Note on Dates, Names, and Currency

Since the reform of the calendar in 1582 by Pope Gregory XIII, two systems of dating existed in Europe, the old and the new style. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, Catholic lands had converted to the new Gregorian system; these areas included Spain, France, both parts of the divided Netherlands (though the northern part, the Dutch Republic, was predominantly Protestant), and the Catholic states of the Empire. The Protestant powers, including the German Protestant states and England, refused to follow the reforms of the Pope and continued to use the old Julian calendar well into the eighteenth century. To make the chronology easier to follow, all the dates in the text are given in the new style, although the footnotes reflect the date as found in the document. In addition, the beginning of the calendar year has been taken as January 1, not March 25 as in the English usage.

With regard to personal names, I have chosen to employ accepted English versions if they exist, such as Henry IV of France or Archduke Albert instead of Henri IV or Erzherzog Albrecht. Otherwise I prefer to use the name as employed by the person concerned, (e.g. Johann Wilhelm, not John William). However, for convenience, their titles have been translated into English; thus Herzog Johann Wilhelm von Jülich-Kleve appears as Duke Johann Wilhelm of Jülich-Kleve in the text.

Similarly for place names, common English versions, like Cologne, The Hague, and Vienna, will be found; otherwise the name of the place as it styled itself has been used, thus Jülich, not Juliers. The names of larger geographic units pose more problems, and I have elected to use certain terms for convenience. In seventeenth century correspondence, the terms “Flanders” and “Holland” were frequently employed to refer to the southern and northern parts of the divided Netherlands, but as these terms also are names of individual provinces, they can cause confusions. Thus the term “Belgian” has been adopted to refer to the ten southern provinces which remained loyal to Spain and which became the hereditary territories of the Archdukes Albert and Isabella in 1598, and the “Dutch Republic” to refer to the seven newly independent northern provinces. Similarly, in seventeenth century diplomatic correspondence the appellation “Austria” often denoted the whole of the Habsburg hereditary lands, though Austria itself formed only a small part
of the extensive territory ruled by the Habsburg dynasty. To avoid confusion I have used the more unwieldy term Habsburg hereditary lands to denote the whole. Finally, even though Germany did not become a unified nation until the nineteenth century, the adjective German is convenient when referring to lands and rulers of the “Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation.”

Lastly, to facilitate the comparison of different currencies, approximate equivalence in Dutch guilders have been supplied, using the following rough conversions:

1 Dutch guilder = 0.096 pounds sterling  
0.48 German Talers  
0.58 Rhine guilders  
0.97 livres tournois  
0.39 escudos

**Note**