

8/X/73 ✓

My guess, based upon the discovery from Meyer's Noblesse de Bretagne that the great majority of noble succession documents ~~that~~ never entered the public record — courts or notaries — but were settled under a private seal that was not challenged & so never would enter a public court, is that the vast wealth of the aristocracy was based on rentes (pore Wappat) & other forms of wealth other than office, so that the adherence to office of great public power (Parlements, etc.) was based not upon the income but the control that they afforded. There was a clear consciousness of the wealthy/aristocratic segment that the protection of their position lay in controlling significant public office. That they held these positions by venal-hereditary means was once a mark of mobility; later, it was a device to guarantee stability. The despotic officialdom set up in this way was given a private means of controlling public policy that allowed them to ~~to~~ create an oligarchic control of the state utterly beyond the comprehension of the royal ~~to~~ teams that ~~to~~ had originally contrived venal office as a fiscal expedient. The problem lies in seeing how the ~~new~~ mentality of the new aristocracy grew up. However much it drew in personnel from the old aristocracy is not that relevant per se, for if the old adapted itself to the new, then the force of tradition is nil. The key question, perhaps, is to find out why the "new nobility" kept offices, if they weren't that profitable, after their family's noble status was secure.

When did requirements of succession become hereditary?