

Book Reviews

THE ITINERARY OF KING RICHARD III, 1483-1485. Compiled and introduced by Rhoda Edwards. Alan Sutton Publishing Limited for The Richard III Society, 1983. £2.50.

The itinerary of a late-medieval English king reflects his relationship with the capital and the institutions of government, and with the provinces of the realm. A king needed to keep in constant touch with his principal officers of state and they with the machinery of government established in London or Westminster. On the other hand, a king needed to show himself to his subjects, be feted by provincial towns and cities, and impose his personal authority on those who were unruly or in revolt. These requirements were especially demanding of a usurping king whose grip upon the crown was uncertain. In such circumstances, the result would be lengthy, rapid, even frenetic, travels from the royal residences around London to distant parts of the kingdom: it was so with Henry IV, even with Henry VI, and it was certainly so (as Ms. Edwards makes clear) with Edward IV in 1469-70, Richard III in 1483-85 and Henry VII in 1485-87.

To establish with precision the itinerary of a late-medieval English king is no easy task. Not only are the documentary materials from central government often fragmentary and those from local, private institutions even more so, but the interpretation of dating clauses is bestrewn with difficulties; for example, writs and letters from the royal chancery were frequently issued several days after the King's authorisation and they record the whereabouts of the chancellor as often as they do those of the King himself. All this is apparent to Ms. Edwards, who includes in her introduction (pp.xiv-xvi) a useful comment on the manuscript sources on which she has relied and on their value in establishing King Richard's itinerary. She draws primarily on the records of the signet and privy seal offices in the published volume of British Library Ms., Harleian 433, and in the Public Record Office (notably PSO1, C81 and the published Calendars of Patent and Close Rolls).

The result is an itinerary which is reliable and surprisingly full: rarely are the whereabouts of the King unknown for more than a continuous period of a week or ten days; and even on these occasions, reasonable inferences can be made from the evidence assembled by Ms. Edwards. Richard III spent no more than one-third of his time in or around London, at Westminster or Greenwich, in the Tower or Windsor Castle. For considerable periods he felt it necessary to travel: to the west country, the midlands and as far north as Yorkshire in traditional manner following his coronation on 6 July 1483. Thereafter, his movements were mostly dictated by threats to his kingship: he went south to Hampshire, Dorset and Devon in November 1483 after Buckingham's rebellion and rumours of an invasion by Henry Tudor; in March 1484 again to the north, which he loved and where he felt safest. Nottingham Castle was his favourite residence beyond the environs of London: its fine apartments were in a good state of repair, and both Edward

IV and Richard spent much money on a new polygonal tower and a range of bay windows facing the main courtyard of the fortress. Nottingham was at the heart of the kingdom, in easy touch with Richard's loyal northern gentry and perhaps too with his officials further south. It was from Nottingham that he set off to do battle at Bosworth Field in August 1485.

It is not without significance that Richard's two visits to Canterbury did not coincide with the feast of England's most venerated saint, Thomas Becket, and he made no effort to travel to Windsor for the feast of St. George and the garter celebrations — indeed, he left Windsor a day or two *before* 23 April in 1485! Nor during his short reign did Richard visit East Anglia (Howard country), the north-west (the Stanleys' fief) or Wales (which may have seemed too distant and too unpredictable).

Begun as an imaginative project by the Gloucester branch of The Richard III Society, Ms. Edwards's itinerary has been compiled with skill and restraint, and it will prove a useful adjunct to future scholarly study of King Richard's reign.

RALPH A. GRIFFITHS

THE 1483 GLOUCESTER CHARTER IN HISTORY. Alan Sutton (for the Gloucester City Council and the Gloucester Civic Trust), 1983. £2.25.

In order to provide historical background for its splendidly successful 'Gloucester 500' celebrations in the late summer of 1983, the city of Gloucester staged four lectures by eminent historians: Dr. N. M. Herbert, 1483: Gloucester's Livelihood in the Middle Ages; Professor R. A. Griffiths, Richard III: King or Anti-King?; Miss Susan Reynolds, 1483: Gloucester and Town Government in the Middle Ages; Mr. Peter Clark, A Poisoned Chalice? The 1483 Charter, City and County 1483-1662. The written texts of these lectures, together with a new translation (by Herbert) of The Charter of Richard III to Gloucester, Granted by Letters Patent 2 September 1483, make up this nicely produced paperback volume.

Gloucester, with a population of some 3-3,500, ranked among the top twenty boroughs in England at the close of the Middle Ages, occupied an important strategic position commanding the first easy crossing point above the Severn estuary, and served as a staging-post for travellers from Wales to London or the Midlands to Bristol. As Herbert points out, it had at least ten inns by 1455 (notably the New Inn in Northgate Street), regularly served as a venue for all manner of royal commissions and inquisitions, and functioned both as a river port and a market centre. Although very much overshadowed by Bristol as a port for overseas trade, it had considerable significance as a distributor of goods to lesser communities within its hinterland, as well as producing a range of manufactured goods (notably iron, cloth and leather) in its own right. Gloucester's prosperity or otherwise in the fifteenth century is very difficult to estimate, however, mainly because of a regrettable lack of documentation: Herbert concludes, on the basis of frequent (if by no means unusual) complaints to central government about its poverty, the reduced number of enfranchised traders and the growing incidence of lapsed rents

from communal property in the town, that it *did* experience an economic slump during the later fifteenth century (albeit less serious than the townsfolk themselves were apt to suggest); Clark, by contrast, believes that, despite complaints of decay, Gloucester was tolerably prosperous at the end of the medieval period (particularly when compared with clearly declining centres like York, Oxford and Coventry).

Reynolds, in a well-informed if tedious survey of Gloucester's government in the Middle Ages, explains how, thanks to charters from Henry II, Richard I and John, the town achieved a measure of self-government in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, with the main administrative burden naturally falling on richer and more powerful members of the community. During the fifteenth century, she sees Gloucester's leaders engaging in all manner of apparently public-spirited activities (like repairing walls and paving streets), and concludes that civic government was 'reasonably harmonious and efficient in the years leading up to 1483'.

The 1483 charter, granted shortly after Richard III visited Gloucester, both confirmed existing privileges and granted new ones. No doubt the burgesses were primarily concerned to secure a reduction in the town's fee-farm, and the King, anxious to consolidate his position, obliged by cutting it from £65 to £20 in recognition of 'the good and faithful actions of the bailiffs and burgesses in causes of particular importance to us'. The charter also established a new framework for civic government, on the London model, and gave the borough enhanced status and wealth as 'the county of the town of Gloucester' (by giving it jurisdiction over a substantial tract of surrounding countryside). Yet, as Clark convincingly argues, the charter proved something of a 'poisoned chalice' during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries: not only did it result in the growing power of a 'narrow magisterial caucus' in the town (or city, as it became, in the usage of the time, when the former abbey of St. Peter's became a cathedral in 1541), but also provided a basis for increasingly poor relations with neighbouring country gentry resentful of urban oligarchical authority. Gloucester's firm commitment to Parliament during the English Revolution, however, ensured a reversal of this situation after the Restoration (when the city lost control of the inshire).

All four lectures include some reference to Richard III in connection with the charter: Reynolds, for instance, remarks that, by September 1483, the new King was 'effusively grateful for support from anywhere'; while Clark, in similar vein, comments on Richard's 'lavish distribution of political favours' and sees the charter as essentially a product of the 'short-term pressures of political expediency'. Only Griffiths, emerging from many years grappling with England's most ineffective King (Henry VI), has the opportunity to *centre* his attention on the altogether more capable Richard III (and he does so with considerable gusto in the liveliest paper in the collection). Griffiths is no Ricardian: his Richard III is an 'ambitious overmighty magnate' who, despite his prestigious role as sole royal uncle and Protector of the realm, seized his nephew's throne, probably murdered him and his younger brother in the Tower, and, as a result, sowed the fatal seeds for the Yorkist monarchy's destruction. Griffiths is impressed by Thomas Langton's much quoted letter to his friend the Prior of Christ Church (and

similar evidence) suggesting that the King has received less than justice for his care in handling even the most humble of his subjects; also, he gives more credence than usual to John Rous's pre-Tudor portrait of Richard as a man who 'ruled his subjects in his realm full commendably, punishing offenders by his laws, especially extortioners and oppressors of the commons' and thereby 'got great thank of God and love of his subjects, rich and poor, and great praise of the people of all other lands about him'. Even so, Griffiths concludes, 'no amount of sound government and laudable instincts as a ruler could remove the fundamentally damaging fact that on no reasonable ground . . . ought Richard to have been king'. Clearly, such a verdict must remain contentious to say the least.

K. R. DOCKRAY

ENGLAND, FRANCE AND BURGUNDY IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY, C. A. J. Armstrong, 1983. Hambledon Press, 35 Gloucester Avenue, London NW1 7AX, £24. Price to Members, £15, direct from the publishers.

Since the publication of his edition of Dominic Mancini's *The Usurpation of Richard III* in 1936, Mr. Armstrong has been one of the leading contributors to our understanding of the fifteenth century. This volume consists of a compilation of all his articles (fifteen, of which five are in French), and stands as a major tribute to the author's insight and scholarship. A number of pieces, rescued from relatively obscure sources, are now made more available and refreshingly the contents of the book have been updated by Mr. Armstrong where necessary. A brief but succinct introduction draws together the various and wide-ranging topics.

Six articles are directly concerned with English history of the later fifteenth century. The volume commences with the magisterial discussion of 'Politics and the Battle of St. Albans', a seventy-two page reconstruction of events leading up to the outbreak of civil war in 1455. Both the quality of the research and the handling of chronicle evidence are quite outstanding, and over twenty years after its original publication, the two recent biographies of Henry VI still firmly acknowledge its authority. An important piece on 'The Inauguration Ceremonies of the Yorkist Kings' draws on a more limited range of sources, and the rather brief description of the coronation of Richard III (mainly from the *Great Chronicle*) has been overtaken by the impressive collection of manuscript material brought together by Anne F. Sutton and P. W. Hammond.

After a useful survey of the speed of news during the Wars of the Roses more diverse themes are introduced. The perceptive and thorough account of the personal piety of Cicely, Duchess of York, has a far wider significance than the title might suggest. Similarly, the apparently rather obscure piece on William Parron, the court astrologer of Henry VII, is also of considerable value. Whether the fortunate conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter really assisted Henry at Bosworth must remain a matter for esoteric speculation. But Parron's notable silence concerning the exact fate of Edward IV's sons is of more substantial interest. His astrological treatise, dedicated to Henry VII in 1499, contained a chapter on the children entitled '*De Innocentibus*' (at the

time when the second continuator of *The Great Chronicle* was inserting 'Innocentes' and 'Mors Innocentium' against the passages referring to Edward V and his brother). However, while professing a belief that they had been dead for over fourteen years (i.e. before Henry's succession), Parron refrained from attacking Richard by name. This was almost certainly a reflection of the official policy of silence on the matter. Mr. Armstrong himself (in his second edition of Mancini) believed that Henry felt that publication of the murder would damage the prestige and standing of the English crown abroad; a lack of reliable information about the precise details of the children's fate may also have been a contributing factor.

After a brief piece concerning the thirteenth-century origins of the abbey of Faversham (the only item that does not fall readily within the scope of the compilation's title) and an interesting account of one of Sir John Fastolf's French law suits (an area of work supplemented by Armstrong and Allmand's recent edition of *Parlement* cases), the emphasis shifts to fifteenth-century Burgundy. Much of the material here is in French, including a massive 104-page survey of the marriage policy of the Burgundian Dukes. Interestingly both this and another article on the Double Monarchy raise major questions about the Anglo-Burgundian alliance, so vital for the prospects of English-occupied France. Significantly, from 1425 onwards the marriages arranged by Philip of Burgundy were either suspect or directly against English interests. This section of the book also contains much of value concerning cultural contacts between England and Burgundy during the 1460s and 1470s, highlighting among other things the literary and artistic appreciation of William Lord Hastings. Further articles on Ducal policy towards the nobility, the Order of the Golden Fleece and the language question in the Low Countries emphasise Mr. Armstrong's mastery in this field.

Overall this is a substantial volume, reproduced with a minimum of typographical errors. In the author's own words the fifteenth century had remained a 'much neglected area of study' until only recently. The present collection represents a considerable achievement that has played an important part in redressing the balance.

M. K. JONES

THE COMMON LAWYERS OF PRE-REFORMATION ENGLAND. THOMAS KEBELL: A CASE STUDY. By E. W. Ives, Cambridge Studies in Legal History. 1983. Cambridge University Press, £40.

This is a book about people, as the cover blurb says. The career of Thomas Kebell of Leicestershire from c. 1439 to his death in 1500 provides the framework of a study that covers all the activities of the common lawyers of his day from their education at the Inns, their pronouncements in the courts, to their death-bed pieties, as well as broader issues affecting the operation of the law. Kebell's well documented career is constantly companioned by those of his fellows, among them Thomas Bryan, William Jenney, the Catesbys and Roger Townshend. Kebell's first public office was attorney general of the Duchy of Lancaster in May 1483 on the dismissal of Richard Empson (who

regained the post after Bosworth). Ives convincingly explains this change in the terms of patronage: Empson was an associate of Lord Rivers, Kebell one of Lord Hastings. Later Kebell's personal standing was to ensure his safe passage over the crisis of Bosworth to become a serjeant at law in 1485. He had maintained his connection with Hastings' family during Richard III's reign and was safe both from dismissal and execution unlike Kidwelly and Catesby. As a serjeant Kebell amassed a fortune and established a family of country gentlemen in Leicestershire by the acquisition of land, the gilt edged, gentile investment. Unfortunately for Kebell's purchases, and despite three wives, his male descendants had failed by 1571. Kebell's legal career is rounded out by his will and the inventory of his great house which shows him to have been a pious man owning a substantial library, many flocks of sheep and a fine display of plate. His personality is partially retrieved by Ives' detailed analysis of his legal arguments recorded in the Year Books. Kebell was assertive, confident, impudent and loved to hear the sound of his own voice. Well read and well versed in Latin, French and English, he was capable of fine grammatical distinctions in his arguments. He was an enthusiast for the law he practised and respected by his fellows.

Two important chapters deal with the crown's special relationship to the law. The lawyers were the crown's servants, they obediently served its interests even as they guarded the King's position as the fount of justice. Yet the King had to 'fight' for his rights in the courts like his subjects and might resort to labouring juries, like them, to get his way. It was a period that saw considerable reinterpretation of the law for the crown as over Humphrey Stafford and the right to sanctuary or the long battle over the King's feudal dues. The lawyers acted as required but within the correct procedures of the law. The complexity of their relationship is admirably indicated to the benefit of both parties as well as to that of the twentieth century political historian of the period who so often ignores the work of legal historians.

The author goes beyond the old lines of debate on the reception of the civil law in England, discounting any idea of conflict and preferring a more mundane and recognisably 'true' perspective of a single, unified legal profession operating both common law and equity together. Equity acted as a useful corrective to the procedural inadequacies of the common law. The lawyers generally accepted the notion that wrongs should be put right, if not by the common law, then by equity; they were aware of the problems and willing to question and to change. A chapter is devoted to the 'changing community' as exemplified in the law. Clients who had to be satisfied, the Inns where new ideas could be tested out, gossip and rivalry, all encouraged lively experiment as did the fluid, intimate court debates on cases in the cramped surroundings of Westminster Hall.

Ives covers all possible aspects of the common law during his period but only some can be briefly noted here. The development of the teaching role of the Inns, Kebell being among the first generation which benefited and one of those devoted to the continuing of that tradition. How a legal practice was built up from administrative work for lords, cities, the church and corporations as well as litigation. Kebell numbered the Lords Hastings, the Marquis of Dorset, the Willoughbys as well as the Catesbys among his

employers. The fees and rewards a lawyer might expect are assessed and the chances of promotion to the ranks of the serjeants and the judges, as well as the high quality and morality of the men who were so promoted. Corruption there was, but Ives finds it rarely among the judiciary of the period. The lawyers might alarmingly exploit the technicalities of the law for their clients but rarely did they allow sleight of hand to go undetected or unrebuked.

Ives' lawyers are recognisable people, not those strange, disembodied 'men of their time' loved by so many political historians of the period. There is only one brief lapse from this reality when the author repeats the old myth of Sir John Markham's dismissal from the bench by Edward IV despite Sir John's resignation 'by his desire and special requeste' on the grounds of 'his grete age and debilitie' (*Guildhall Studies in London History*, vol. 3, 1978, p.90). Ives' clarity of exposition makes the book generally a most enjoyable recreation of an ubiquitous group of men who had, he is convinced, job satisfaction, variety, rich rewards and 'glamour' in their profession. It is an essential book to understanding the period, as all Ives' earlier articles have led us to expect, and an example of what a fifteenth century 'biography' can be.

There is an extensive bibliography, though strangely it does not include the complete edition of *Harleian MS. 433* although it is quoted via other printed sources. Footnotes are agreeably at the bottom of the page and there is an appendix of biographies of the serjeants at law who were Kebell's contemporaries.

ANNE F. SUTTON

THE HASTINGS HOURS: A FIFTEENTH CENTURY FLEMISH BOOK OF HOURS MADE FOR WILLIAM LORD HASTINGS. Preface and Commentary by D. H. Turner. Thames and Hudson, £25.

Medieval books of hours form the largest single category of illuminated manuscripts still in existence. In the middle ages the Hours meant less exact sections of the day apportioned for business or religious duties; canonical hours were merely established rules set up by the christian church for the recital of certain prayers and devotions at particular times of the day. It was inevitable that devout laity, wishing to copy the clergy's example, would commission their own personal prayer books in order to follow the church's programme of daily devotion. Books were a means of revealing God's purpose and could help man to know and worship his creator. The most important books were those that set out the liturgy of the church — the missal, which included the text for the celebration of the mass, and the breviary, which was the divine office of prayers and hymns sung by the religious at the canonical hours. The latter contains the whole text of the divine office and, in addition, includes a short service in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It was this 'Little Office of Our Lady' which was to become the staple source of the books of hours. Passed from the monks to the clergy to the laity, this office became the favourite prayer manual of the latter everywhere. By the thirteenth century it had been detached from the main psalter and set up as a prayer book in its own right. Apparently the

earliest known example of a separate book of hours in the English tongue is the mid thirteenth century Hours of the Sarum Use.

No two books of hours were alike, but they invariably begin with a calendar, to indicate the days for celebrating the feasts of the church and of its saints. This was followed by the Gospel sequences and the prayers to the Virgin and, the most important section, the Hours of the Virgin. The Hours of the Cross and the Hours of the Holy Spirit usually came next, then the Seven Penitential Psalms. The Litany — the cry for help —; the Office of the Dead, which filled a deep need in medieval man's heart; and, finally, the invocation of the Saints completed the contents.

Making up a book of hours was no easy task — vellum sheets had to be assembled and ruled with horizontal and vertical lines; then the scribe carefully copied out the letters leaving spaces for the main initials and the miniatures. Then the miniaturist added colour decoration to the initials and the borders; finally the artist painted the miniatures, drawing the outline before laying on the gold leaf, followed by the colour — usually red and blue, but also green, yellow and pink. The result was a valuable work of art and a prized possession and all literate people aspired to own one of these personal and often personalised prayer books. From the study of medieval wills and inventories, it is obvious, from the careful instructions left by the deceased owner, that they were indeed precious objects. Many rich people owned more than one; many surviving books of hours contain details of family births and deaths in them; others have pilgrims' badges sewn into them; still others served therapeutic purposes, one Spanish book containing an invocation against bed bugs! Surprisingly, the invention and more widespread use of printing, rather than destroying this particular art form, increased the vogue for books of hours.

The Hastings Hours is the earliest known example of the Ghent-Bruges illumination school and its publication serves two useful purposes: 'knowledge of it is vital for appreciation of the Ghent-Bruges school of Flemish manuscript illumination, and beyond that of early Netherlandish painting in general' and as an historical document it is fascinating because of its 'association with the England of the Wars of the Roses' (Turner). One of the intriguing facts about the book is that nothing is known of its previous history until it was purchased by C. W. Dyson Perrins (of the Worcester Sauce fame) from the booksellers Bernard Quaritch on 3 January 1910 for £2,000. It was subsequently bequeathed by his widow on her death in 1968 to the British Museum.

It has now been reproduced by Thames and Hudson from the Additional MS. 54782 in the Department of Manuscripts, the Reference Division of the British Library. It measures seven by five inches and is attractively presented in a stout slip-in box and the quality of reproduction is superb. Although the typesetting is by a British firm, the colour origination and printing was done in Switzerland and the book was bound in the Netherlands. The production of the plates is uniformly excellent, the colour being remarkably faithful to the original and the quality of paper used is first-class. The lay-out of the accompanying text is clear and there is a most valuable and informative commentary by D. H. Turner.

There are twenty pages on the life and times of William, Lord Hastings, where the author comments that 'the traditional view of Richard III has been disputed, but the facts of Hastings' death are not in doubt' and comes down clearly on the side of the traditional date of Friday 13 June, for the beheading. Hastings is seen as a counterforce to the Earl of Warwick and is employed both as a soldier and a diplomat by Edward IV. On the latter's death, Hastings' 'loyalty to the memory of Edward IV was unwavering . . . (he) . . . was the potential kingmaker . . . too late he discovered the true foe and tried to make peace with the queen . . . to the calculating man who was Richard III, Hastings' death was a political expediency.' It is a pity that Turner gives no references at all for his information in this section. There follow twelve very important pages on The Hastings Hours, with a detailed exposition as to why Hastings should be regarded as the patron and owner of the book. In four folios there is clear evidence, where the family's arms of the 'manche' or sleeve appear: in f.13 where it is surrounded by the Garter and surmounted by a helmet and mantling and the Hastings' crest; in f.74 & f.151 where the arms are merely surrounded by the Garter; and, in f.184, the most interesting, where the arms have been incorporated into the miniature of a funeral scene. The Hastings' arms appear on one of four banners, and also on a row of shields on a black hanging attached to a chandelier. There then follows eight pages on the scribes and illuminators of the Hastings Hours, where Turner firmly advances the view that the miniatures, 'even if they are due to one master and one or more assistants, . . . are due to one artistic personality'.

Inevitably, though, the book will be bought for the beautiful reproduction of the seventy-eight plates or folios. A brilliant technique of depth is used by the illuminators, in which the sense of perspective is excellent and the right degree of balance is maintained. The figures appear to move through the accompanying landscape. Turner rightly draws attention to the particularly striking depiction of water, 'which appears limpid with clear reflections', seen, for example, in f.48b, the Memorial of St. Christopher. The homage to the infant Christ in the Memorial of the Three Kings (f.42b); the gruesome murder of Becket in the Memorial of St. Thomas Becket (f.55b); the tenderness of the Blessed Virgin Mary (f.59b); and the sombre note of the Vigils of the Dead (f.184b) are all depicted with skill and sympathy. There is commentary on thirty-eight of the plates.

There are a few printing errors — or spelling mistakes; occasionally a sentence jars, ('William, Baron Hastings, for whom appears to have been made the book of hours'); and the price is daunting! However, to the enthusiast, it is a truly beautifully produced work: 'Lord Hastings himself was perhaps more a man of the middle ages than of the Renaissance, and it is a world in transition that looks out at us from the pages of the Hastings Hours, a world that was striving to reconcile tradition, invention, decorative art and art for art's sake'. In the middle ages books of hours were regarded as valuable possessions — Thames and Hudson can be proud of this twentieth century replica.

KENNETH HILLIER

THE TRANSFORMATION OF MEDIEVAL ENGLAND 1370-1529. J. A. F. Thomson. 1983. Longmans, hardback £14.95, paperback £7.95.

It is some years since a new textbook has been produced and this in spite of an enormous amount of research culminating in revisions of many aspects of late medieval English society and politics. As a fresh and long overdue synthesis of such research J. A. F. Thomson's book is most welcome and will be valuable to students and teachers alike.

One in a new general series 'The Foundations of Modern Britain' this volume both presents and represents the new approach to historical analysis. The straightforward political narrative has been in part replaced by an examination of major themes and, more important, the author has disregarded those positively legendary dates — notably 1485 — which have for so long been an arbitrary and largely meaningless demarcation, accepted generally for little other reason than commonness of usage. It is high time that 1485 was more widely acknowledged as the year of yet another change of dynasty and not of some supposed revolution which marked the end of one age and the beginning of another. In stopping short of the Reformation Parliament and the Break with Rome Dr. Thomson recognises the approach of a crisis which deserves far more recognition as the end of an era.

The volume begins and ends on the verge of a crisis. The renewal of the hundred years war in 1370 heralded in a long period of military stalemate and defeats; the glorious Edward III was prematurely senile bringing political instability; and the minority of Richard II, exacerbating the latter, saw also, the start of widespread social unrest. The changes brought about by the establishment of the English church and the dissolution represented a drastic upheaval in the political and social life of England. The two crises, however, were separated by one and a half centuries of growth and change. Some problems remained unsolved, notably, as Dr. Thomson is at pains to emphasise, the succession to the throne. This was as much a problem in the late fourteenth century as it was for Henry VIII. The England of 1530, however, was very different from that of 1370 and in his Epilogue the author has carefully outlined the major aspects of the transition. The England which had been so involved in Europe was growing more insular; the producer of wool was now a producer of cloth; government was passing from the hands of the cleric to the literate layman; and magnate power underwent very marked changes leaving a more stable and dominant monarchy.

Dr. Thomson's thematic approach confronts immediately several major aspects of the medieval period — population, towns, social mobility, retaining and the various social classes, thus approaching the age in broader terms, encouraging familiarity with the wider issues, before tackling the political detail. England's growing self-awareness is the subject of one of these early chapters, Dr. Thomson boldly tackling, in a brief but excellent survey, the controversial question of nationalism.

The politics of the period are the subject of a comparatively short section comprising concise chapters (a general characteristic of the whole volume) presenting the most up-to-date research, together with the author's own views. They are easy to absorb and interesting to read. Ricardians will already

be familiar with Dr. Thomson's two notable articles, particularly on the issue of Richard III and William Lord Hastings, upon which he has openly changed his mind. His assessment of Richard's reign cuts through or ignores much of the myth to present an excellent analysis of the reign. He sees Richard as ultimately responsible for the fate of his nephews but keeps the event in proportion with other major events of the reign. In treating of it in a chapter on the establishment of the Tudors Dr. Thomson shows the latter to be a natural continuation of the story of fifteenth century political developments.

Dr. Thomson ends as he begins — thematically — tackling these two major stumbling blocks for students, the government and the church. Both sections have the merit of combining a portrayal in depth with clarity. In closing on the ecclesiastical matter the author presents lollardy and heresy in the fourteenth century as the first stage in religious change and stops short of the profoundest piece of church history in English annals.

The entire volume is exceptionally well arranged for convenient use with basic information provided in 'frameworks' of events chronologically presented and an extensive series of appendices comprising tables, maps and genealogies. It is to be hoped that it will replace some of the older textbooks and their myths.

ROWENA E. ARCHER

SANDAL CASTLE EXCAVATIONS 1964-1973. P. Mayes and L. A. S. Butler. Edited by Shirley Johnson. 1983. Wakefield Historical Publications, £25.

Readers of the Society's Bulletin may recall an advertisement in the March 1981 issue for this volume which was then due for immediate publication. Various difficulties led to a two year delay, but the waiting has been worthwhile. The advertisement may have been a little presumptuous in claiming the volume to be the most detailed report on any castle excavation in Europe, (cf. the Society of Antiquaries volumes on Portchester and the Royal Archaeological Institute's planned multi-volume work on Hen Domen) but *Sandal Castle Excavations* will remain an outstandingly comprehensive work by even the most rigorous of standards. Indeed at 372 pages it is even larger than was envisaged in 1981.

As one would expect, the greater part of the book is devoted to expert reports on specialist matters, by far the largest contribution being chapter three on pottery and vessel glass (pp.83 to 230). Most of us however would probably use only the first two chapters, on the history and the excavation of the castle. The first chapter includes, as an appendix (pp.18-19), seven abstracts and transcripts from BL Harleian MS. 433 which record the provision for an income of 2000 marks for the King's household at Sandal, which was to be established there from July 1484 to September 1485. As we know, King Richard also ordered certain building work and in spite of the brevity of his reign, particular features of the castle can still be attributed to this period. This is more a matter of history than archaeology of course, but what is especially helpful is that it is now clear from the excavation work, that King Richard's work apart, Sandal Castle is primarily a castle built c.

1240-1270 and is to be seen as grouped with contemporary castles, such as Henry III's York. Sandal can perhaps also be compared, certainly in the case of the donjon, with another Warenne castle at Lewes in Sussex which, like Sandal, is a circular construction with two slender towers on the circumference, facing the field, on the side unenclosed by the bailey wall, all built on a motte. This is rather interesting as it is not so common a feature of English keeps and suggests the Warenne lords perhaps had their own views on castle design — an admittedly tenuous thought that may have occurred to Mayes and Butler.

The book is very adequately endowed with diagrams on every other page, but has only one photograph, as a frontispiece. A large number of photographs would not necessarily have been of much value, given the abundance of diagrams, but perhaps an overall aerial picture would have been wise.

The excavations prove that Sandal was a big castle, possibly not in the same league as its neighbour at Pontefract, but large and impressive all the same, and the archaeologists are to be congratulated on having brought it more fully to our attention than before.

JAMES PETRE

Notices of Books and Articles

The following list consists of recent books and articles, mainly published in the last twelve months, although earlier publications may be included. The appearance of an item in this list does not preclude its subsequent review. Items marked by an asterisk are in the Society's Library.

BOOKS

Christine de Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies*. Translated by Earl Jeffrey Richards. Foreword by Marina Warner. 281 pages. Illustrated. 1982. Persea Books, New York, \$17.95.

One of the most popular of fifteenth century authors, writing in this instance in defence of women. Translated into English for the first time. Strikingly 'modern' in argument.

Pauline Routh and Richard Knowles, *The Medieval Monuments of Harewood*. 112 pages. Illustrated. 1983. Wakefield Historical Publications, volume 14. £5.40.*

Account of the six medieval alabaster monuments in Harewood Church, Yorkshire, including Edward Redman, esquire of the body to Richard III. Copiously illustrated with photographs and line drawings.

1240-1270 and is to be seen as grouped with contemporary castles, such as Henry III's York. Sandal can perhaps also be compared, certainly in the case of the donjon, with another Warenne castle at Lewes in Sussex which, like Sandal, is a circular construction with two slender towers on the circumference, facing the field, on the side unenclosed by the bailey wall, all built on a motte. This is rather interesting as it is not so common a feature of English keeps and suggests the Warenne lords perhaps had their own views on castle design — an admittedly tenuous thought that may have occurred to Mayes and Butler.

The book is very adequately endowed with diagrams on every other page, but has only one photograph, as a frontispiece. A large number of photographs would not necessarily have been of much value, given the abundance of diagrams, but perhaps an overall aerial picture would have been wise.

The excavations prove that Sandal was a big castle, possibly not in the same league as its neighbour at Pontefract, but large and impressive all the same, and the archaeologists are to be congratulated on having brought it more fully to our attention than before.

JAMES PETRE

Notices of Books and Articles

The following list consists of recent books and articles, mainly published in the last twelve months, although earlier publications may be included. The appearance of an item in this list does not preclude its subsequent review. Items marked by an asterisk are in the Society's Library.

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ARTICLES

M. A. Hicks, *Restraint, Mediation and Private Justice: George Duke of Clarence as 'good lord'*, *Journal of Legal History*, volume 4 no. 2, September 1983, pages 56-71.*

The Duke of Clarence as an arbitrator in disputes and supporter of his retainers' just causes.

Derek Keene, *The Medieval Urban Environment in Documentary Records*, *Archives*, volume 16, number 70, October 1983, pages 137-144.

A medieval town can be reconstructed both in plan and in the vertical from surviving records, presenting a composite picture of what it looked, smelt and felt like to live in such an environment. Winchester and central London are the main areas studied by the author.

H.-J. Nimtz, *Geboren mit vollständigem Gebiss*, with accompanying gloss headed *Richard der Gute* in the *Frankfurter Neue Presse*, 5 August 1983, page 5.*

The article gives a brief resumé of the Ricardian controversy with emphasis on the role of the Richard III Society, but in the gloss agrees with the sympathetic conclusions of Kendall and Andreas Kalokhoff. A letter replying to the article from Society member Fran Rita Diefenhardt-Schmitt appeared on 10 August 1983, and further correspondence in translation is in the Society Library.

Notes on Contributors

Rowena Archer is currently working on late medieval English history for a D.Phil. at Oxford.

Doreen Court did research in organic chemistry and now teaches. She is interested in the attitudes towards Richard III of non-British chroniclers and historians.

Keith R. Dockray. Member of the Society. Senior Lecturer in History at the Polytechnic, Huddersfield.

Ralph A. Griffiths. Professor of Medieval History, University College Swansea, University of Wales.

Kenneth Hillier. A member since 1973. B.A. Hons. (University College, London); Head of History at Ashby Grammar School, Ashby-de-la-Zouch. His particular interests are the Buckingham Rebellion and William, Lord Hastings.

Geoffrey Hodges. A member of the Society. Scholar of Eton and King's College, Cambridge. Assistant master at John Beddoes School, Presteigne, Radnorshire.

M. K. Jones finished his Ph.D. thesis on 'The Beaufort Family and the War in France' in 1982. He is at present a lecturer in Renaissance and Early Modern History at Bristol Polytechnic.

James O. Petre. A member since 1967; B.A. (Wales), M.A. (London), his particular interest is the later medieval castle on which he hopes to complete a doctoral thesis.

Pauline Routh. A Yorkshire member whose particular interest is ecclesiology and pre-Reformation tombs and monuments. Her publications include *Medieval Effigial Alabaster Tombs in Yorkshire* (1976).

Joanne C. Stone. A member since 1975. At present a third year History and English student, writing a dissertation on Shakespeare's dramatic use of sources in *Richard III*.

Retha M. Warnicke. Associate Professor of History, Arizona State University, Tempe. She has a Harvard Ph.D. and is the author of *Women of the English Renaissance and Reformation* and several other publications on fifteenth and sixteenth century England.

Barrie Williams. Chaplain of St. Edward's Church, Cambridge, and Assistant Chaplain of Trinity Hall. Author of *The Subscription Book of Bishops Tounson and Davenant*, *The Franciscan Revival* and *Archbishop John Williams*.

Contributions to the Ricardian

These are welcomed from all members on any subject relevant to the aims of the Society. These may be illustrated by photographs (glossy prints showing good contrast) or by line drawings. All contributions, including advertisements and letters, must be typewritten, with double spacing and adequate margins, on one side of the paper only. Permission must be obtained for the use of copyright material, but this is not usually necessary for short quotes. References and footnotes must be given in one sequence at the end of the article. They must take the form of the following examples:

J. H. Ramsey, *Lancaster and York*, vol. 2 (Cambridge 1892), pp.485-6.

B. P. Wolffe, When and why did Hastings lose his head? *English Historical Review*, vol. 89 (1974), pp.835-844.

Details need not be given in full for second and subsequent references to the same source.

Contributions for the June 1984 *Ricardian* must reach Anne Sutton, 17 Enfield Cloisters, Fanshaw Street, London N1 6LD, before March 31. This does not apply to articles which should be sent well in advance and can be sent at any time.

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For reliable, inexpensive Genealogical Research consult: Patricia Berner, 8 Rooks Meadow, Hagley, Stourbridge DY9 0PT. Documents transcribed. Ancestral locations photographed. S.a.e. appreciated.

Now under Ricardian ownership — Hilgrove Books, 22 Hilgrove Street, St. Helier, Jersey, Channel Islands. New and secondhand books, maps and prints, has excellent secondhand booksearch service. Please contact Mrs. Susan Pike.

Some one some where must have a copy of the book *Edward of Middleham*. Please try and find it for fellow Ricardian living in South Africa, D. R. W. Barber, P.O. Box 90, Rivonia, South Africa 2128.