Lourmarin in the Eighteenth Century
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III

VILLAGE GOVERNMENT

The political sophistication of Lourmarin, a village whose population was never much more than 1,500, was surprising. The community's political base was relatively broad and many decisions affecting the village were made by its inhabitants. Indeed, one of the themes of this chapter will be the degree of political participation at the village level. Lourmarin does not fit the stereotype of a sleepy provincial village, inhabited by a few rural bourgeois and large fermiers, the majority of whose inhabitants had little land, less education, and no influence upon decisions made for them by priest and seigneur. Instead, the political structure of Lourmarin was quite complex; for example, in the village there were 22 elected officials plus the treasurer, school teachers, midwife, and several other persons who performed essential functions. Since the influence of the Catholic church was weak and the villagers rarely saw their seigneur, most Lourmarinois were politically conscious and zealously guarded their rights of local self-government, tempered by the paternalism of the village notables. Although there were differences among the villagers based on religious as well as social, economic, and familial divisions, the villagers tried, if not always successfully, to present a united front and oppose interference from any outside authority.

1 See Chapter VI for a discussion of the seigneur, who never resided permanently in his chateau after 1680.
This chapter will examine the governmental structure of the village by enumerating the various political offices in Lourmarin, followed by a discussion of those village employees who provided various services to the community. If, as will be described, the political organization of the village was complex, so too was the process by which decisions were made. Furthermore, the range of subjects which occupied the village leaders was wide. Because of the religious composition of the village, religious issues occupied the council periodically from 1680 to 1750, after which their importance declined. The council was particularly active in times of crisis, such as the plague in 1720–22, and during the period of the French Revolution, when the village turned for leadership to its more wealthy citizens, who also provided financial aid to ward off starvation. A real concern for the villagers' welfare, combined with genuine apprehension that the indigent class might resort to violence, led the notables to aid the village in times of economic crisis. But except in times of crisis, the village council's attention was devoted to less momentous topics—building a new fountain, repairing a secondary road, or considering the schoolmaster's request for a raise in salary to meet "increased living costs." All other topics, however, were subordinated to the council's concern with fiscal matters and how best to levy and collect enough taxes to meet expenses.

Although the Lourmarinois usually tried to avoid all but the most essential contact with provincial and royal officials, they occasionally welcomed royal intervention, especially when they found themselves unable to cope with local problems. In discussing how Lourmarin was governed and how decisions were made, one must keep in mind that the two primary goals of the village leaders were to keep the local tax levy to a minimum and to protect the interests of the village against all threats from the outside.

Community affairs in Lourmarin were centered in the town hall (maison de ville or hôtel de ville). Even more than the church or the chateau, the town hall was the focal point of a spirited and sometimes quarrelsome community. The Lourmarinois were vitally interested in maintaining an efficient municipal government and neither the organizational structure of their local government nor the duties of its individual members changed appreciably between 1680 and 1789.

The villagers zealously guarded the local perquisites guaranteed by the Provençal constitution, the first of which was the right to elect their own
municipal officials, who were the very lifeblood of the village. Almost all important decisions affecting the community originated with the village council and, since the seigneur seldom visited Lourmarin, they were often able to influence him to adopt their point of view regarding the management of community affairs and problems. And although the community leaders were required to report the results of the annual election to their seigneur shortly after January 1, there is no evidence that the seigneur ever exercised a veto over the choices made by the community.

In 1648 the Parlement in Aix, in order to standardize municipal governments throughout Provence, sent a royal official to Lourmarin. He called a meeting of all heads of families (pères de famille) and, after obtaining information and advice from them, transmitted their views to the Parlement. The Parlement at Aix then issued réglements, or rules for the community, which governed the political organization of Lourmarin until the Revolution. Municipal government was guided by two consuls who were elected annually. According to the réglements, both consuls were to own real property with a minimum capital value of at least 300 livres. The more important of the two was the mayor, sometimes designated as "mayor/first consul," while the other was called simply "second consul." During the 40 years from 1750 to 1789, when identification by profession is more accurate than for the earlier period, 22 different men served as mayor. Of these, 21 can be positively identified as bourgeois: the twenty-second, Jacques Roman, was listed as a négociant.

With the exception of Roman, these men were all large property owners, paid a proportionally large amount of taxes, and were from families which had been prominent in Lourmarin since at least the seventeenth century.

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2 Masson, Les temps modernes, p. 149.
3 Jacques P. Anastay, "L'administration des communes au XVIIe siècle: Lourmarin," Provincia, VII (1927), 97. Anastay, descendant of one of the several Anastay families of the eighteenth century, described the political organization of his native village. These regulations, except for the religious provisions, were similar to those governing other Provençal villages. See also Masson, Les temps modernes, pp. 149–63 for a complete discussion of this question.
4 The question of identification of the bourgeoisie was discussed in Chapter I. Identification of the bourgeoisie was made from the 1770 and 1791 tax records or from their identification as such during the time they were mayor. It is possible that, both here and throughout this study, the meaning of bourgeois was not well defined and occasionally was used as a title of honor and respect for gentlemen farmers who, nevertheless, may have worked part of their land themselves.
The average value of real property owned by these 22 was 5,353 livres, and the median property value of the first consuls was 3,578 livres. Of the 21 bourgeois, two were also listed in the 1770 cadastre as écuyer and, until the Revolution, they used "de" before their last names. Despite this title, however, they were listed on the tax rolls and continued to pay taxes like everyone else.

One of these écuyers was Pierre Henri Joseph de Girard; the other was Dominique de Savornin, whose ancestors had moved to Lourmarin from the neighboring village of Lauris about 1600. Savornin had married Anne Girard, Pierre Henri Joseph's aunt, in 1731. Their marriage contract, which identified Savornin as bourgeois, provided a dowry of 3,374 livres—a sizable amount for a village community, but by no means rare since early the next year Antoine Ailhaud, another prominent bourgeois, provided a dowry of 5,000 livres for his daughter's marriage to Jacques Murat, a Marseilles merchant. Excluding the seigneur, Savornin was the sixth largest landowner with property valued at 5,446 livres, compared to 13,864 livres for Girard. A genealogy prepared in 1894 and preserved in the Musée Calvet in Avignon traces the Savornin family back to 1287 and claims that the family was entitled to use écuyer at the time they moved to Lourmarin. This may be true, but the "de" was never used in official documents until the second half of the eighteenth century. The Savornins, one of the most influential Protestant families in the seventeenth century, had, along with most other Protestant families, renounced their "heresy" in 1685. Their name reappears, however, in the Protestant parish register in the 1750's.

Elected in 1813, Dominique Daniel de Savornin served as mayor of Lourmarin for several years. His wife, pretentiously named Marie-Anne-Antoinette-Josephine-Honorine by her bourgeois father, Antoine-Louis Corgier, gave birth to a son, Dominique-Antoine-Alphonse de Savornin, in 1813. Little more is known of this son except that a marginal entry was made in 1859 in the état-civil opposite his birth entry stating that a decision of the Civil Tribunal of Apt had removed the "de" from his name. Henceforth Dominique-Antoine-Alphonse, then 46, was to be called simply

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5 A.Not., Jacquier, June 5, 1731; February 17, 1732.
6 M.C., 4548, fo. 106, Généalogie de la famille de Savornin de Lauris.
7 A.M., État-Civil, December 15, 1813.
"Savornin." At least the Savornin name is memorialized by the main street which passes in front of the mayor’s office—Rue Savornin.

The position of second consul was much different from that of mayor, and the men who were elected to this office came from among the craftsmen of the community, not from the bourgeoisie. In the 40-year period 1750–89, during which 22 different men were elected second consul, none owned real property valued at more than 1,200 livres and only two had land holdings exceeding 500 livres in value. No one who served as second consul was among the 30 largest taxpayers at the time of the Revolution. The average value of real property owned by the 18 of these 22 who can be traced was 361 livres, a very modest capital sum indeed. The median property valuation was 325 livres. Of these 18 only ten (56 percent) had more than the 300 livres’ property valuation supposedly required for second consuls.  

Eighteen of those who can be identified by profession were artisans who, as a group, owned less property than the non-artisans who were elected second consul. For instance, the small house of Bernard Guillemet, master

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tailor</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoemaker</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hatmaker</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockingmaker</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mason</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheelwright</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacksmith</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innkeeper</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Négociant</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travailleur</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table III–1. Profession of Second Consul, 1750–89


8 See Table III–1. See also Table I–3 for the composition and income of the artisan class in Lourmarin in 1791.
tailor, also used as his workshop, was evaluated at only 25 livres. Since the cadastre evaluated only real property and did not include such items as specialized tools and equipment, the average value of the second consuls' property appears lower than it actually was. But the divergence between first and second consul is much too great to be bridged by an economic explanation alone. The second consuls represented a class of Lourmarinois obviously inferior, both economically and socially, to the mayor and other leading citizens serving on the municipal council. Most of the second consuls were either newcomers to the community or were born into Lourmarin families which had been craftsmen for generations. Owning little land, they were more mobile and tended to move from one village to another with relative ease, thus explaining why the second consuls are more difficult to trace. A high rate of mobility was not typical of either the larger landowners, who supplied the mayors, or the small peasant farmers, since both of these groups were tied to their land. But despite their lack of roots in the community, the artisans were socially superior to the large class of travailleurs and day-laborers. The superior social position of the artisans was also due to their economic importance in the village. And although the job of second consul was not a full-time position it was time-consuming, and the artisans, who spent most of their time in the village proper, were in a better position to be au courant about village problems.

From an examination of the council minutes it would appear that the second consul's inferior social and economic position was reflected in his political functions. For example, he was usually entrusted with overseeing those community expenditures amounting to only a few livres, while the responsibility for major matters, particularly those involving large expenditures or a visit to Aix, was usually entrusted to the mayor. The conclusion that social, economic, and political differences separated the two consuls is reinforced by noting that during the 110 years for which records are available, no individual ever served as both mayor and second consul. This indicates a tacit if not official recognition of different qualifications for the two consuls which therefore altered the intent of the original 1648 edict.

The two consuls were to serve one year only. At the end of their terms each consul chose his successor, subject to a seldom-used council veto, and the retiring mayor and second consul then became councillors for the next
three years. Before the three-year council term expired, occasionally a councillor was re-elected.  

The mayor and second consul presided over a council of 12. Deliberations of December 14, 1681, mention 13 councillors "according to the rules of this community." It appears that the 12 elected members were joined by the priest, who was automatically a member, for a total of 13 councillors. After the first quarter of the eighteenth century, however, the priest was not mentioned as being a member of the council and no longer attended council meetings. The property qualification for councillors was the same as that for mayor and second consul—300 livres—and each councillor served three years. Four councillors were retired annually, with two of the four vacancies being filled by the retiring mayor and second consul while the other two new councillors were elected by majority vote of the council. Entries in the council minutes indicate that the retiring consuls exercised considerable influence in the choice of the other two new councillors. A retiring councillor could not be re-elected to the council for two years, although in the interim he might be elected consul. Evidently the Lourmarinois hoped that under this system no one individual or clique would hold office long enough to abuse their power and that the important communal offices would be rotated among the village notables.

Lourmarin's local government may perhaps be best described as a rather broad-minded oligarchy. Although many artisans served as second consuls and some of the more wealthy ménagers as officers, the political life of Lourmarin was strongly influenced, if not actually controlled, by the bourgeoisie, since by the practice of co-option the members of a relatively few

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9 There is no evidence of "electioneering" for any of the village offices. No one ever "ran" for an office; rather, the current consuls and councilors merely announced their choice of a man to succeed them. These decisions were probably reached at an informal caucus over a glass of eau de vie and objections to the nomination were rarely voiced in the council meeting.


12 Curé Girard, who died in 1729, had been Lourmarin's priest since the 1680's and had led the village through the turbulent years after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. By not applying the letter of the law against the new converts he helped mend a badly split village. Generally popular among all the villagers, in 1718 Girard had donated 800 livres, the interest on which was to be used for poor relief. A.M., D.M., January 1, 1718. After his death no Catholic priest was able to command the affection, not to say the loyalty, of the Protestant majority.
families rotated the various community offices among themselves. It was only on specific issues, discussed at a General Council, and not on the election of officers or the general running of the village, that the populace at large was given a voice. It is important to point out, however, that the initiative for the calling of a General Council usually came from this oligarchy, whose members we might term "enlightened" because they did not exercise power exclusively along narrow class lines.

In general, this system prevailed until the French Revolution, although there were many variations. The number of councillors elected each year varied from two to six since a councillor was often replaced before the end of his three-year term because of illness, death, resignation, removal from the community, or because he had accepted another local office. The rules also decreed that fathers and sons, fathers-in-law and sons-in-law, uncles and nephews, and first cousins could not hold local offices at the same time so that if a relative was also elected, a councillor might be replaced before his term expired. Occasionally a councillor did not retire at the conclusion of his three-year term. An extreme example was Jean Franc, bourgeois, who served as councillor for 26 consecutive years, from 1731 to 1756.

It appears that the religious question often divided the village leaders, at least well into the eighteenth century. Seemingly protected by the Edict of Nantes, Lourmarin was predominantly Protestant in the seventeenth century, and prior to 1685 the rules of the community decreed that six Catholics and six Protestants were to serve on the council, although no mention was made of religious requirements for the consuls.13

All Protestants, including the second consul, were removed from local offices in August, 1680, only to be readmitted January 1, 1681.14 Orders from officials of the king in Provence declared that all Protestants were to be permanently excluded from holding positions in local government in September, 1683, more than two years before the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Naturally the Protestants complained bitterly that the village's constitution was being violated.15 After 1685 the same individuals clashed, this time as "old Catholics" and "new converts." Most of the Protestants

14 Ibid., August 25, 1680, January 1, 1681.
15 Ibid., September 12, 1683.
"abjured the heresy of Calvin" after October, 1685, without enthusiastically embracing Catholicism.\textsuperscript{16} To the Catholic community these "newly-converted Catholics" were as dangerous as former Protestants. On January 1, 1715, after much prodding, the Intendant spelled out the intentions of the Act of Revocation promulgated by Louis XIV in 1685.\textsuperscript{17} Not only did the king want and expect abjuration, but he required that the newly-converted attend mass and receive instruction in the "mysteries of our Holy Religion."\textsuperscript{18} Only when the latter requirement had been met were the former Protestants to be allowed to hold office on a basis of equality with the old Catholics.

After 1715 there was less discussion of the religious issue, at least within the council, but as we shall see in Chapter VII, religious problems still plagued Lourmarin, especially on those occasions when royal officials tried to stamp out Protestantism by force. The new converts often did not perform their "Catholic duties," but apparently the only penalty imposed within the village itself was denial of burial in consecrated ground, that is, the Catholic cemetery. Except for enforcing this penalty, the priest, the seigneur, and the few important Catholic families such as the Girards did not intervene. Religious differences were definitely receding as the villagers realized the necessity for uniting against increased royal tax pressure and the continuing demands of the seigneur and the dîme. By 1750 Lourmarin had again become what it was in the seventeenth century, a predominantly Protestant village controlled by the Protestant majority. Although the Protestant church was not rebuilt until 1816, the Protestants had their own minister and after 1747 began once again to keep a parish register. The entries in this register clearly show that a large percentage of the more important families were Protestant. Table III–2 clearly shows that, at least after 1750, the Protestants controlled the village government.\textsuperscript{19} The predominance of Protestant mayors after 1750 underscores this fact. Because

\textsuperscript{16} A.\textit{Not.}, Chastroux and Pacot, October 21. 1685 to February 23, 1686, \textit{pavirn}.  
\textsuperscript{17} A.\textit{M.}, D.\textit{M.}, January 1, 1715.  
\textsuperscript{18} \textit{Ibid.}  
\textsuperscript{19} See Table III–2. Since Protestantism was not officially recognized until 1788, it must be emphasized that the percentage of Protestants in each category in Table III–2 may be too low. In each of the categories there were several individuals whose religion could not be positively determined. A positive identification was, however, made for those listed in the Protestant column.
of the absence of a Protestant parish register from 1685 to 1747 it is impossible to make any comparison with the period before 1750. However, the Protestant mayors and other officials after 1750 were usually from the same families as those who served before 1750. With few exceptions, the important Lourmarin families at the time of the Revolution were Protestant.

### Table III-2. Protestant Officers of Lourmarin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Total No.</th>
<th>Protestants</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mayor/first consul, 1750-1789</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second consul, 1750-1789</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All officers, 1765-1774</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In addition to the two consuls and the 12 councillors the community elected eight other officials. The secretary (greffier) kept the official minutes of the municipal council meetings on stamped paper and, along with the local tax book (cadastre), the municipal deliberations filled the most important record book in the community. The secretary was responsible for listing the names of those who attended each meeting and he recorded the subjects discussed and the decisions made. He also transcribed orders from the Intendant, who often required that they be entered in the deliberations to make them a part of the official record. The secretary, along with the consuls, was the only elected official who could spend the village’s money, although his expenditures were usually minor.

The quality of the extant minutes depended almost entirely on the intelligence and dedication of the secretary. The position was usually held by a bourgeois, occasionally by the schoolmaster, never by the curé.²⁰ It is impossible to tell what rules, if any, governed the secretary’s tenure. In 1715 the village decided that the secretary would serve only one year and could not be re-elected for three years; this decision was immediately ig-

²⁰ The position often remained in the same family. For instance, in the eighteenth century up to 1789 the position of secretary was held by a member of the Ailhaud family, prominent bourgeois in Lourmarin, for 34 years. In the last 40 years before the Revolution a member of the Bernard family served as secretary for 13 years.
nored. Occasionally a secretary served for five or ten consecutive years, but at other times he was replaced annually. When the mayor retired he either chose a new secretary or asked that the former one be "reconfirmed in his post." The final decision, however, rested with the council.

Three auditors (auditeurs des comptes), whose primary task was to audit the records of the community treasurer and report their findings to the council, were elected annually. Because of the importance attached to this job, the 1648 rules said that at least one must be "Catholique, Apostolique, et Romain." In 1682 the Protestants complained that the system had worked up until that time but now there were only two auditors, both of whom were Catholic. Although the rules called for three auditors, only two were elected annually until 1760. During this 80-year period (1680–1760) it was usual, although not mandatory, for one of the auditors to be either the curé or the viguiere, the seigneur’s officer. After a dispute in 1760 over the audit, caused in large part by the curé, the community, as required by the rules, elected three auditors instead of the usual two and the curé never again filled this post. Henceforth three auditors were elected each year.

Two police officials (intendants de police), sometimes known as weighers (pezateurs), were elected annually. The police supervised all weights and measures used in the community and were empowered to inspect scales used in trade and to mark those they judged to give a correct weight with "LOUR" as an indication to the villagers of the scales’ accuracy. Usually the police were changed each year.

There were also two estimators (estimateurs) elected annually. One estimator was to be a Catholic and one a Protestant, but for some time after 1680 they both were Catholics. Often the consuls from the previous year filled this office and thus acted as both councillor and estimator the year after their consulate. The 1648 rules state only that the estimators were to adjudicate "disputes" among inhabitants. In other Provençal

21 A.M., D.M., January 1, 1716, and passim.
25 Anastay praised adjudication by the estimators as a "very wise measure" which insured "prompt and fair justice," possibly because it avoided the time and expense connected with the established judicial system. Anastay, "Lourmarin," p. 99.
villages they estimated property values, evaluated property damages caused by animals, inventoried the belongings of the deceased, and fixed fines for those persons violating local police regulations.26

In its annual budget the council always allocated funds to pay certain of the municipal officials. The two consuls and the secretary each received salaries of nine livres per annum while the auditors, weighers, and estimators each received three livres in compensation. The 12 councillors served without pay. The community thus paid a total of 48 livres in salaries to its municipal officers, a sum hardly munificent enough to attract to public office men interested only in monetary compensation. The love of political office, no matter how insignificant, was evidently not confined to the big cities. Of course the attraction of status was probably strengthened in Lourmarin by the desire of the wealthier villagers to maintain control in order to protect their material interests. Men do not necessarily expect payment for looking after their own. The consuls and secretary were also allowed 200 livres to pay for miscellaneous, minor expenses for which they were responsible.

Table III-3. Municipal Officers in Lourmarin in Three Selected Ten-Year Periods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Estimated Adult Males in Lourmarin</th>
<th>Adult Males as Officers %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1685-1694</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1725-1734</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1765-1774</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table III-3 indicates the rather broad base of political participation in Lourmarin, although the poorer elements in the population were excluded because of the required property qualification. Although it may be a mere coincidence, it would appear that while the population was increasing in the eighteenth century, the selection of municipal officers was becoming

26 For example, at Charleval, one of only two villages founded in Provence in the eighteenth century, the estimators were "to assist the consul in his administrative duties," possibly explaining the frequency with which consuls became estimators. Pierre Theus, La fondation d'un village de Provence au XVIIIe siècle: Charleval—1741 (Aix-en-Provence, 1960), p. 205.
more restrictive. The percentage of adult males who served as municipal officers declined from 26 percent to 14 percent from the first to the third periods. It should be emphasized that the number of municipal offices remained the same.

At the regular council meeting held either the day after Christmas or on January 1 the council would "proceed to the election of the new government." The viguier was always present to represent the seigneur. After invoking the blessings of God, the secretary began the election process by saying:

By the mayor and consuls here present it is stated that a year has passed since they had the honor of being elected to the office which they have fulfilled to the best of their ability. They pray the council to accept their apologies if they have been found lacking in any particular, having served with only the best interests of the community at heart. They therefore request that the council proceed to the election of the new government as is the custom.

With this formality completed, the council then elected those local officials mentioned above. The council, whose responsibility it was to choose the new officials, usually accepted the consuls' choice of successor. However, they had the right, which they occasionally exercised, to reject the men nominated by the consuls and either named the new consul themselves or required that a new name be submitted for their approval. On January 1 all of the newly elected officials appeared at the council meeting and took an oath to fulfill the duties of the office to which they had been elected.

This regular council (conseil ordinaire) conducted most of the business of the community. Present at regular council meetings would be the viguier, the two consuls, the secretary, and the 12 councillors (13 if the priest was included). Other persons might attend upon council invitation, especially if the council was dealing with matters which directly concerned them. Absenteeism was a chronic problem. The 1648 rules provided for a three-livre fine to be levied on councillors who missed a meeting without a valid excuse, but often council meetings had to be adjourned without decisions

27 There were years when, due to royal orders or local circumstances, the annual elections were not held, but the usual, and legal, practice was for elections to be held each year.
being reached because the requisite quorum was not present. Moral coercion did not improve attendance, so finally in 1763 Lourmarin persuaded the Parlement in Aix to increase the fine for absence at a council meeting to 12 livres because "of the sad state of the village."

For other than routine matters, such as an increase in taxation, a Special Council meeting (conseil extraordinaire) was called which included, in addition to the regular council members, the ten individuals in Lourmarin who paid the most taxes. Occasionally a General Council—a meeting of all family heads—was convoked to discuss important questions concerning the entire village. The General Council seems to have been an eighteenth-century addition and, since it required the approval of Parlement, was not often called. Council meetings were called by ringing the town bell and by the public crier (valet de ville), who announced the meeting publicly. When a Special Council meeting was to be held, the ten highest taxpayers were notified by written invitations (billets).

In addition to the regular meetings held annually to elect and swear in new officers, the council always met every May 1 to consider the expenditures and revenues for the current year and to levy a tax sufficient to cover the difference. Other council meetings were held periodically, the number and frequency being determined by the needs of the community. Usually the mayor called the meeting, but the vignier, as the seigneur's representative, might also take the initiative. The two consuls presented an agenda of matters to be discussed and the council debated each proposition in turn. If the council decided that action should be taken, it was they who provided the money and authorization necessary to implement their decision. The number of meetings held in a calendar year varied greatly; an aver-

30 Anastay, "Lourmarin," p. 100; A.M., D.M., passim. Normally the regular council already included one or more of the ten.
31 A.M., D.M., April 2, 1786. For example, 176 heads of family were recorded as attending the General Council meeting of March 29, 1789, to discuss Lourmarin's cahier and elect delegates to the Estates General. They therefore represented about one-half of Lourmarin's population. It is probable that many of the poorer inhabitants, unused to direct participation in the local government, saw no reason to attend. It is also possible that some of those who did attend sat quietly on the back benches at the village church and, unable to sign their names in the minutes, were simply not recorded as having been present. A.M., D.M., March 29, 1789.
32 A.M., D.M., February 16, 1725, and passim.
age was one or two council meetings per month. There tended to be few 
meetings in the summer and relatively more in the autumn, especially after 
the harvest had been gathered. In general, whenever there occurred any 
unusual event—plague, poor harvest, severe weather, presence of armies, 
or financial crisis—which adversely affected the village, the council met 
quite often. Whenever the number of meetings increased dramatically, the 
subjects most likely to be discussed were how to provide relief measures for 
the poor, the group most severely affected by a catastrophe, either natural 
or caused by man.

After a detailed examination of council minutes from 1680 to 1830, it 
may be said that there was no such thing as a “normal” or “average” meet­
ing. It might be interesting to examine one council meeting without pret­
tending that it is in any way typical as to the subjects considered or the 
decisions made. The meeting chosen for discussion occurred April 14, 
1789, shortly before the Estates General was to assemble in Paris. It was a 
Special Council meeting, which meant that in addition to the regular coun­
cil members, the town crier was instructed to inform the ten largest land­
holders in the village of the date and time of the meeting. The mayor had 
attempted to convocate the council on April 12, but so many members 
pleaded that they were occupied with other business that a quorum did not 
appear. As a result, Jean Paul Corgier, the mayor and richest man in 
Lourmarin after Girard, became angry and let it be known that stiff fines 
would be levied unless the meeting were held on the fourteenth as sched­
uled.

At 1:00 P.M. on April 14 the members of the Special Council began 
filming into the meeting room in the town hall and seated themselves 
around a large rectangular table covered with green baize. The room was 
damp and chilly and even though the shutters were open the room was 
still rather dark. Mayor Corgier sat at the head of the table flanked by the 
second consul and the viguier. The councillors occupied the other chairs 
around the table and, since this was a Special Council meeting, the addi­
tional members sat against the wall on straight-back chairs. After the 
usual opening formalities recording those present and acknowledging the 
presence of the seigneur’s viguier, Mayor Corgier reported that he, along

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33 Ibid., April 12, 1789.
VILLAGE GOVERNMENT

with Sieurs Antoine André Bernard and Antoine Abraham Goulin, both bourgeois, had attended the Assembly of the Third Estate in Aix for 11 days beginning with an 8:00 A.M. session on April 1 convoked in the Cathedral. They had presented Lourmarin's cahier to the assembled delegates and had assisted in drafting a general cahier for the Third Estate and electing deputies to the Estates General. They asked to be reimbursed for lodging and travel expenses amounting to 128 livres. The council, which had authorized the trip, quickly agreed to pay their expenses.

As the second order of business, Mayor Corgier presented a petition from four bakers who complained that since the suppression of the local grain tax the previous month they still had about 30 bushels of wheat on which they had already paid the tax. In routine manner the council, as a matter of equity, approved the payment of 13 livres to the four.

Goulin then reported that he had been to Aix where, as instructed, he had spent 21 livres to purchase two scales. The council, suspecting that some scales being used to sell commodities, especially grain, to the public were inaccurate, ordered Goulin and Pierre Henri Bernard, Antoine André's brother, to travel throughout the parish and check all scales used in public transactions. The intendants of police and the consuls were to accompany them. If the scales were accurate they were to be so marked; otherwise, they were to be confiscated.

The secretary, Antoine Ailhaud, bourgeois, read two letters from the Intendant, informing the council of the king's concern about the scarcity of grain in Provence. In order to alleviate the situation, Louis XVI had ordered that six grain storehouses be set up in Provence; the nearest to Lourmarin was in Aix. Lourmarin was to decide how much grain it would need to carry it through the summer and then submit its request with the understanding that the grain would be allotted on the basis of demonstrated need and that the village must replace the grain borrowed one month after their harvest was completed. After a lengthy and heated discussion, the council decided to ask for 125 bushels which "we need immediately," with the notation that the village would certainly need more before harvest time. Lourmarin's council noted that when the time came to repay the grain borrowed, the village would then be forced to buy more.

34 This tax will be discussed in Chapter IV.
They therefore decided to sell the king’s grain to the “indigent classes,” although at a price considerably below the market price. The council voted to provide the difference from current village revenue. Sieur André Aguitton was to transport the grain from Aix, Sieur Barthélemy Fayet was to supervise its delivery to the poor, and two other bourgeois were charged with collecting the price fixed by the council and depositing the money in the village treasury.

Mayor Corgier relayed another letter from Aix to the council in which the king requested a report of “losses suffered by each community since last December, either from the harshness of the winter or from popular emotions.” A committee was appointed to draft an answer. The council reported that Lourmarin’s losses came from the “almost total mortality of the olive trees,” the loss of income from the village fermes and the purchase of grain during the winter to feed the poor, but that there were no losses from “popular uprisings.” Although the times were a bit more urgent, this meeting was not different from Lourmarin’s council meetings from 1680 onward, and demonstrated that important decisions were made and appropriate action taken by the bourgeoisie.

In addition to these elected officials of Lourmarin, the village employed a number of persons to perform specific functions. One of the most important of these municipal employees was the treasurer, who had the overall responsibility for collecting all taxes. The treasurer was not an elective office but rather the community awarded it annually to the man who made the best offer. Individuals interested in serving as treasurer were encouraged to submit bids on three consecutive Sundays, usually in early spring. As bids were received they were officially recorded in the book in which the council minutes were kept and the lowest bidder became treasurer. Before 1760 bids were based on the number of sous and deniers the treasurer would retain of each écu he collected. In the 80-year period prior to 1760, the highest bid was three sous, six deniers per écu, or a return of 5.83 percent to the treasurer, while the lowest bid was nine

35 Fermes were concessions leased by the village to fermiers for various services. They are discussed more fully in Chapter IV.
36 The écu is equal to three livres.
deniers, or 1.25 percent. Both of these extremes were unusual; the normal return to the treasurer was between three and four percent.

In 1760 the council lengthened the treasurer's term to three years and substituted a straight money payment for the percentage of tax collections the treasurer had formerly received, although continuing the practice of having competitive bids. The treasurer's salary ranged from 300 to 550 livres with the average payment being 450 livres. In order to encourage the villagers to pay their taxes promptly, the treasurer was authorized to collect an additional one sou for each livre (5 percent) of tax delinquent on November 1. The treasurer's accounts were examined annually by the auditors.

Expenses associated with the treasury, such as the charge for registering the contract between the treasurer and Lourmarin in Aix, were paid by the village, and they also allocated a small expense account to the treasurer to cover trips made to deposit the money he collected in the district treasury at Apt.

In Provence, taxes owed to the royal, provincial, and district (viguerie) governments were levied on the community as a whole; it was the treasurer's responsibility to collect from individuals, whose rate of payment was based on the amount of real property they owned. Since the treasurer was expected to pay Lourmarin's levy in installments which came due at periodic intervals, it was not unusual for him to advance his own money, interest free, pending completion of his collections. On the assumption that money to repay the advances made by the treasurer was more readily available in the summer, in 1757 the village moved the beginning date of the treasurer's contract to July. Because the office of treasurer required capital combined with business sense, the position was always held by an important and wealthy member of the community.

A village school, financed by the community, existed in 1680 when this study begins, and the schoolmaster and schoolmistress, usually husband and wife, were important village employees. Decisions on hiring, subjects to be taught, and the amount of compensation to be paid were made by the

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38 Ibid., January 23, 1757.
39 Like the position of secretary, the treasurer was often a member of the Ailhaud, Bernard, or other influential bourgeois family.
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council with the advice of the priest. Final approval came from the Archbishop of Aix, but this seems to have merely been a formality. The major emphasis of the school was clearly secular and not religious, and the quality of education offered to their children was of great concern to the inhabitants of Lourmarin.

In the field of education the Lourmarinois demonstrated their pragmatic approach to local finances. The teachers were paid a salary by the village, the schoolmaster usually receiving twice as much as the mistress. If the council decided that a budget cut was necessary and consequently that the teachers' salaries should be reduced, the village's contribution was supplemented by a small tuition charge which each student was required to pay. Presumably the tuition paid by the students was sufficient to provide the difference between the teachers' former and present salaries. If, then, all other village expenditures remained the same, the annual payment for education, and thus the tax rate, would decrease slightly while an extra burden would fall on the pupils' parents. But the council also recognized that although the tuition charge was modest, there would be families who could not afford to send their children. The council therefore included in the teachers' contract the provision that a certain number of "poor boys" or "poor children" were to be taught free of charge. Determination of these children was to be made by the consuls in consultation with the priest. Although the specific number of children so educated is not usually given, it appears that most teachers were required to educate at least ten in this manner. This does not mean, of course, that all village children attended school.

The teachers were required to instruct any of the village children who appeared at school in "reading, writing, and ciphering," although there is no indication that attendance was compulsory. Priests often taught school in Provence, but there is no evidence that any religious instruction was offered in Lourmarin's public school and no churchman ever served as schoolmaster. A prospective teacher was always examined by the council

10 A.M., D.M., passim. This practice was followed, with some variations, in most Provençal villages. Masson, Les temps modernes, p. 670.
11 A.M., D.M., September 26, 1717, June 23, 1726. June 8, 1727, and passim.
12 Ibid., February 22, 1728, and passim.
13 Ibid., passim; Masson, Les temps modernes, p. 668.
to determine his competence to teach the various secular subjects. Reputation and experience served as the main criteria for appointment.

In addition to the village children, the teachers were permitted to teach "foreign" pupils—those students living outside the parish—and they were also allowed to accept a small number of "pensionnaires" who lived at the school. Since classes were held in a house rented by the community for this purpose, the boarding pupils probably lived in the extra rooms along with the teachers. In 1717 the maximum number of boarding pupils was set at 12 and seems to have remained constant throughout the century. Since the students who boarded at the school made an additional payment to the teachers, obviously they were interested in having as many pupils as possible "live in." The council, fearing this would cause a decline in the quality of education, was equally determined to enforce its limit of 12 and on at least two occasions teachers were relieved of their duties for violating this rule. In 1722 the consuls and priest demanded that the council replace the schoolmaster, since "he cannot give proper attention to the children of this place because of the great number of boarding pupils which he has." Two prominent citizens complained in 1764 that Monsieur and Madame Richier had been remiss in their teaching duties, either through indifference or design, and consequently "the boys and girls do not want to return [to school]." Since these teachers had been the subject of earlier complaints, the council decided that they were showing "favoritism to the foreign boarding pupils, which is contrary to the public good and to the rules for good order." Such a situation was deplorable, the council went on, since the function of the school was "to instill in its students the love of virtue, which is the greatest good."

In 1759 the council decided that "in imitation of many communities of Provence" the village should hire an additional teacher to instruct their children in Latin. In typically frugal fashion, the council decided to reduce the salaries of the present teachers and to increase the tuition fees charged the students. The new Latin teacher was paid 120 livres, 95 less

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44 A.M., D.M., September 26, 1717.
45 Ibid., September 12, 1722.
46 Ibid., April 1, 1764.
47 Ibid., September 6, 1761, April 1, 1764.
48 Ibid., April 1, 1764.
49 Ibid., June 24, 1759.
than he had requested, but the council agreed to supplement his income by allowing him to charge one livre per student each month "for the principles of Latin."  

Ten Latin students during one year would have added 90 livres to his income. From 1772 until the Revolution Sieur Brieugne and his wife were the teachers in Lourmarin, having come from a similar post in a nearby, but smaller, village. Schoolmaster Brieugne received an annual salary of 150 livres and his wife 75, a rather generous sum since many villages in Provence paid only 100 livres or less. The community also paid 30 livres for the rental of a schoolhouse so that the village's annual expenditure for education amounted to 255 livres.

The boys were divided into three classes and the tuition they paid ranged from six sous per month for the younger boys in the third class to 12 sous for the older ones in the first class. At Auriol, a village slightly larger than Lourmarin, the tuition was 10, 15, and 20 sous per month. The girls were taught in two classes and paid at the rate of six and four sous per month. No figures are available on the total number of students, but if there were five students in each class, their tuition payments would have amounted to slightly more than 83 livres, based on a nine-month school year, thereby increasing the teachers' income by more than one-third. An increase of two students in each class would have increased the Brieugnes' income by more than one-half.

It may be assumed that in years when the village paid the entire salary of the teachers and instituted no tuition charges for local children, there were more children attending school. The tuition fees were certainly within the range of the bourgeois and most ménagers and artisans, but they would have been prohibitive for a poor peasant. Even were the school "free" to all local children, it is very possible that the poorer peasants, barely able to earn enough to feed their families, would not have been able to spare a son or daughter since young children were needed to work in the fields. But probably the greatest barrier to the education of the poor was that the poor themselves could see no practical advantage in learning to sign their

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50 Ibid., October 21, 1759.
51 Ibid., March 29, 1772; Masson, Les temps modernes, pp. 669-70.
names or being able to read Racine: the introduction of Latin into the school curriculum could hardly have impressed the poor peasant.

The little information available about literacy in Lourmarin was obtained from the notarial minutes and the parish registers. There were, however, two occasions, in 1685 and in 1788, when large numbers of men and women came before either the notary or the priest and were given an opportunity to sign a document. In 1685 the Protestants appeared to abjure and to assume the duties of the Catholic church, then in 1788 Protestants were allowed to legitimize their marriages and their children by simply appearing before the priest and swearing that such events had occurred. From these documents one can determine the numbers of both sexes who could sign their names. Although Catholics would not be included in either list, these two documents do provide a look at all of the Protestants in the village, from the wealthy bourgeoisie to the poor travailleur. As the table below demonstrates, there was an increase over the century in the percentages of each sex who could sign their names, but the increase was not very dramatic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1685</th>
<th>1788</th>
<th>1685</th>
<th>1788</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

source: *A.Not.*, Chastroux and Pacot, October 21, 1685, to February 23, 1686, *passim*; *R.P. Cath.*, April 1, 1788 to February 10, 1789, *passim*.

Among the multitude of transactions with which the notary was concerned was the drafting of marriage contracts and testaments. Not everyone, of course, was required to have either, but a surprisingly large number did. For example, in the decade from 1751 to 1760, there were marriage contracts for more than 60 percent of the marriages performed in Lourmarin. Since both partners to the contract were required to sign if they were able, one may examine these documents to determine if the number of...
Village Government

those able to sign increased during the eighteenth century. Similar information about literacy can also be derived from the testaments, but because testaments often were not drawn up until a person was old or near death, one is often unable to determine whether a missing signature is due to the fact that the executor was illiterate or the fact that his illness prevented it.

Table III-5. Literacy in Lourmarin, from Marriage Contracts, 1721–90

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decade</th>
<th>No. Examined</th>
<th>Groom Could Sign</th>
<th>Bride Could Sign</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1721–1730</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1731–1740</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1741–1750</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1751–1760</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1761–1770</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1771–1780</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1781–1790</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>444</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: A. Not., Jacquier, Ailhaud, Rey, Borrelly, 1721–90, passim.

Literacy measured by the ability to sign is higher in the marriage contracts than that evidenced by the Protestants examined in Table III–4, but this is probably a reflection of the fact that the better educated Lourmarinois were more likely to spend the livres necessary to have a marriage contract drawn up. Pierre Valmary, using parish registers, has examined the signatures by bride and groom in 360 marriage ceremonies in the small rural villages of Thézels and St. Sernin from 1700 to 1792. Only seven percent of the men and 1.7 percent of the women could sign. Even when one makes allowance for the fact that he examined marriage ceremonies rather than marriage contracts, Lourmarin’s rates are considerably higher. The percentage of those able to sign increased after the decade of the 1720’s; from about 1740 to the Revolution slightly more than one-half of the men could sign. The same general increase is evident for the women, with about one-quarter able to sign in the period from 1760 to the Revo-

55 The notarial books analyzed were chosen at random and no attempt was made to examine all of the contracts in each decade. Thus the total number of contracts for each decade listed in Table III–5 was fewer than the total number of marriage contracts for that decade.

lution, as opposed to just under one-fifth earlier. Although the increase was slow, the number of men and women who could sign their names was increasing.

In 1791 Master Brieugne and his wife were involuntarily retired, ostensibly because of old age, after the council received a petition signed by 29 "active citizens" who demanded their replacement. Brieugne was replaced by Pierre Ginoux, member of an old Lourmarin family, who was a surveyor and mathematician. This event is also noteworthy because it marked the first time that a local man or women was appointed teacher although there is no ready explanation for the apparent lack of local talent to fill the position prior to Ginoux’s appointment. It is possible, of course, that this exclusion was intentional because the council felt that an outsider, even though no more qualified, would command greater respect than a villager.

Although they were constantly concerned with reducing community expenditures, the Lourmarinois demonstrated a real interest in the education of their children and did a tolerably good job of providing an adequate and relatively egalitarian system of public education, at least for those who could afford the modest tuition charge and who were interested in education in the first place. But the time had not yet arrived for them to believe in "universal education." Except for the provision for free tuition extended to a few poor children, no attention was given to those who could not, or would not, avail themselves of Lourmarin’s educational system.

The village allocated money annually for the employment of a rural constable (garde terre or garde champêtre). Lourmarin always employed at least one rural constable, usually a local man who owned little or no land of his own—the constable was never a bourgeois, artisan, or sizable landholder. Octave Festy has observed the low social status of the garde champêtre throughout France in the eighteenth century. Because of the time-consuming nature of the work, the small farmer could not afford to spare the time from his fields. Even if the travailleur had only a few acres, he enjoyed more security than the position of constable provided. The position was for 12 months and each year the council either reconfirmed the constable or appointed a new one. In either instance open bidding

57 A.M., D.M., July 21, October 1, 1791.
occurred on at least three consecutive Sundays, with the man who offered to take the job for the lowest salary, assuming he was qualified otherwise, being appointed.

The constable was the only full-time employee of the village engaged in law enforcement. His salary depended, of course, on the number of applicants bidding for the position but the figure was usually around 200 livres per year, paid on a monthly basis. His primary function was to guard all of the territory within the parish. He was to pay especial attention to the grape vines and the olive, fig, and mulberry trees, but in more general terms he was also to oversee the "orchards, meadows, and enclosed land."

The constable was awarded one half of all fines collected from lawbreakers (the other half went to the seigneur) and he also received for his diligence three livres from the proprietors of land damaged by sheep and six livres from each shepherd he reported who did not have the required number of bells, fixed by law at one bell for each ten sheep. The erring shepherd also had to pay an additional six livres to the community. Most of the fines collected in this manner were allocated by the council for poor relief. The constable had a full-time job which, if he were diligent, was potentially lucrative. To insure the constable's undivided attention to his job, in 1711 the council stipulated in the lease that he devote all of his attention to his office and instituted a ten-livre fine if he should be found working at any other job.

In addition to the constable, special guards were hired to protect the vines as the grapes matured and were harvested during a period which began September 1 and usually lasted about 40 days. These temporary guards received seven sous per day and were required to remain day and night in the particular area of the parish to which they were assigned. For unexplained reasons, no special guards for the vines were hired after 1719, and one can only assume that this seasonal function was taken over by the regular constables. Or it is possible that the constable himself was allowed to name temporary deputies whose appointment did not have to be approved by the council.

59 A.M., D.M., September 16, 1788, and passim.
60 Ibid., July 26, 1711.
61 Ibid., September 5, 1717, August 4, 1718, and passim.
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Since the primary reason for employing special guards in the fall was to safeguard the ripening grapes, the council appointed a four-member committee which went into the vineyards, judged the degree of ripeness, and fixed a date for beginning the harvest. For example, on October 1, 1786, the committee reported to the council that the grapes are not quite ready. It would be better to leave them a few days longer and then we would be assured of having good wine. This would be in the best interests of everyone and would preserve the good reputation that our wines have acquired over the years. The date is therefore set for next Thursday, October 5.\(^{62}\)

In 1714 a fine of 50 livres, a considerable sum, was levied against those individuals who disregarded the council’s date.\(^{63}\) Since wine was one of Lourmarin’s major exports, these precautions are understandable. Only in years of very poor harvest, such as 1764, were “foreign grapes” allowed in Lourmarin.\(^{64}\)

The town crier (valet de ville) was chosen by the council and his appointment had to be approved by the seigneur. Like the constable, the town crier was usually a local man with little or no land.\(^{65}\) Whereas the constable’s office was an active and demanding one, the valet’s position seems to have been more honorific and the council usually selected an older man. His most important duty was to announce “in all the cross-roads” the meetings of the council and the times when bids would be accepted for the various leases. He also read publicly all royal and provincial decrees pertaining to Lourmarin. The town crier’s pay increased slowly from 12 to 34 livres during the century before the Revolution. In addition to his rather nominal salary, the council also paid traveling expenses for trips he made for the community to neighboring villages and also provided the town crier with an entirely new uniform, complete from hat to shoes, every three years. In 1778 his new outfit cost 102 livres, an amount which also included

\(^{62}\) Ibid., October 1, 1786.
\(^{63}\) Ibid., September 30, 1714.
\(^{64}\) Ibid., September 23, 1764.
\(^{65}\) Ibid., April 2, 1725.
a new trumpet. It is easy to imagine that the glory of such a resplendent uniform helped to compensate for his meager income.

An equally low-paid, but functionally much more important village employee, was the midwife (*sage femme* or *mère sage*). Her annual remuneration was increased from nine to 15 livres during the century. In addition, each new mother was expected to pay the midwife a small sum depending on her means and conscience. Since there was no doctor in Lourmarin during much of the eighteenth century, the midwife assisted at all village births. There is no indication of what training or experience was necessary for this position, but one can surmise that the qualifications were not very high. One explanation for the poor quality of midwives in France was the low wages paid them and a frequent request in the *cahiers* of 1789 was that their pay be increased. The midwife worked very closely with the priest, who appears to have had a voice in her appointment, since except for his parents, the midwife and priest were usually the first to see a new baby. An examination of the parish registers clearly shows that the midwife often baptized a new-born infant, especially one who was born prematurely, had serious birth defects, or obviously might not survive being carried to the church for baptism. Although she might have lacked experience initially, the midwife actively promoted the welfare of the village mothers and earned their respect.

Lourmarin also employed a keeper of the clock tower, who was usually a tool-maker (*maréchal à forge*). In return for an annual salary of 12 to 30 livres, he was expected to keep the clock tower in working order and to ring the bell when requested by the council. The bell was also to be rung at regular intervals during the day; in 1793 the council complained that this was not being done and was thus a great inconvenience to the "silk spinners and other workers who have fixed hours" and who depended upon it.

Lourmarin evidently experienced the same problems in its new industries as was experienced by other pre-industrial societies. Learning to live by the clock was never easy. A.M., D.M., July 7, 1793.

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67 While visiting the town hall of the neighboring village of Lauris in February, 1968, I saw the uniformed town crier, complete with battery-powered megaphone, announcing a forthcoming council meeting.


69 Lourmarin evidently experienced the same problems in its new industries as was experienced by other pre-industrial societies. Learning to live by the clock was never easy. A.M., D.M., July 7, 1793.
with the Intendant. For 30 livres per year the agent was expected to protect and defend the interests of the village. He seems to have been particularly helpful in obtaining funds to reimburse Lourmarin for expenses incurred during the War of the Austrian Succession, but by 1762 the village concluded that it could dispense with such an expensive service.\(^7\) From this time onward Lourmarin kept no agent in Aix, sending instead its own “notables” to plead directly with royal or provincial officials.

In addition to the above-mentioned village employees who provided essential services to the community and who were paid on an annual basis, Lourmarin occasionally hired lawyers and artisans for specific purposes on a temporary basis. But the treasurer and the schoolteachers, who filled positions requiring special training and large amounts of time, along with the constable, received most of the money Lourmarin spent on local services. The village leaders were willing to spend moderate amounts of money to obtain capable persons for these positions, but they were not averse to economizing whenever possible, as in the case of the Latin teacher.

This chapter has pointed out that the municipal officers and other employees were numerous and the political superstructure of the village complex. The subjects with which the municipal council dealt, the decisions they made, and the means used to implement these decisions were also complex. The two subjects which consumed most of the council’s time, however, were fiscal questions and the measures taken to provide for the poor, with all their ramifications.\(^7\) There is no easy way to categorize the myriad of other subjects dealt with by the council, except possibly to mention those concerned primarily with the village itself and those in which the village had to contend with some outside authority, usually of royal origin.

The council underwrote all expenses for the various Te Deums and celebrations held in Lourmarin. It is difficult to generalize about the fêtes except to say that they occurred on joyful occasions, such as military victories or the birth of a royal heir, or on days when village celebrations were traditional. The community participated in an especially joyous Te Deum in 1723 when they gave belated thanks for the lifting of the dreaded plague.\(^7\) The political adaptability shown by the village leaders reflected the obvious

\(^{70}\) A.M., D.M., May 2, 1762.
\(^{71}\) These two subjects will be discussed fully in Chapters IV and V.
\(^{72}\) A.M., D.M., March 25, 1723. See also Chapter V.
fact that many of these celebrations took place under orders. For example, in April, 1791, a *Te Deum* was sung for the restoration of Louis XVI's health while in January, 1793, the village celebrated the death of "Louis Capet." 

The council also supervised an annual fair held in Lourmarin on November 30, the feast of St. Andrew, since "time immemorial." Throughout the eighteenth century the council tried to obtain authorization to hold another fair and also to establish a weekly market day. In February, 1791, the National Assembly granted Lourmarin two annual fair days—August 4 and All Saints' Day, November 1—and a regular market day, Thursday. Perhaps the urging of the local "Club of the Friends of the Constitution" influenced the National Assembly's decision. This was a happy occasion for Lourmarin, one of the unexpected benefits of the Revolution, and some of the inhabitants began designing posters and making plans to publicize the new fair dates. 

The delivery of mail to and from Lourmarin was done by outside contractors and did not adequately meet the needs of the community. In 1784 the villagers complained that their letters were being carried to Cadenet, the nearest village to the south, by a young boy who either lost the letters along the way or allowed them to be stolen. In 1788 the council awarded a contract to Joseph Julien, a stocking-maker from Lourmarin, who agreed to deliver mail to the post office in Cadenet for 24 livres per year together with a charge of one sou per letter. Those who subscribed to a newspaper or journal were also required by this contract to pay the postman three livres per year. Although no precise figures are available, we can assume that, since this provision was inserted in the contract, some persons in the village received journals from Marseilles, Aix, and Avignon regularly. Although one cannot ascertain what effect these journals (or books, for that matter) had in the village, the fact remains that the Lourmarinois were exposed to outside ideas.

The range of other local problems with which the council was forced to deal was almost limitless and included everything from taking precautions

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74 *Ibid.*, December 10, 1713, and *passim*.
against wolves, brigands, and epidemics to providing, cheerfully it would seem, free food and lodging in 1778 for two royal engineers who were drafting a detailed map of France. Most of these local problems were handled efficiently and conscientiously, and strict attention to the best interests of the community was usually placed above all other considerations.

The council, naturally, was equally concerned with the fiscal, judicial, and administrative bodies outside of Lourmarin with which it was forced to deal. Lourmarin, relatively isolated, had very little real contact with royal authority except when taxes came due or when a travailleur sent his son to serve in the king’s army.

Lourmarin was involved with the royal militia in two very important ways: first, because the village furnished needed recruits and second, because the community was required to help provide materiel for any contingents of the king’s army stationed in Provence. Each year the community was required to furnish one, two, or occasionally three, militiamen. For a few years after 1685 recruits were to be from “the best of the old Catholics” but this requirement was ignored in the eighteenth century. As soon as the Intendant notified the consuls about the number of militiamen to be recruited, they appointed a committee of notables to draw up a list containing the “name, age, profession, and height of all young men of the parish between 18 and 40 years of age who were eligible for army service.” A separate list of married men, domestics, and boys aged 18 to 20 was also made. The eligibles gathered on a Sunday afternoon and watched while their names were placed in a hat and the second consul pulled out the number required. The unfortunate new recruit was outfitted by the community, given a token payment as a sort of “enlistment bonus,” and was delivered, usually protesting, to the nearest army commander. Even should the village accomplish the successful delivery of the new militiaman, it often happened that the recruit escaped almost immediately and returned home. The village either had to find and return the deserter to his unit or, perhaps more difficult, find a replacement. Although the names of the more
wealthy Lourmarinois did appear on the lists of those eligible to be drafted, by various stratagems the well-to-do entirely avoided conscription in the eighteenth century, although some did serve as officers.\textsuperscript{8}\textsuperscript{3}

Lourmarin was responsible for furnishing uniforms to its militiamen while they were on active duty, paying recruiting bonuses, and exempting the soldiers from the \textit{capitation} during the entire six-year term of service; no wonder the community felt this was a heavy financial drain on their resources. Upon discharge the soldier returned to the village and showed his separation papers to the consuls, who in turn officially registered his six years of service in the municipal deliberations and granted, as required by the Intendant, two additional years of exemption from the \textit{capitation}.\textsuperscript{8}\textsuperscript{4}

It is therefore not surprising that the council habitually complained that Lourmarin's levy was too heavy.

A less consistently pressing problem, but one which disrupted the village much more when it occurred, was the requirement that all royal troops be fed and housed during times of war. Although theoretically the village was to be reimbursed for all expenses incurred in connection with the troops, often years passed before all the claims were settled. For example, two regiments were quartered in Lourmarin in the winter of 1708–9 during the War of the Spanish Succession and the village was required to furnish 19 sous per day for each soldier.\textsuperscript{8}\textsuperscript{5} This was almost twice as much as a day laborer made at that time. During the 150 days while the troops were stationed in Lourmarin, the village was forced to borrow 3,500 livres at five percent interest. Before securing this loan from creditors in Aix, the village asked for and received the permission of the Intendant.\textsuperscript{8}\textsuperscript{6} Moreover, the troops returned to winter quarters in Lourmarin in 1712–13.

Expenses incurred during the fighting of the War of the Austrian Succession in 1744–47,\textsuperscript{8}\textsuperscript{7} when the Austrians advanced into Provence, were

\textsuperscript{8}\textsuperscript{3} For example, see the list of those eligible for 1733. This list of 66 persons, like other such lists, included the names of the most wealthy. \textit{A.M., D.M.}, February 22, 1733.

\textsuperscript{8}\textsuperscript{4} \textit{Ibid.}, April 25, 1753. and \textit{passim}.

\textsuperscript{8}\textsuperscript{5} \textit{Ibid.}, December 9, 1708.

\textsuperscript{8}\textsuperscript{6} \textit{Ibid.}, December 16, 1708.

\textsuperscript{8}\textsuperscript{7} For this phase of the fighting see Pierre Grillon, "L'invasion et la libération de la Provence en 1746–1747," \textit{Provence Historique}, XII (October–December, 1962), 334–62.
still the object of discussion well into the 1760's. The most direct and momentous effect of the war on Lourmarin occurred between 1744 and 1747 when several detachments were quartered in the village. Because of the actual fighting in Provence, Lourmarin had to provide men for emergency service—eight men in March, 1744, alone—plus large quantities of grain, vegetables, straw, hay, and several mules. In 1757, while reviewing Lourmarin's expenditures during this period, the council discovered that the total expenditure in goods and services amounted to the staggering sum of 123,332 livres, or about 16 times the amount collected annually for all secular taxes. Although some of the money came from communal revenues or loans, most of it was owed to individuals. Much time, energy, and money for attorneys' fees were expended before Lourmarin's claims were finally satisfied in the 1760's.

There are numerous examples of royal orders and instructions being transmitted to the village through the Intendant. More often than not these requests were for various types of information about the community and show the crown's rather broad interest in its villages. In 1723 alone, Lourmarin received three separate requests for reports on the quantity and quality of wood cut in the village since 1719, information about monasteries (there were none in Lourmarin) and details concerning the harvest, including requests for inventories of all kinds of grain, hay, and vegetables.

The crown's interest in improving agriculture in France was demonstrated in 1778 when the Intendant announced that Louis XVI had approved a plan to establish a Society of Agriculture in Provence. A number of important persons, including Seigneur Bruny, who was very interested in agricultural improvements, sponsored this association. However, it was not active and, prior to the Revolution, had no effect on agricultural conditions and practices in Lourmarin.

Occasionally the council appealed to the royal officials when they were in need of more stringent measures to deal with purely community matters. The consuls followed this procedure in 1783 when Pierre Eyssavel, wheel-

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89 Ibid., March 15, July 29, 1744, July 4, 1745, and passim.
90 Ibid., April 3, 1757.
91 Ibid., January 13, August 29, October 27, 1723.
92 A.D., Bouches-du-Rhône, C 93, fo. 253, April 18, 1778.
wright, built some sort of undescribed structure which obstructed the right-of-way of the "great road" from Cadenet to Apt, the major royal road through Lourmarin. After trying unsuccessfully to have the obstacle removed, the consuls informed the royal Procurers in Aix that they had decided "to put this business in your hands since you have more efficacious means than we do to have your orders respected and to maintain the good conduct that you want to establish." This appeal to superior authority is an indication of the growing impact of the royal presence in Lourmarin.

One can see from this discussion of Lourmarin's political organization that many people had a role in making the village function properly. There was no one "strong man" or narrow clique which made all the decisions. For the ancien régime the degree of political participation in Lourmarin is about as great as could be expected and was considerably more than occurred in some parts of France. On the other hand it was normal that the "better people" excluded the lower classes from this political structure for the very real reason that they did not have the necessary ability or interest to govern themselves. As evidenced by the dubious reception given the works of Rousseau by most of the philosophes, even eighteenth-century liberals did not want everyone to participate in government. For the Lourmarinois, education had not become the avenue to political democracy it would become for later generations. The truth is that the notables in Lourmarin probably did as good a job, if not better, in protecting the interests of the lower classes than they could have done for themselves. As will be demonstrated in a later chapter, much of the council's time was devoted to finding ways of relieving the misery of the poor. It is a tribute to many hard-working, dedicated men to say that the village administration, with its complex structure, worked reasonably well and was not altogether to blame if by the time of the Revolution many of the village's problems remained unsolved. The leaders' sensitivity to local problems, their concern for the welfare of the entire village, and their willingness to tolerate religious differences, in exchange for a united front and a local esprit de corps, are not to be disparaged. Paternalistic and oligarchial, though not narrowly so, the village government was reasonably efficient and responsive to the needs of the local population.

93 Ibid., C. 1177, October 18, 1783.