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The Nesles of Picardy in the Service of the Last Capetians

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

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