were they written? Why did the letter-writer (however that is determined) choose a particular language? And finally, when were the letters written and when did they take on the form in which we now possess them?\(^{48}\) Not all of these questions can be answered. Indeed we only know the basics, for example, of how these letters were written.

Marguerite’s letters were written on parchment, likely by a scribe trained at the University of Paris or Saint Denis. Few of her letters appear to have been written by the same scribe. In some instances, however, scribes trained in the same scriptorium may have created the letterforms.\(^{49}\) For example, SC 1/17/142 and 140 share similarly written letterforms for "p" and "a," and the pen strokes share common characteristics. The letter "p" has two pen strokes, both thin, beginning with a loop in the middle of the line, followed by the bowl of the "p."

These letters likely date from between 1272 and 1280, when communication

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\(^{48}\) Each letter in SC has been cut down to size in some way and pasted on a large sheet, with a hole cut out so that only the edges of the letters are pasted down. The hole allows for the PRO (Public Records Office, which pre-dated the current National Archives of Britain) stamp to be seen on the reverse of the document. The sheets were then bound into large leather books for storage.

\(^{49}\) SC 1/17/140 and 142.
between Marguerite and Edward began to taper off. If they were written by the same scribe, we could expect to see more similarities, but here we see small individualities appear in the script, such as the scribe of SC 1/17/142 and his consistent use of a hook-like flourish on the final minim of the letter "m." As for other letters, it is evident from a mere glance that they were not written by the same scribe, and again the text indicates a period of time which would allow for the same scribe to be available to Marguerite.

If Marguerite indeed did not often use the same scribe, there is the question of why this would be. Three possibilities exist. One, Marguerite did, as some historians have argued, write some of the letters herself. V. LeClercq felt that Marguerite may well have written the letters, either in her own hand or with a great deal of control over word choice. He interpreted the spelling or use of particular French words in some letters to indicate Provençal origin, rather than a northern dialect more common for royal French letters.50 Boutaric, on the other hand, dismisses this possibility entirely. Entertaining such possibilities only detracts, in Boutaric's view, from the more significant matter of what can be learned about Marguerite as a person and Marguerite as a political figure. At any rate, Marguerite was certainly educated, but it would have been highly uncommon for a thirteenth-century queen to herself take pen to parchment.51 Second, Marguerite could have merely not trusted the same scribe twice, which is likely reading far too much into scribal variations. But a third, more sensible

50 LeClercq, Histoire Littéraire, 832.
possibility exists. If Marguerite's correspondence with Henry, Edward, and her brother-in-law, Alphonse de Poitiers was not considered diplomatic correspondence, from one government to another (or their representatives), then she may not have been assigned a regular scribe.

Whether or not Marguerite wrote these letters herself (physical act), she influenced their creation (content) if not the actual words (structure). Marguerite could have easily communicated a desire for certain rhetorical strategies, such as sandwiching a rebuke of her nephew's broken promise in between promises to help him with his troubles. She was certainly educated and also considered the education of her children, male and female, to be a significant and worthy goal. Thus, Marguerite was more than capable of dictating a letter at length, even in Latin, not merely giving a scribe the idea of what to put down on parchment. Surely a scribe would not have thought to remind the king of England, repeatedly, of promises made to his aunt, or use such forceful words to remind a nephew of promises which he had made. Marguerite may not have participated in each step of the letter-writing, or making, process, but she could well have been more deeply involved than previously thought.

Medieval letters are not commonly thought of in the same light as their early modern counterparts. The "familiar" letter is considered by many early

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52 LeClercq, *Histoire Litteraire*, 829; Sivery, *Marguerite*, 16-17
modern scholars to appear as a literary form in the sixteenth-century. Medieval letters could be legal documents, a means to make recommendations or request information, but such letters are not often thought to hold much literary merit. Book ownership and literary patronage are more often thought of as common activities for medieval noblewomen, neither of which necessarily indicates literacy. The act of writing is constructed as a male act; owning those words as female. But like early modern women whose letters and literary voices were taken over by men, the physical act of writing a letter should not be inextricably associated with agency. Thus, while Marguerite certainly did not control every aspect of her correspondence to Edward or others, she could manipulate input and focus, if not all physical aspects. In fact, the authority to command, and necessity for, scribes is a sign of power, not weakness.

As discussed previously regarding those physical aspects, some of the letters were sealed, but how, why, and when did Marguerite’s letters shift from their original form to their present physical status? Since we already know that they did not originate in that form, why cut them up? The first incarnations of the Public Records Office (PRO), in possession of a monumental amount of documentation to sort through, could have sliced up any number of letters which

56 Carol M. Meale, Women and Literature in Britain, 1150-1500 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). The focus here is on women’s presence in literature, literary patronage, and ownership of books.
57 Women’s Voices, vii.
were likely not given a privileged place in the process of organizing the vast amounts of English history documents.\(^58\) In this particular case, cutting up the hundreds of letters that now make up the Special Collections (SC) of the National Archives, Britain, was probably an early attempt at preservation. Such a volume of correspondence, lacking any sort of immediate internal organization, and likely in varying stages of disarray with other records, must have seemed a daunting task to undertake. As all of SC is organized in the same manner, it was likely done so as a matter of organizational expediency and nothing else. When Bréquigny visited England prior to 1789, on his quest to transcribe all documents to and from French rulers, no hint of the PRO yet existed. His minor comments on the original appearance of these letters give the only hints to the whole story.

Beyond physical matters, the majority of medieval and early modern letters do share common characteristics and structures. Well into the early modern period, for example, a letter-writer may allude to information that had been given verbally to a messenger, and would only be given to the recipient in such a manner. The difference, for some historians, has remained how those who sent and created letters categorized them. In structure, we will see that Marguerite’s letters do not vary greatly from other medieval letters, with an address and title, a greeting, an apostrophe followed by a text and a valediction, and generally a dating clause.

Marguerite’s letters to Edward all begin in a similar manner. For example, she addresses Edward in one letter as the “very exalted and very excellent prince, her very dear and very beloved nephew Edward, by the grace of God king of England, Marguerite, by that same grace queen of France, greeting and true love.” At this point, the text changes depending on the type of letter. Here, the apostrophe is brief, as Marguerite calls Edward her “very dear nephew.” Marguerite writes often for “good news” of the English royal family and prays that Edward will see fit to send some word back to “us.” Marguerite assures Edward that she, and whoever else is included in “us,” is well. She reiterates that she would willingly hear good news from Edward, and reciprocates in advance with assurances that she was quite well when this letter was written.

We should also consider the issue of language. Marguerite’s twelve letters in Old French are not the only letters of that era in the vernacular, or even the only written works produced. Joinville’s Vie de Saint Louis was written in Old French, in the late thirteenth century. Several of Edward I’s letters appear in Old French, as well as letters by Eleanor and Philip III. Old French, as distinct from Early Old French and Middle French, existed from roughly 1100-1300, defined mainly by its continued use of the case system. Latin was still preferred for official correspondence, though French was a popular alternative during and

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59 SC 1/17/130 (Shows evidence of seal).
60 C-F, v.1, no. 227, p. 285..
61 I have chosen to follow Kibler’s designation of the period, rather than looking further back to the earliest known examples of Old French. See William W. Kibler, An Introduction to Old French (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1984), xxiv.
after Edward’s reign. The English aristocracy was also most likely more literate in French than English or Latin.\(^6^2\)

Of course, if we accept that kings would have requested that all official correspondence be in Latin, then what are we to make of letters in French between Edward and Philip and others? First, we should look at the topics of some of these letters. For example, in a letter from 1279, Edward confirms a treaty between his father and Louis IX for the surrender of the Agenais to England. The text appears in Old French, its edited length runs just over two single-spaced pages, and the extant copy can be found in the Gascon Rolls, which concern the English administration of southwest France.\(^6^3\) Edward announces himself as "by the grace of God, king of England, Lord of Ireland, and Duke of Aquitaine," and thus stakes his theoretical claim to the Aquitaine, lands which his father had lost over sixty years earlier. The remaining text is unsurprising and merely restates the terms of the treaty between the previous kings of France and England.\(^6^4\)

What is interesting, at least for current purposes, is that such a document was written in French, which was a language rarely used for official matters in England. It is possible that Edward or his chancery chose the language as a politeness to his cousin, King Philip, and yet declaring himself "Duke of Aquitaine" seems to contradict that theory. Another possibility could be that no one considered a reconfirmation of a treaty, especially concerning land


\(^{63}\) The majority of the Gascon Rolls are located in the National Archives of Great Britain.

\(^{64}\) C-F, v.1, no. 179, p.229.
surrounded by French apanages, sufficient importance to warrant using Latin. French may also have been used to ensure that fewer people would have understood it, though again this seems unnecessary in this matter.\(^{65}\) If anything, the Capetians were slow to use French in the everyday administration of their kingdom. The counts of Blois and Champagne, for example, used French frequently and pervasively for official matters from the mid-to-late thirteenth century, as did the royal administration in those areas.\(^{66}\)

Of the twelve letters in French, Bréquigny describes three as showing signs of having been sealed at one point, all on the back of the documents. All three touch on matters of state, or at least of matters of some importance to Marguerite and Edward as queen and king. In the first letter, Marguerite commends the Abbey of Cîteaux to Edward's care, as he has always been "courteous and favorable" to them out love for Marguerite.\(^{67}\) Arguably, Marguerite engages in political action by interceding on behalf of a French abbey that was popular with the Capetians. She repeats a request that she makes many times, for many different people, in different contexts – interceding on their behalf with Edward in his capacity as king of England.\(^{68}\) Marguerite makes this request as a queen of France, not as Edward's aunt, though the letter does remind the reader of the connection.

\(^{65}\) Chaplais, *English Diplomatic Practice*, 130.
\(^{66}\) Serge Lusignan, "L'administration royale et la langue française aux XIIIe et XIVe siècles," *The Dawn of the Written Vernacular in Western Europe*, Michèle Goyens and Werner Verbeke, eds. (Belgium: Leuven University Press, 2003), 64; 53.
\(^{67}\) C-F, v.1, no. 123, p. 151, "cortois et favorables."
\(^{68}\) See p. 10, Chapter Two of the present thesis.
In the second letter, Marguerite protests on behalf of Hugh des Baux, their cousin, whose Sicilian lands had been removed from his control by Charles of Anjou. She refers to Hugh as her "nephew," a common affectation for younger male members in a family line. Hugh has asked his "aunt" to request Edward's assistance to regain control of his lands in Sicily. In theme, this letter differs from the previous letter only in the involvement of a family member, rather than a religious institution.

The third letter is much longer than the first two and is one of two lengthy missives in which Marguerite strongly requests her nephew's assistance, in his capacity as king of England, with removing Provence from Charles of Anjou's control. In this letter, sent in October of 1280, Marguerite does not linger over the niceties, but goes straight to her subject matter – a gathering of nobles who all support Marguerite's claims on Provence. She has made definite plans to move forward in May and insists that Edward honor his promises to help this cause. Before the dating clause which ends the letter, Marguerite begs her nephew to "believe if it pleases you Brother Pierre de Frens who carries these letters," which is a very strong indication that Marguerite imparted further information to de Frens which she did not trust to a letter.

Final conclusions as to why French was so popular with Marguerite, or with her scribes, are complicated. Opinions and conclusions on the intricacies of

69 C-F, v.1, no. 200, p. 254-5.
choice for matters of privacy and use of the vernacular vary widely even amongst the most notable scholars of diplomacy and epistolography. In these three instances, French was chosen, by default or by choice, as the language in which to write letters which have significance to political culture. The most likely answer as to why is simply the growing ascendancy of Old French in both thirteenth-century French government and literature. For the English, French had held on as a language for literature, and for government and power.\textsuperscript{71} Marguerite may have also used French, or requested that French be used, to underscore her familial relationship to Edward. If Marguerite did, however, use French as a tool, to demonstrate her power and have it understood by Edward, nothing remains to show this definitively. Questions that cannot be answered, however, still need to be asked.

Chapter Two: Marguerite's Relations with Her Family(men) and Her Attempts to Inherit Provence

As we have seen, because Marguerite’s letters are both private (in the sense of a limited readership and thematic content) and public (if they were sealed, they were likely sealed patent, not close), they demonstrate the deceptive nature of what historians sometimes call the public/private divide. Traditionally, medieval women's historians have held to the idea that women lost power in the high middle ages. As “nations” began forming out of the disjointed parts of the European landscape, power became centralized in the body of the king, and what that symbolized. These historians argue that women, particularly queens, who had fully participated in land ownership and the exercise of power through ties of kinship, were forced off the main playing stage into a shadowy domestic realm.72

According to this traditional view, Marguerite could not have been active in political matters because she existed in a “sphere” which did not allow such activity.73 This view has suffered under the weight of more recent scholarship


73 See also Joan B. Landes, Feminism: the Public and the Private (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 5, for a discussion of how association with the domestic, and thus with private life, placed both modern and medieval women on the back burners of public space and historical research.
which explores areas across Europe in which many aristocratic women could and did exercise power through land and political action throughout the middle ages.\textsuperscript{74} Of course, not all contemporary work on medieval power supports the theory that only the degree and visibility of women's power varied in the late middle ages.\textsuperscript{75} This tension between the theory of aristocratic women's retreat into a silent domestic arena and the reconsideration of "power" and participation by aristocratic women in political and land exchanges (which nearly always involved kin groups) gives new flavor to an older historiographic question. The study of gender and politics can be compatible, removing the false distinctions between public and private. Doing so forces us to "expose the very political nature of history" and the involvement in both history and political culture.\textsuperscript{76}

Thus, we must examine power and family relations, and the conception of public and private life and actions. Did women really lose power, or have historians looked at the matter in a way that did not allow them to see the power that women held because of where or how that power played out?

In light of this tension, this chapter will focus on which family connections appear strongest in the letters, followed by Marguerite's reliance upon those connections in one particular instance – her ongoing desire to wrest control of Provence away from Charles of Anjou.


\textsuperscript{76} Scott, \textit{Gender and the Politics of History}, 26-27.
Between roughly 1236 and 1295, Marguerite composed at least forty-one letters to various family members, mainly the English royal family. Marguerite's close personal relationship with the English royal house appears as a popular theme in all secondary literature, modern and contemporary, on the two royal families. Often, though medieval authors such as Joinville refer to the blood connection, "c'est que nos femmes sont deux soeurs," as the explanation for the friendship between the English and French kings, this closeness is not explained further. Modern biographers have continued this trend. Powicke, in his classic *The Thirteenth Century*, touches upon the lifelong connections formed when Henry III inexplicably chose to marry Marguerite's sister Eleanor. In several works on thirteenth-century France, England, or biographies on the elite of those periods, the bonds between the families, as well as between their extended kin, have at least passing mentions, as for example Powicke's description of the "friendly relations" which "opened England to the Savoyards." The lingering effect of this persuasive theme is an apparently rock-solid relationship between the English and French royal houses, no mean feat to be sure. Enmity had been common to the two kingdoms since William the Bastard became William the

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Conqueror by capturing the English throne in 1066, particularly since John of England earned his nickname “Lackland” when he lost Normandy to Philip Augustus in the early part of his reign.

A surface reading of several letters supports the contemporary and modern historiographic view on how close the families were. For example, we see that in 1263, at the height of civil war in England, Marguerite writes to her beleaguered brother-in-law. She informs Henry that she is concerned for his entire condition – his health and general well-being. Marguerite knows that God wants Henry to be congenial and enjoy prosperity. The French royal household, in particular "dominus noster rex," also enjoy good health. In sum, all is well on both sides of the Channel.\(^\text{80}\) At first glance, this letter conveys a sense that Marguerite and Henry enjoyed a close personal relationship. But in order to understand that relationship, we must break down first who may have had access to this letter and how "personal" and "relationship" may have been understood by Henry and Marguerite. And we have to understand the conventions of medieval letter-writing.

First, as was demonstrated in chapter one, medieval letter-writing was not a lone act. Several, even dozens of hands might contribute to the creation of a letter, particularly when sent and received by members of the aristocracy.\(^\text{81}\) So, in two senses, letters were both public and private: they were public because

\(^{80}\) C-F, no. 116, p. 145.

\(^{81}\) See also Robert Henri Bautier, "Chancellerie et Culture au Moyen Age," in Chartes, sceaux et chancelleries: études de diplomatique et de sigillographie médiévales. (Paris: Ecole des chartes, 1990), 48-9, on the complex culture and evolution of the French chancelleries.
several scribes, messengers, and others could have had easy access to a letters' contents; and they were private because on another level, only the sender and the recipient would understand the meaning behind a short message. In addition, the highly formulaic structure of medieval letters could hinder viewing this letter as more than a polite fiction of familial affection. Traditionally, Marguerite's addressing Edward as her "very beloved nephew" reads as adherence to an accepted letter formula. The dichotomy between what appears on one hand as open and "public," and on the other hand what seems "private" or closed, reveals the different ways to read these letters.

It is important, therefore, to remember that letters between Marguerite and Henry are more than just missives flowing between a woman and her brother-in-law. These two people were also regents of two powerful countries that shared a troubled past. While it may be possible to read the previous letters and others as proof of a tight familial connection, might it not also be possible to see it as one of many paths towards maintaining diplomatic bonds between France and England? For example, in another letter dated from 1263, Marguerite writes again of the close bonds between the families, but some interesting word choices appear in the letter. For example, she speaks of "de nostris finibus" (concerning our goals/lands) and maintaining the internal connection between their hearts. The phrasing here can be translated several different ways. The context allows for "finibus" to indicate either goals (the end

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82 Chaplais, *English Diplomatic Practice*, 78. See also Chapter One of the present thesis.
83 C-F, v.1, no. 117, p. 146.
of the conflict in England) or lands (French interests in England, such as monasteries, and vice versa). As for the internal connection, perhaps it would be best to understand it not just as a personal plea, but also as a reminder that the two families shared a complex network of connections.

But, for all that this letter demonstrates the possibility of a close familial emotional tie, this may not be the case. We should note that in most instances where Marguerite's letters appear to demonstrate a cozy relationship with the recipient, other readings are possible. Many of Marguerite's other letters have a casual air, as if they were written with very little or no underlying intent. Contemporaries describe Marguerite as brave and joyous, and the latter quality seems to appear in many of her letters. We have already seen Marguerite's short missives concerning the health of the English royal family. Other letters appear equally “light” in terms of subject matter, asking "to know good news" of Edward. The conclusion that the thirteenth-century Capetians and Plantagenets shared exceptionally close ties is overdrawn because this type of communication may not be enough to claim that medieval kin groups shared the kind of affective bond associated with modern families.

Thus, we should also explore the possibility that, aside from the degree of closeness between these two royal families, Marguerite’s letters may function as a form of political discourse, a form still easily available to late medieval queens.

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84 Joinville, Ch. 400, p. 125; Ch. 601, p. 178.
Many of the ways in which Marguerite influenced the court, and her husband's actions, may be lost to us, but we can see some of her influence through her letters. A nineteenth-century scholar, Etienne Boutaric, seriously considered Marguerite's role as a political figure.\textsuperscript{87} Theresa Earenfight recently reflected on the presence of political discourse in a queen's correspondence at some length in an article on the Aragonese queen, María of Castilla. Her article's goal was to treat a queen's letters as political documents. In this fashion, we would hope to "broaden and deepen our theoretical understanding of both queenship and the political culture of monarchy." Perhaps even more importantly, kings did not rule alone. Advisers, family members, lords and vassals all contributed to this entity that historians identify as medieval government.\textsuperscript{88}

In order to understand how a queen could contribute to such a political discourse, we should consider the structure of thirteenth-century French government. The government that Philip Augustus inherited in the late twelfth century from his father, Louis VII, contained a poorly organized chancery and a tenuous framework for governance.\textsuperscript{89} John W. Baldwin discusses how Philip regularized the royal administration and built upon two things that made the Capetians great, sacred kingship and dynastic continuity, to provide his descendants with a vastly more effective government.\textsuperscript{90} The Capetians mastered

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{87} Boutaric, "Marguerite de Provence," 419.
\item \textsuperscript{88} Theresa Earenfight, "Political culture and political discourse in the letters of Queen Maria of Castilla," \textit{La Corónica}. 32, 1 (Fall 2003): 136.
\item \textsuperscript{89} John W. Baldwin, \textit{The Government of Philip Augustus: Foundations of Royal Power in the Middle Ages} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 31; 404.
\item \textsuperscript{90} Baldwin, \textit{Foundations of Royal Power}, 13.
\end{itemize}
sacred kingship through a systematic use of "ritual symbolism." A queen existed primarily in the practical world of governance, as well as the ritual world, to give the kingdom a new ruler and heir. In a sense, a sound administrative infrastructure helped him ensure that his kingdom would live on, but a queen provided the crucial heir.

Marguerite therefore always had a well-defined role as the one responsible for ensuring that her husband had heirs of his body to inherit the product of his good governance – a kingdom of France stretching from the upper reaches of Maine to the Mediterranean Sea. But Marguerite, Queen of France, did not function only as mother. Queens of France acted as regents, diplomats, intercessors, patronesses of art, music, and literature, and sometimes even sovereigns. A queen's place in the political structure of a monarchy could change in an instant. Blanche of Castile, for example, was in turn a tool of alliance between her father and her father-in-law, the mother of a king, a regent, and a de facto political adviser.

As much as the word "power" has been debated, "political" may be the new buzzword to fall under scrutiny. Childbirth, in a royal context, could be considered a political act, one in which a queen's participation is essential. But this traditional, and possibly political, act is not the only way Marguerite

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93 See Nolan, Capetian Women and Parsons, Medieval Queenship, for even more examples.
94 Experience of Power, 1-3.
contributed to a smoothly functioning Capetian government. Consider a letter exchange which took place between Marguerite and Henry III in 1256. Marguerite wanted Henry to favor Deerhurst priory, which was attached to a French monastery dedicated to Saint Denis. She spoke at some length about the importance of this priory, as it is the monastery "of our most faithful patron, The Blessed Dionysius, martyr." Once she switches to the real matter at hand, she drives home the reason for the letter. She requests that Henry defend and protect the priory and its wealth.\footnote{"devotissimi patroni nostri, beati Dyonisii martiris," C-F, v.1, no. 101, p. 129.} Louis IX emphasizes the need to protect the priory in another letter, from the same year. We can assume, therefore, that the two letters were sent at or about the same time, implying that the two letters were meant to reinforce each other. Louis reemphasizes the need to protect the priory, though he does place slightly more emphasis on the significance of Saint Denis.

Several things are evident from this letter exchange. Marguerite acted as more than an excuse to foster peace between France and England. She operates on a political playing field, as an active figure alongside her husband, brother-in-law, and the Church. Louis and Marguerite worked in tandem to achieve a desired political result – the ongoing protection and security of a monastery. This was, of course, a relatively minor event in context. Marguerite negotiated nothing, averted no wars, and did not exercise any great power. But she did perform an important queenly function, and one that while not great,
certainly did not fade away in the high middle ages. Indeed, this was not the only time that Marguerite interceded with her English relatives on the behalf of family or others, and Marguerite was certainly not the only French queen who acted as intercessor for a religious order.\(^{96}\) Marguerite did not exactly act behind the scenes, though we could argue that she did not act publicly, or officially.\(^{97}\)

There are several troubling elements to this conclusion, but particularly that it presupposes that the only activity worthy of study is official, or that only “official” correspondence has something to offer the historian.\(^{98}\) We should consider whether there is anything truly "official" in the medieval period. Letters may be seen as “political” and “official,” but not necessarily letters by queens. Perhaps more importantly, Marguerite could have played on Henry’s affection far more effectively than Louis, giving her a considerable political advantage. It may be possible to view these letters as a two-way discourse in which women were allowed to engage in a form of political action, and men were able to maintain the fiction of a masculine, public, monarchial “state,” while mining all possible avenues of knowledge and influence. Discourse with aristocratic women, we can see here, supplied kings with a valuable resource.

We also have letters such as the one sent by Marguerite to Edward in 1269, before he became king. The subject matter is simple; she commends the

\(^{96}\) Parsons, “The intercessionary patronage of Queens Margaret and Isabella of France,” Thirteenth Century England, VI, 145-156. Parsons refers to Margaret and Isabella’s choice of intercession to improve their reputations. Marguerite intercedes for her cousins Hugo of Vienna and Gaston de Bearn with some frequency, as well as other religious houses in England with French connections. See SC 1/17/129 and 140.


\(^{98}\) Earenfight, “Political culture and political discourse,” 136.
abbot and convent of Citeaux to Edward’s attention. Aside from the common letter conventions, where she states her name and title, she never refers to the French crown. She performs her role as queen, but the letter does not reflect that she explicitly acted on behalf of her king. Of course, Louis was in the Holy Land and thus she likely acted alone in this matter. Here, therefore, Marguerite played a political, but perhaps not “official” role.

An exchange of letters, on average considerably longer in length than those previously discussed, went on between Marguerite and her husband's brother, Alphonse of Poitiers, as well as between Alphonse and Eleanor, starting in August of 1263. The letters cover the political turmoil tearing mid-thirteenth-century England apart. Henry III’s negotiations with the English barons had disintegrated to the point where the royal family could no longer be assured of their continued status or safety. In July, furious over her husband’s willingness to accede to the barons' demands, Eleanor left the safety of the Tower in an attempt to reach Edward in Windsor. In a dramatic and memorable statement of popular opinion, crowds of angry Londoners pelted the Queen's barge with all manner of garbage and random items at hand.

Marguerite felt the possible impact of a popular uprising against the English crown could be detrimental to her own situation, and her husband evidently agreed. Marguerite asked her brother-in-law to send ships from La

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100 Howell, *Eleanor*, 196.
Rochelle to the aid of the English royals.\textsuperscript{101} Alphonse politely responded that he could not, because he did not then have ships available.\textsuperscript{102} Eleanor adds her own plea in October, begging for assistance and making reference to a subsequent letter by her sister.\textsuperscript{103} Marguerite makes a passionate, but ultimately unsuccessful, plea for ships to aid her brother-in-law, sister, and nephew.\textsuperscript{104}

At least one of Marguerite's roles becomes evident through these letters. She acted as link between the families, providing them with reasons, or perhaps excuses, to avoid war. In this way, Marguerite ably performed a function that women had long performed in medieval society, that of a bridge between families and principalities. Marguerite's actions, however, should not be read that simply. If we assume that Marguerite supported the abbey of Citeaux or her brother-in-law simply because she was told to, we would be writing incomplete histories. No single figure in a government, king or not, could be responsible for every action that keeps the government functioning (at home or abroad). Any research or historical work that fails to account for all the parts and people of medieval government, therefore, produces only partial histories.

Based on the sources, it seems important to emphasize that for Marguerite, her relationship to the three parts of her family, English, Savoyard, and French, combined conceptions of family, inheritance, and political

\textsuperscript{101} AP, no. 2015, p. 541.
\textsuperscript{102} AP, no. 2016, p. 542.
\textsuperscript{103} AP, no. 2020, p. 544.
\textsuperscript{104} AP, no. 2017, p. 542.
involvement. In the letters and in modern scholarship, we see rare and tantalizing mentions of Marguerite's actions concerning the inheritance of Provence by her brother-in-law, Charles of Anjou, and thus the removal of Provence from independent control. Throughout her political actions, Marguerite is alternatively portrayed by modern scholars as incompetent or sympathetic, depending on an author's tastes. Margaret Howell often paints Marguerite as a dedicated sister, strident in her defense of Eleanor, particularly concerning the de Montfort affair. William Chester Jordan describes how Louis "restricted her freedom of action, a situation Margaret bore with difficulty." In many instances, Marguerite's direct attempts to control her context, such as a failed attempt to force a promise from Philip III to obey her in 1263, failed miserably, but the attempt may not have been the desperate move of a greedy woman, as it has so often been described. Perhaps the taint exists only because Marguerite failed where Blanche of Castile had succeeded. Urban IV absolved the future king of that promise, but the lingering affect on Marguerite's reputation remained.

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105 Howell, *Eleanor*, 150.
In a move that did some historical reputations no favors, Eleanor, Marguerite, and others fought to rectify what they saw as gross injustices concerning the payment of their dowries and the rulership of Provence. Where the average thirteenth-century aristocratic woman might not possess the power to hold property in her own name or dispose of that property at will, Eleanor most definitely did have that power, though not consistently throughout her reign as queen.\textsuperscript{109} Eleanor’s dower, unfortunately, returned to the crown upon her death and was rarely under her control during her lifetime. We call this unfortunate precisely because a queen’s influence and power after her husband’s death could depend heavily upon her dower properties.\textsuperscript{110} Thus neither sister wished to let go of what they considered theirs, not in a society where land ownership equaled freedom and power.

In 1276, Marguerite wrote "a très haut, très noble prince, son très cher, très amé neveu Edward." She understood that his campaigns in Wales kept him from keeping his promises to give her the help she needed concerning

\textsuperscript{110} Howell, \textit{Eleanor}, 263; 280-281.
By the time Marguerite wrote this letter, Louis IX had been dead for five years, Henry III for four, and her sister Beatrice for nearly ten. Louis had attempted to appease his wife in 1260 by assigning her a new dowry, but she could not be dissuaded. Marguerite remained quite firm over her refusal to ignore the shifting status of her dowry lands, which seemed to get smaller and smaller with each reorganization, or that she had never received her monetary settlement. By 1276, she had turned her attention firmly to her English nephew. In collaboration with Eleanor, Marguerite reminded Edward of their great need and the injustice that had been committed.

Eleanor wrote to her son in 1279, concerned about the proposed marriage between Charles of Anjou's son and the daughter of the king of Germany. Such a marriage would have upset Eleanor and Marguerite's hopes that they would someday retake Provence. She also gently reminds him that this alliance would be no more to his advantage than it was to hers. In a subsequent letter, dated 1282, Eleanor had prepared a letter to be sent to the French court concerning purchasing Provence and she wanted her son to give his approval before sending it.

Again, for Marguerite and her sister, their relationship to their English, Savoyard, and French relatives was crucial to their approach to the matter of Provence. In their dealings with Provence and with their web of family

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111 C-F, v.l, no. 150, p. 186, "to the very exalted, very noble prince, her very dear, very beloved nephew Edward."
112 C-F, v.1, no. 150, p. 186.
113 Crawford, Letters of the Queens of England, 64.
connections, Marguerite and Eleanor acted almost independently of how their husbands and sons wished them to act.\textsuperscript{115} A natural question would be why Marguerite would go so far to pursue this matter. We should look back to how the saga of the dowries, and the countship of Provence, unfolded for Marguerite.

Raymond Berenger IV of Provence had his will drawn up in 1238. In it, he designated his youngest daughter, Beatrice, as his heiress. Sanchia would receive 5,000 marks; Marguerite and Eleanor were set to inherit 10,000 marks each. The will lists the order of succession, which would have put Provence in the control of Sanchia and her heirs if Beatrice did not have sufficient progeny to inherit the county. The will specifies that a daughter of Beatrice’s, if such a child existed, could inherit before any child of Sanchia’s, but not in place of a younger brother. If Beatrice and Sanchia did not provide new counts or countesses of Provence and Forcalquier, Raymond Berenger gave control of his lands over to his cousin, Jamie I of Aragon. And inn fact, Jamie would inherit rather than a daughter of Sanchia. In addition to monetary settlements, Beatrice of Savoy was set to receive use of the county for her lifetime, a common enough stipulation. No mention is made of what would happen once Beatrice married.\textsuperscript{116} Marguerite, however, never saw any of her inheritance and there is an equal lack of evidence that Sanchia or Eleanor saw any of theirs. Only Beatrice benefited

\textsuperscript{115} Boutaric, "Marguerite de Provence," 420.
\textsuperscript{116} Layettes, ii, no. 2719, p. 378-382.
from her father's will, and she used her own testament to ensure that her husband would continue to benefit. ¹¹⁷

Marguerite must have had a battle plan to win back Provence and nearly all of it happened in a series of well-planned missives. Her first steps included making promises of homage to Rudolf of Hapsburg, who had inherited the title of King of the Romans after Richard of Cornwall's death in 1272. Provence had formerly been a fiefdom of Frederick II's, but neither Beatrice of Provence, nor her husband Charles of Anjou, ever did homage to the subsequent holders of Frederick's title. If Richard of Cornwall, his competitor Alfonso X of Castile, or Rudolf considered Provence their fief, why did none of them ever demand homage of Beatrice or Charles? A simple answer may be that as an apanage of the French crown, Provence could not have two feudal lords. Apanages were not strictly speaking fiefs, but the form they took greatly resembled a feudal order which would been very familiar to everyone involved.¹¹⁸ Eleanor herself reminded Edward that the loss of Provence concerned them both, and that Provence was "held from the empire."¹¹⁹

Besides Eleanor, Marguerite was not alone in her desire to prevent Charles of Anjou, the king's brother, from slipping easily into her father's position as Count of Provence. In 1280, Marguerite informed Edward that she had formed a group of lords to make an effort to push her interests, and those of her sister, in

¹¹⁹ Crawford, Letters of the Queens of England, 64.
Provence. This was a gathering of significant import. It included her Savoyard cousins, Henry III of Champagne, the archbishop of Lyon and the bishop of Langres. Marguerite declared that she had done homage to Rudolf of Hapsburg as King of Germany for Provence and its holdings. By doing so, she made her position and her intent quite clear. Jamie I of Aragon, her cousin, signed away his rights in 1258, though Raymond-Berenger’s will did give him Provence in the event that Beatrice had no male or female heir, and that Sanchia had no son.

In the end, the sisters were frustrated in their desire to oust Charles of Anjou. We might ask ourselves how seriously Marguerite's political machinations in this area were taken. It would not appear that Charles took any direct action to hold onto Provence, and it is thus difficult to determine whether this indicates his lack of concern, or a lack of evidence to prove or disprove his concern. Letters from her nephew or brother-in-law or sister do not mean that anyone outside of these families felt that Marguerite could have succeeded. But perhaps the truth lies in the letter sent to Marguerite by Pope Nicholas III in 1280, most likely after she informed her nephew that she had formed an army. The Pope firmly admonished his spiritual daughter and asked her to please let go of her stubborn refusal to allow Charles of Anjou to rule his kingdoms in peace. The

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121 C-F, v.1, no. 210, p. 265.
122 Layettes, ii, no. 2719, p. 378-382.
Pope begged her to desist in her attempts to cause harm "to the illustrious reputation" of the French kingdom with her attempts at discord.\textsuperscript{124} Could she not see that her best interests, and those of her son the King of France and thus of the kingdom itself, lay in "harmony" not "destruction?"\textsuperscript{125} Popes do not admonish queens without reason. Surely, the Pope spoke of ruin because of the ongoing discord in that region and did not wish to make matters worse. Another exchange of letters between Pope Nicholas, Charles, and the King of the Germans in this same time period shows us that the discussion did continue. This supports the theory that whether or not Marguerite could have held Provence and ruled, the threat her attempt represented was taken seriously by those who had something at stake.\textsuperscript{126}

In conclusion, we must reevaluate Marguerite in a larger context. Though exhaustive research shows the relatively sparse documentation extant for her life, we have enough to show several things. One, despite her relatively meager presence in works on her family members, evidence suggests that Marguerite should not be considered a minor historical character. Her actions contributed to a fabric of medieval rulership in France, England, and Provence and we must understand all of this fabric's contributing factors. This may very well include seemingly inconsequential acts that may have been far more significant to contemporaries. Two, we can see through Marguerite's letters that letters, and or actions, existed in a gray area concerning what may have been seen as

\textsuperscript{124} "claris titulis"
\textsuperscript{125} \textit{Registres de Nicolas III,} no. 825, p. 378, "lay in 'concordia' not 'excidium.'"
\textsuperscript{126} \textit{Registres de Nicolas III,} no. 807, p. 374; no. 748, p. 346.
private, and what was public. By viewing Marguerite’s letters and actions as participation in political discourse, therefore, we can also help to write a better, more complete history of medieval governance.
Conclusion

In an attempt to contribute to a more inclusive awareness of how a queen acted and reacted in the late thirteenth century, this thesis has studied Marguerite de Provence's letters in an attempt to investigate the political roles that she may have played. Respecting the roles that medieval queens acted out, whether they be "official" or not, can only help to reform modern interpretations of medieval rulership. Since this would be true of most then nascent European "states," future comparative work on queenship will hopefully follow.

Marguerite's letters suggest that her position as queen frequently put her at the heart of thirteenth-century politics, regardless of the fact that she did not for any length of time perform a formal political role such as that of regent. She assisted in the formation and reinforcement of positive relations between her husband's kingdom and that of her brother-in-law. She advised, admonished, and encouraged her nephew, a sovereign. Thus, as demonstrated previously in this thesis, Marguerite may represent not a break in the power of medieval queens, but rather a manifestation of another, more quiet type of influence.

Most importantly, a change in the outlet of power does not signify a lack of power. Marguerite influenced her husband in his relations with England, which resulted in a period of relative peace of both countries. She performed as a political actor, as a queen involved in governance. She did not need to assume the role of sovereign, regent, or any other easily recognized role in the
administration of medieval governments to do so. A queen could as easily have been a regent (as was Blanche of Castile) or an important means of keeping the peace (as was Marguerite). In the end, however, we must look past Marguerite's role as an arbiter of peace between France, England, and her extended kin group. To focus too intently on that role would only reinforce the idea that a queen could have no role or position independent from a king, whether he was her husband, son, nephew, or brother-in-law.

Beyond re-examining Marguerite in relation to her letters, this thesis allowed for the complete transcription and translation of unpublished letters written by Marguerite. These translations, in addition to work on the other sources pertinent to her life and queenship, can only contribute positively to the study of medieval queenship, and medieval history as a whole. For example, one of Marguerite's letters specifies that she had "left Mascon to return to France," signaling a distinct mental separation between Paris and its environs and the outer reaches of the "French" state. Small details such as this may help others to refine the formation of a French national consciousness.

Are there other letters by Eleanor and Marguerite waiting in European archives? Whether this is merely an historian's fantasy or a genuine possibility, it should not be dismissed lightly. Some scholars have hinted at other evidence, but do not specify what evidence or where it might be. Published letter-collections may be a place to start, working backwards from what is published to

127 SC 1/17/145, "Et si nous sonmes parties de Mascon pour nous en raler en France."
128 William Chester Jordan, "Isabelle of France and Religious Devotion at the Court of Louis, IX," Capetian Women, 210; and Howell, xix .
where any original copies are located. If unpublished letters of medieval queens exist in the Special Collections of the British National Archives, then similar letters may exist in other European archives. Regardless of what may be found, what has been found is enough to rewrite this portion of history.

Modern scholarship on, and attention to, medieval queens tends to alternate between more serious works and popular biographies, both of which frequently overlap. Many French and English queens have already been the subjects of panegyric-style biographies, particularly in the nineteenth-century. And some of those queens later underwent scrutiny in both academic and popularized biographies. But is that the right method? This thesis has attempted to step back from a strictly chronological retelling of events, or blatant narration, because the intent has not been to tell a story or rewrite Marguerite’s biography. In a sense, Marguerite herself, as a woman who lived and died more than seven hundred years ago, is not a figure that should be studied, not because she did not matter, but because the task of recovering any "truth" about the ephemera of her life is next to impossible. Popular biographies, in particular, flesh out what little detail they do have with entirely fictional details - hair color, opinions, and motivations for the figures whose lives they recount. Authors and scholars such as Alison Weir and Nancy Goldstone have written recent accounts of Eleanor of Aquitaine and Marguerite and her three sisters, for example.¹²⁹

Medieval French queens after Marguerite include: Isabella of Aragon (d. 1271); Maria of Brabant (d. 1321); Joan I of Navarre (d. 1305); Margaret of Burgundy (d. 1315); Clementia of Hungary (d. 1328); and Jeanne of Burgundy (d. 1330); Blanche of Burgundy (d. 1326); Marie of Luxembourg (d. 1324); and Jeanne d'Evreux (d. 1371), Marguerite de Provence's granddaughter. Reason suggests that a systematic study of later French queens, at least through the end of Capetian rule in France, would assist in a better understanding of how queenship developed in the later middle ages. Compared to the wealth of scholarship for English queens, French queens in particular have suffered from a lack of attention.¹³⁰ This thesis has sought to explore how Marguerite may have been an active contributor to political life. Marguerite, however, is not the only European queen who remains quiet beneath the weight of a husband, family, or kingdom – or lack of scholarly interest.¹³¹

¹³⁰ *Capetian Women*, 1. John Carmi Parsons has written extensively on various medieval English queens, specifically Eleanor of Castile. See *Eleanor of Castile: Queen and Society in Thirteenth-Century England* (New York: Saint Martin’s Press, 1995). Eleanor’s successors as queen of England include the infamous Isabella of France and the popular Phillipa of Hainault. After that, the study of both French and English queens, and monarchy, becomes somewhat more complicated by the lengthy dynastic struggles between the two countries that began in the mid-fourteenth-century.

¹³¹ See for example, Bak, “Roles and functions of queens in Árpádian and Angevin Hungary (1000-1386 A.D.),” *Capetian Women.*
Appendix A

Letters
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Printed Editions</th>
<th>Document Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>SC 1/3/138</td>
<td>C-F, v.1, no. 34, page 42; DD, v.1, no. 244, p. 164</td>
<td>1235 (after the feast of Saint Remigius); DD lists it as Jan. 14, 1236</td>
<td>Howell (p. 203, n. 1) discusses the questionable dating of this letter. This letter is from Marguerite to Henry III.</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AN J. 403, Testaments, I, no. 3, original seal</td>
<td>Trésor du Chartes, II, 2908, p. 446</td>
<td>1241, Saint-Germain en Laye, April</td>
<td>See Sivéry, pg. 76. Letter from Marguerite concerning a testament of Louis'.</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/3/144</td>
<td>C-F, v.1, no. 101, p. 129; DD, v.1, no. 315, p. 222</td>
<td>c. 1256; DD lists the date as May 24, c. 1260</td>
<td>This letter is from Marguerite to Henry III, in Latin, in support of an English priory connected to the monastery of St. Denis.</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/3/139</td>
<td>C-F, v.1, no. 108, p. 136; Shirley, p. 173; DD v. 1, no. 362, p. 251</td>
<td>c. 1261; DD lists the date as early May, 1262</td>
<td>Letter to Henry, concerning Simon de Montfort. Several elisions in text which appear to be due to the mistreatment of the original manuscript.</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AN J. 307, no. 55, folio 6.</td>
<td>AP, no. 1866, p. 432-3; Boutaric, p. 100</td>
<td>1263 (Molinier bases his dating off the surrounding documents)</td>
<td>Letter to Alphonse de Poitiers concerning Gaston de Bearn, the Queen's cousin.</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>C-F, v.1, no. 117, p. 146</td>
<td>c. 1263</td>
<td>Another letter to Henry, on her health and the state of the royal family.</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Source Details</td>
<td>Date(s)</td>
<td>Translation</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/3/141</td>
<td>C-F, v.1, no. 120, p. 148; DD v.1, no. 384, p. 264</td>
<td>c. 1263; DD lists it as March 1263</td>
<td>Letter to Henry, discussing his recovery from a recent illness. Latin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BNF no. 10918, f. 18 r.</td>
<td>AP, no. 2014, p. 540-1; Boutaric, 101</td>
<td>August 1263</td>
<td>Letter to Alphonse de Poitiers, concerning the problems of the English royal family. Latin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BNF, no. 10918, f. 19</td>
<td>AP, no. 2015, p. 541</td>
<td>August 1263</td>
<td>Letter to Alphonse de Poitiers, re: Simon de Montfort. Latin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BNF, no. 10918, f. 19r.</td>
<td>AP, no. 2017, p. 542</td>
<td>October 31, 1263</td>
<td>Letter to Alphonse de Poitiers. Latin</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>BNF, no. 10918, f. 18r.</td>
<td>AP, no. 2018, p. 543; DD V. 1, no. 424, p. 298</td>
<td>October 31, 1263</td>
<td>Snippet of a Letter to Alphonse de Poitiers. Latin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BNF, no. 10918, f. 19 r.</td>
<td>AP, no. 2027, p. 548</td>
<td>Aug., 30, 1265</td>
<td>Letter to Alphonse de Poitiers concerning the English royal family. Latin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC 1/17/141**</td>
<td>C-F, v.1, no. 123, p. 151; Rymer, T. II supplement, p. 158</td>
<td>c. 1269; C-F states that the date is &quot;uncertain.&quot;</td>
<td>Letter to Edward I recommending the abbot and monastery of Citeaux. Lists and Indexes does not cite C-F as a published source, but dates and locations could support my designation, though the dates given for SC 1/17/141 make Marguerite's salutation to her dear nephew, &quot;fils ainé du roy d'Angleterre,&quot; out of place. French</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/3/143</td>
<td>C-F, v.1, no. 126, p.154; DD v. 1, no. 424, p. 298</td>
<td>c. 1270; DD lists it as c. 1259-1270</td>
<td>Letter to Henry III, concerning the health of his nephew Henry. Latin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/3/142</td>
<td>DD v. 1, no. 430, p. 300</td>
<td>c. 1259-1270</td>
<td>Letter to Henry III, refers to a still-living Louis IX, so before his death in 1270. Latin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuscript</td>
<td>Page Numbers</td>
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<tr>
<td>A.N., J. 408, no. 2 A (contemporary copy – Boutaric leaves off the 'A' in his citation)</td>
<td></td>
<td>French</td>
<td>1271?</td>
<td>Marguerite writes to her son, Philip III, concerning her dowry lands. A modern French translation exists in Sivéry and Boutaric includes a modernized version of the original old French in his article on Marguerite.*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC 1/17/142</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>1275</td>
<td>Marguerite writes to Edward I in support of the abbot and convent of Marmoutiers. No published/printed copy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC 1/17/140</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>1275-1295</td>
<td>Marguerite writes to Edward I on behalf of the abbot of Savigny. No published/printed copy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC 1/17/128</td>
<td>C-F, v.1, no. 150, p. 186</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>c. 1276</td>
<td>Letter to Edward I in which she comments on his apologies for not being able to help her concerning Provence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SC 1/17/149</td>
<td>C-F, v.1, no. 163, p. 209</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>c. 1278</td>
<td>Letter to Edward I concerning a marriage alliance with the Emperor of Germany.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC 1/17/146</td>
<td>C-F, v.1, no. 166, p. 212</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>August 4th, 1278</td>
<td>Letter to Edward I.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC 1/17/144</td>
<td>C-F, v.1, no. 170, p. 217-8</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>The day after St. Matthew's, 1278</td>
<td>Letter to Edward I, proposing a marriage between his son and one of her granddaughters by her son the king.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC 1/17/136</td>
<td>C-F, v.1, no. 200, p. 254-5</td>
<td>c. 1280</td>
<td>Letter of recommendation for Hugh des Baux, Marguerite's relative, who lost his lands to Charles of Anjou.</td>
<td>French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC 1/17/138</td>
<td>C-F, v.1, no. 221, p. 277</td>
<td>c. 1280</td>
<td>Letter from Marguerite to Edward, recommending someone.</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC 1/17/147</td>
<td>C-F, v.1, no. 222, p. 278</td>
<td>c. 1280</td>
<td>Letter to Edward in recommendation of Pierre Berenger, who leant the French crown money when needed.</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC 1/17/143</td>
<td>C-F, v.1, no. 223, p. 279</td>
<td>c. 1280</td>
<td>Letter to Edward, commenting that she has not heard from the messengers he said he'd sent.</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC 1/17/137</td>
<td>C-F, v.1, no. 224, p. 280</td>
<td>c. 1280</td>
<td>Letter to Edward, concerning Gaston de Bearn.</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC 1/17/148</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1281-1282</td>
<td>Letter to Edward I, informing him of her health and that she awaits a reply to her message. No published/printed copy. The original is badly damaged.</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC 1/17/129</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Mâcon, Sept. 27, 1282</td>
<td>Letter to Edward, concerning the seisin of Tavistock, co. Devon, a church for Hugh de Vienne. No published/printed copy.</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC 1/17/131</td>
<td>Rymer's <em>Foedera</em>, I, ii, p. 155</td>
<td>Mâcon, Nov. 20, 1282</td>
<td>Letter to Edward on behalf of Mr. Grimoard de Hautes-Vignes.</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC 1/17/145</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Chalon-sur-Saone, Weds. after Easter, 1283</td>
<td>Marguerite to Edward I, requesting credence for her envoy. No published/printed copy.</td>
<td>French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC 1/17/139</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>After Easter, 1293-1295</td>
<td>Marguerite to Edward I, on behalf of the friars minor of Paris. No published/printed copy.</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AP = Correspondance Administrative d'Alphonse de Poitiers, ed. Molinier (letter numbers refer to the entry's number in the collection, not the page number).
C-F = Lettres de Rois, Reines, et Autres Personnages, ed. Champollion-Figeac
Boutaric = Saint Louis et Alfonse de Poitiers by Edgard Boutaric
DD = Diplomatic Documents, edited by Pierre Chaplais
SC = Special Collections at the National Archives, Kew, UK.
*His translation/version of the letter is quite different from Sivéry's, but that could be explained by the century plus between Boutaric's article (1867) and Sivéry's biography (1987).
**A cross-check between List and Indexes and C-F indicates that the two documents are the same, but List does not specify page numbers in C-F.

Notes: The source information indicated in Diplomatic Documents appears to be incorrect. No other citations for these letters have been located.

The letters range from the length of a normal printed paragraph to several pages long. A rough estimate of page length if all letters (from Marguerite) were put together would be perhaps fifty pages.

Where a long date range is given, I have chosen to select the top of the range for use in organizing the letter.
Appendix B

Transcriptions and Translations
To the very excellent prince, her very dear and very beloved nephew, Edward, by the grace of God king of England; Marguerite, by that same grace queen of France, greetings and true love. Very dear nephew, because we believe that you would willingly have good news about us, we make known to you that we are presently well, thanks to God, which we would hope to hear every day about you. And thus we have left Mascon in order to return to France. Very dear nephew we beg you to willingly believe du Perer clerk of the queen of England, our very dear sister, your good mother, who carries these letters, concerning what he will say to you from us. May the Lord protect you. Given at Chalon the Wednesday after Easter.
faisons asavoir que quant ces lettres furent faites et quant Freres Patriz le Norrez qui ces lettres porte vint a\textsuperscript{137} nous, nous estiens a Mascon seines et herties a Dieu merci et [ne] nous entendons a partir d’ilec jusques tant que nous aions vostre response de ce que nous vous avons mandé par monseignor Pierre de Frenz. Si vous prions que vous de ce...

[remainder of letter damaged]

To the very exalted and very excellent prince, her very dear and beloved nephew, Edward, by the grace of God king of England; Marguerite, by that same grace queen of France, greeting and true love. Very dear nephew because we understand that you would willingly hear good news of us, we make known to you that when these letters were written and when Brother Patrick le Norrez, who carries these letters, came to us, we were at Mascon hale and hearty thanks to God, and we do not intend to leave from here until we have your response concerning what we sent you through Monsignor Pierre de Frenz. Thus we pray that you...

\textsuperscript{138}

To the excellent prince our dearest nephew, Edward, by the grace of God illustrious king of the English, Marguerite by that same grace queen of the French, greeting and truly affectionate love. Your highness, on behalf of the religious order, for the noble man of Savigny, abbot of the Cistercian order, we regard that our [proces] must be extended, if it is pleasing to be considering since the contemplation of lord Jesus, for the same in the maintenance of good men, what is said for our kingdom [H], you might wish a conciliatory gift and [__gium] promising to us that the Abbot ought not to be molested. Given at Vincennes.

\textsuperscript{137} MS. porte vient nous.

\textsuperscript{138} I have chosen to leave off any translation of ‘de ce’ because lack of context renders any translation uncertain.
PRO 131
SC 1/17/129


To the excellent prince our dearest nephew, Edward, by the grace of God illustrious king of the English, Marguerite by that same grace queen of the French, greeting and truly affectionate love. As lord...[his] own church of Tavistock in the diocese of Exeter\(^{140}\), if only our cousin and yours, Hugh of Vienne\(^{141}\), might be having an air of authority to be united [Ser_eintate], we require and ask since he built up Hungary with our love of him having recommended [him] and of his [p??atoribus] for the preservation of his men and having been prevailed upon to allow [pitem] the possession [i_puis eccem], you might first absorb [velitis a__lin] the gathering of citizens with God. Given at Mascon, on the Sabbath before the festival of the Blessed Michael.

PRO 146
SC 1/17/142

Magnifico principi nepoti nostro karissimo, Edwardo, Dei gratia illustri regi Anglie, Francorum regina, salutem et properos ad vota successus. Pro religiosis viris abbate et conventui Maioris monasteris, Turon dyocese vestram celsitudinem [deplacamus]. Quantinus ipsius abbati et conventui, ad tollendam, violenciam et iniuriam, qui super quibusdam prioratibus quoniam regno vestro longo tempore termerunt, manifestisime sicut dicitur [illegible] pietatis et nostro vestrum velitis auxillium et consillium favorabiliem [illegible]. Datum Paris die mercurii post dominicam [...].

\(^{139}\) Hungary

\(^{140}\) The word "Tavistock" is difficult to make out, but if the next word is "Exoniensis," it may refer to a church in Tavistock, which is in the county of Devon, in the diocese of Exeter.

\(^{141}\) The English spelling of Hugh's name is that from the List and Indexes entry on this letter. See Lists and Indexes, p. 256.
To the excellent prince our dearest nephew, Edward, by the grace of God illustrious king of the English, Marguerite by that same grace queen of the French, greeting and quick success to [your] undertaking. Your highness, on behalf of the religious men, abbot, and the monastery of Marmoutiers-lès-Tours, we give favorable consideration for the diocese of Tours. While for the abbot and religious community itself, towards removing the violence and offence which against the same priories as they have long dishonored your rule, just as it is most evidently said [name illegible] of piety and you may wish with us help and favorable advice [illegible]. Given at Paris on the Wednesday after the Sunday [...].

PRO 143  
SC 1/17/139

To the most fair prince, our dearest nephew, Edward by the grace of God most illustrious king of England, Marguerite by that same grace queen of the French, greeting and without interruption [aumentum] of happiness. We require and ask your highness to what extent with the consideration of responsibility and for us it is pleasing to you to first introduce in order that the Friars Minor of Paris or for their mandate might be resolved n that of good memory, J. Archbishop of Canterbury, for the same gathering it is said in his highest wishes to have bequeathed.. Nevertheless, from that cause if it is pleasing [quod] with respect to that gathering of our [priories] whether it seems to have reported suitably. Given at Poissy on the Sabbath after the octave from Easter.
Appendix C

Key Figures
Blanche of Castile: (b. 1188-d.1252) Daughter of Alfonso VIII of Castile and Eleanor of England. She acted as regent of France from 1226-1234.


Sanchia de Provence: (b. 1225 – d. 1261) Married Richard, Duke of Cornwall in 1243.

Beatrice de Provence: (b. 1234-d.1267) Married Charles of Anjou in 1246.

Frederick II of Germany: (b. 1194-d.1250) Holy Roman Emperor, King of Sicily, King of Germany. Frederick was Raymond-Berenger’s feudal overlord.

Henry III of England: (b. 1207) Married Eleanor of Provence in 1236. Reigned as king from 1216-1272.

Richard, Duke of Cornwall (King of the Germans) (b. 1209) Became King of Germans and Romans in 1257. Died in 1272.

Louis IX of France: (b. 1215) Son of Blanche of Castile and Louis VIII of France. He became king very young and his mother acted as regent for many years. Louis died on crusade in 1270. He was canonized as Saint Louis in 1297.

Alphonse de Poitiers: (b. 1220-d.1271) Third son of Blanche of Castile and Louis VIII. He married Jeanne of Toulouse in 1237, claiming that county as an apanage of France after her father Raymond VII of Toulouse died in 1249.


Philip III of France (Philip le Hardi): (b. 1245) Marguerite and Louis’ second son. Married Isabel of Aragon (daughter to Jamie I) in 1262 and wed his second wife, Marie of Brabant in 1274. Reigned as king of France from 1270-1285.
Charles of Anjou (b. 1227 – d. 1285) Posthumous child of Blanche of Castile and Louis VIII of France. Became king of Sicily in 1266 and Count of Provence upon his marriage to Beatrice of Provence in 1246.

Raymond Berenger IV of Provence (b. 1195 – d. 1245): Last count of Provence from the House of Barcelona.
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Abbreviations

C-F and AP numbers are cited by letter numbers, followed by page number in the printed edition.


*AP = Correspondance d'Alfonse de Poitiers.* Editor, Auguste Molinier. 2 volumes. Paris: 1894-1900.

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