



# **Military Migration and State Formation: The British Military Community in Seventeenth-Century Sweden (Studies in War, Society, and the Military)**

*Mary Elizabeth Ailes*

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Historians have long believed that the European continent experienced a profound period of social, economic, and political crisis during the seventeenth century. This era saw the last stages of the great confessional wars; problems of a more general nature, such as economic depression and population decline, also plagued most European societies. Out of the ashes of the century's social, economic, and political dislocation arose a new political force, namely, the centralized state.

To participate in long-term warfare, expand their economies, and create strong armies, monarchs throughout Europe modernized their state apparatuses and in the process developed professional military administrations. Like other northern and eastern European countries that lacked the requisite population or resource base, Sweden relied on immigrants to supply the necessary technical skills and manpower to modernize its state apparatus and economy.

In *Military Migration and State Formation*, Mary Elizabeth Ailes focuses on British officers and their descendants in order to examine larger issues, including the role of the military in promoting elite migration, the opportunities that state building provided to elite foreigners, and the roles that immigrants played in promoting the expansion of the Swedish state. Additionally, Ailes's research demonstrates that international diplomacy did not rely solely on the negotiation of treaties and the conduct of official diplomatic visits. Foreign relations between states also developed on an informal level through the contacts that migrants maintained with their families and friends in their homelands and the social contacts they created in their new homes.

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