

Research Notes and Queries

Ricardians propose, historians dispose

Livia Visser-Fuchs writes:—

Edward of Lancaster is dead. Some Ricardians are foolish enough to keep *wondering how* he died, but more foolish perhaps are those who think they *know* and Charles Samaran, the French editor of Thomas Basin's *History of Louis XI* (3 vols., Paris 1963-72) is clearly one of the latter:

About 1475 Basin translated the story of Edward IV's return to England, the so-called 'short version of the *Arrivall*', from French into Latin and wrote (I translate from the Latin): 'In this battle [of Tewkesbury] perished the abovenamed Edward, called Prince of Wales; John, brother of the Duke of Somerset, called Marquis of Dorset; the Earl of Devonshire and many other knights and nobles'.

Five hundred years later Samaran in a footnote (vol. 2, p.83, n. 2) blandly assures us (I translate from the French): 'The Prince of Wales was assassinated under the eyes of Edward IV after the battle', and his reference for this statement are the memoirs of Philippe de Commines in the edition of J. Calmette (Paris 1924, vol. 1, p.216 and notes). This is a curious reference since neither Commines nor his editor describe young Edward's death as occurring after the battle!

(In fairness I should perhaps add that the continental rumour of Edward of Lancaster's murder is very early (c.1472-3) and that one historian's lapse does not prove or disprove anything).

Richard III's serjeant tailor, Henry Davy

Henry Davy replaced George Lovekyn in the office of King's tailor on 28 September 1483, possibly because George had become involved in the treason leading up to the rebellions of Autumn 1483. George's wife, Jane, was a sister of William Pawne, servant of John Cheyne, master of Edward IV's horse and one of the ring-leaders of the rebellion. He regained his office under Henry VII. It now appears that Henry Davy's career followed a

similar pattern to that of his predecessor, though not with such a happy conclusion. He became involved in treason to his own master's supplanter and died a traitor's death as a 'tailor of London' in 1489 with other rebels. (John Leland, *De Rebus Britannicis Collectanea*, ed. Thomas Hearne, London 1774, vol. 4, p.257. Other London chronicles such as Vitellius A XVI and Stow's *Annals* do not refer to Henry Davy's death.) This was apparently despite a general pardon in December 1488 or for new offences committed since the pardon. The office of tailor was one involving personal service and contact with the King and perhaps as a consequence inclined the owner of the office to manifestations of loyalty.

For other details about Lovekyn see A. F. Sutton, George Lovekyn, tailor to Kings 1470-1504, *Costume* vol. 15 (1981). Lovekyn may also be found acting with Sir John Cheyne in support of his brother-in-law's purchase of the manor of Chyvershall, Essex, in 14 Henry VII (1498-9), (M. Fitch, ed., *Essex Feet of Fines*, vol. 4, 1423-1547, Essex Archaeological Society, 1964, p.101). For Davy see A. F. Sutton and P. W. Hammond (eds.), *The Coronation of Richard III*, Gloucester 1983, pp.332-3. — The Editor.

Book Reviews

FIFTEENTH-CENTURY STUDIES: RECENT ESSAYS. Edited by Robert F. Yeager. Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1984. Distributed by Clio Distribution Services, Oxford, England. £45.00.

One comes to any collection of essays with some expectation of variety of contents and also, inevitably, of variation in the quality of contributions. This collection of *Fifteenth-Century Studies* happily has a real coherence of subject-matter and a high level of authority in tackling the different topics.

At first sight the book looks as if it may be more mixed than this. The three sections into which it is divided — 'Reviews of Scholarship', 'Language and Paleography', 'Literary Criticism' — may appear, in theory, to have the virtue of comprehensiveness, but possibly, in fact, to offer too varied a set of approaches in a single volume. In practice the mixture works well, topics treated from one point of view in one section re-emerging in often a very different light in another. And so, for instance, the reviews of current and past scholarship in studies of Lydgate, Hoccleve, Henryson, and Dunbar in Part One, by Edwards, Mitchell, Fradenburg and Ridley respectively, have a critical counterpoint in essays on these poets in Part Three by Benson, Burrow, Fox, Reiss, and Spearing. It has to be said that there are a very few cases in which such essays on the same topic in