

Book Reviews

RENAISSANCE ESSAYS. Denys Hay. 1988. Hambledon Press, London and Ronceverte, £26.

DENYS HAY is perhaps the most distinguished post-war British historian of the Italian Renaissance, its historiography and impact north of the Alps. Yet, as he remarks in a revealing preface to this reprint of twenty-one of his articles (some never before rendered in English and ranging in date from 1951 to 1985), as an undergraduate he was forcibly discouraged by his Oxford tutor V. H. Galbraith from studying the Renaissance at all on the grounds that such an option was suitable only for girls! Fortunately, Galbraith eventually relented and suggested the postgraduate Hay take on Polydore Vergil as a research topic: the result was the splendid 1950 edition of the *Anglica Historia 1485-1537* (the introduction to which is certainly as worthy of reprinting as some of the essays in this volume) and, in 1952, a definitive study of *Polydore Vergil: Renaissance Historian and Man of Letters*. The range of his work since has certainly been striking: there are pieces here on religious history (notably 'The Church of England in the Later Middle Ages' and 'Religion North and South: Christendom and the Alps on the Eve of the Reformation'), the impact of warfare ('Booty and Border Warfare' and 'The Division of the Spoils of War in Fourteenth-Century England') and the importance of boundaries in history ('Italy and Barbarian Europe' and 'England, Scotland and Europe: the Problem of the Frontier'). Nevertheless, it is the historiography and impact of the Italian Renaissance that has fired his enthusiasm most frequently and most productively.

Great historians of the Renaissance figure again and again in these pages: Hans Baron (most notably in 'The Place of Hans Baron in Renaissance Historiography'), Paul Kristeller, Eugenio Garin and, of course, Jacob Burckhardt (whose classic study of the *Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy* Hay admits to reading 'at first with devotion', re-reading 'in fury' and finally accepting 'for its seminal character'). So do the men whose lives and scholarship made the Renaissance what it was: Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarch, Bruni, Castiglione, Guicciardini and Machiavelli, not to mention 'the first medieval historian' Flavio Biondo (who is the subject of one of the most stimulating essays in the collection, 'Flavio Biondo and the Middle Ages'). Education is a recurrent theme, particularly the thesis that 'with the Italian Renaissance we witness the introduction of a "model" educational curriculum which was (to) dominate the middle and upper ranks of government until after 1900' ('Renaissance Education and the Governors' and 'Did Politics Change in the

late Middle Ages and Renaissance?). The importance of printing, too, is considered in a masterly fashion ('Fiat Lux: Let there be light'), as are 'Historians and the Renaissance during the last Twenty-five Years' (1979).

Perhaps the papers of most interest to Ricardians in this portfolio of scholarship are those concerned with England, Scotland and the Italian Renaissance. In an article originally published in 1965 Hay surveyed 'The Early Renaissance in England', returning to the subject a decade later in 'England and the Humanities in the Fifteenth Century'; while, in 1983, he focused on 'Scotland and the Italian Renaissance.' Despite the many contacts between England and Italy in the fifteenth century, what particularly struck him in 1965 was the absence of any organised and self-conscious educational *movement* and the lack of the indigenous 'professional' humanist: only with the coming of the Tudor dynasty did the aptitudes and abilities of a new kind of scholar begin to find significant support and encouragement in high places. Developing these themes further in an excellent (and very substantial) paper in 1975, he concluded that, although there was a small group of wealthy English patrons who admired learning in the fifteenth century (most notably Humphrey Duke of Gloucester) and 'a smaller group of men whose talents reflected the new learning and who were fired to some extent by the novelties in the Renaissance programme of scholarship', it was not until the reign of Henry VII that 'the humanities came to court and, equally important, began to be naturalised.' As for Scotland, it was even slower to respond to the 'New Learning': moreover, when innovation along humanist lines *did* begin to make an impact in the sixteenth century, it owed more to cultural contacts with France than Italy.

Two further essays in the collection must be specifically mentioned: 'History and Historians in France and England during the Fifteenth Century' (1962) and 'Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*: Literature or Politics?' (1972). The survey of fifteenth-century historical writing must now rank as a seminal study: while stressing the absence of an official historiographical centre in England (comparable to St. Denis in France) and the pronounced lack of English chivalrous history (still flourishing in France in the works of Monstrelet, Chastellain and Olivier de la Marche), Hay is no less at pains to emphasise that England (unlike France) *did* see the vigorous evolution of the town chronicle (especially London chronicles which clearly became 'a regular item in the houses of well-to-do citizens and gentlemen' and 'popular items in the stock of the scrivener and bookseller'). Neither England nor France, however, spawned humanist histories in the fifteenth century along the lines pioneered by Bruni and Biondo in Italy: in England they only emerged with Polydore Vergil and Sir Thomas More (whose *Utopia*, although 'old-fashioned and somewhat impractical' in its social and economic thought, came 'much nearer to the heart of Renaissance theory' in its explicitly moral and educational views).

Looking back on a long scholarly career, Hay modestly declares: 'I once had the ambition to write a big book on the history of historiography. It has been my fate to write little books on big subjects, partly the result of a great deal of time spent teaching, much of it to undergraduates, of which I am, by no means ashamed, and from which I have learned a lot.' We have certainly learned a lot from Denis Hay!

KEITH DOCKRAY

ARTHUR OF ENGLAND. ENGLISH ATTITUDES TO KING ARTHUR AND THE KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE IN THE MIDDLE AGES AND THE RENAISSANCE. Christopher Dean. 1987. University of Toronto Press, £17.50.

Central to this study is the thesis that during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, Arthur was not the universally-known figure a modern perspective on literary history may have us believe, but simply one of many subjects suitable for literary treatment. The critical argument Christopher Dean develops from this premise is surprising: while Caxton and French medieval redactors and compilers of Arthurian romance see in the very quantity of Arthurian writings evidence for their authoritativeness, Dean insists on the relative paucity of English treatments of the subject, and seems to suggest that Arthurian literature is accordingly lacking in value and influence.

This assumption feeds into Dean's method of assessing how Arthurian literature may relate to other Arthurian phenomena. The work begins with a general survey of 'historical' accounts of Arthur, from Nennius onwards, and chapters follow on Arthur's influence on medieval chivalric practice, on Arthur in 'popular' tradition, on Arthur in Middle English texts, on Malory's treatment of the legend, and on Renaissance Arthurian literature. But because the evidence is by and large presented negatively, the chapters stand as sadly discrete units: the book does not build up a picture of how diverse contextualisations of Arthur may reflect contemporary political and literary ideas, and the lack of a positive context conveys a sense of Arthurian literature itself as in general ossified and uninteresting.

Where detailed appraisals of historical, literary and social backgrounds to the Arthurian legend and its treatment would be pertinent, Dean offers instead unimaginative generalisations on familiar material. The chapter on 'Arthur and the Historians', for example, does not discuss historiography, how medievals may have distinguished between 'history' and 'fiction', or how they may have responded to these categories of writing. Disappointingly, Dean also avoids the difficult issue of Arthur's relation to English nationalism. Instead, Dean proposes a decline in belief in an 'historical' Arthur which is matched by a decline in interest in Arthur as a subject for literature.

This attitude towards how fiction and history inter-relate, together with a negative view of Arthur's influence on 'day to day' medieval chivalry, and the argument that Arthur never achieves the folk-hero status of a Robin Hood, are both speculative in their conclusions, and beg the question of how literature functions in the context of other aspects of a culture. The chapter on Middle English Romances is less a new examination of Arthurian literature than a list of texts, implicitly divided into 'epic' and 'romance' inspired works, but the usefulness or significance of such generic distinctions are not explored. The complex issues of what English works owe to French works, what makes English reworkings of French romances distinctive; and the implications of an English readership for works in both French and English, are not approached. The assertion at the end of the chapter that Arthur is not a 'major character of medieval English fiction' (p.90) is beside the point, and with it Dean evades the

fundamental questions of how and why Arthur operates as he does in the extant English literature concerning him and his court.

Dean's negativity leads him into contradictions. For example, while the tenor of the book is that Arthur was not perhaps as well-known a figure as we might think, we are told that the author of the *Awntyrs off Arthure* modifies the source to include Arthur's court because he can thus tap 'the widespread popular interest in the Arthurian material' (p.80). The reductive aspect of Dean's critical obtuseness is most in evidence in the chapter on Malory (one of the most poorly-researched chapters, and one taking little account of recent criticism on the *Works*). Malory is seen as 'a moral writer', one who appreciates 'a good adventure', but who has, primarily, 'a lesson to teach' (p.91). This reading allows for no appreciation of how complex Malory's narrative technique is, nor of how it contributes to a text that presents the Arthurian legend in such a way as to preclude a morally 'black and white' perspective on its subject. Moreover, we are given no sense of a literary context for Malory.

Yet Malory fares well compared with Spenser, who merits only four sides of comment. Arthur's role in the *Faerie Queene* is treated as some kind of literary anomaly, so we learn nothing of how the presentation of Arthur may be connected with Spenser's vision of history and with his intellectual and cultural milieu, nor of what the *Faerie Queene* can tell us of Renaissance attitudes to, and constructions of, the literary past.

Christopher Dean prefaces his account of Arthur with a warning that his subject must be seen in context, but he fails to reconstruct a context that makes sense in literary terms. The final chapter, with its list of references to Arthur in non-Arthurian literature, suitably reflects his doggedly taxonomic method. These references are in the main used to show how little account was taken of Arthur, but in effect they demonstrate to what extent knowledge of things Arthurian is, throughout the period, assumed to be part of an audience's mental baggage.

The portrayal of Arthur, across the centuries and across different vernaculars, is potentially fascinating: a clear perspective on the richness of Arthurian writings in English can help illuminate later-medieval and Renaissance concepts of literary enterprise and tradition. Unfortunately this book tends to close down rather than open up modes of critical inquiry, and while it serves as a basic introduction to the material it uses, it makes the whole subject appear far less complex and interesting than it is.

CATHERINE BATT

THE IDEALS AND PRACTICE OF MEDIEVAL KNIGHTHOOD II.
Papers from the third Strawberry Hill Conference 1986. Edited by Christopher Harper-Bill and Ruth Harvey, Boydell Press, 1988. £22.50.

This volume consists of papers presented at the third Strawberry Hill Conference held in 1986. The general theme of these conferences offers scope for both historians and literary specialists so that speakers represent a variety of academic disciplines.

David Crouch studies the way in which twelfth century magnates exercised their lordship over their subjects. He gives as his main example William the Marshal Earl of Pembroke though a good half of the paper is concerned with other lords and the evidence offered about these seems at least as weighty as that provided for the Marshal's case. He distinguishes two methods for creating and consolidating allegiance, namely *colonisation* and *assimilation*, giving interesting instances of both and presenting the Marshal as relying mainly on the first. We should nonetheless note in this context the Marshal's own insistence, cited by Crouch, that he owed his landed wealth entirely to his wife, the Countess of Striguil — 'ge n'i ai rien si par lui non' — which must be an indication that he was aware of other ways besides colonisation to build up allegiance among his barons.

Jean Dunbabin discusses the problem encountered by nobles who, having entered the church, wished to leave it to pursue a secular career, or by those, frequently younger sons, who, finding themselves the sole surviving child of a noble line, were needed to ensure its continuing existence. There seems to have been much fence-sitting and opportunism, and complications arose about the succession of such ex-clerics. To outwit destiny was no easy matter, and the dubbing sword offered an escape route in a number of cases.

Mary Hackett, looking for clues about the ideals of knighthood in *Girart de Rousillon*, finds that loyalty, love of justice and condemnation of unjust war are among the most highly prized of knightly virtues. Martin Jones, in a more elaborate study of a literary work, looks at the depiction of battle in Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Willehalm*, stressing the author's emphasis on battles as collective, organised actions of bodies of men and his preoccupation with battlefield tactics rather than with single combat. We are shown his even-handedness in praising equally noble qualities displayed by Saracens and Christians, his aim at realism and at an 'anti-heroic' view of warfare. There are copious and careful textual references.

The thirteenth century prose *Lancelot* is the main work considered by Elspeth Kennedy in her study of the quest for identity and the importance of lineage. The second concept proves the more straightforward of the two to handle. Wealth or land holdings, we find, are not the main criteria for measuring a knight's worth: 'beneath poverty of the body often lies great riches of the heart, and under great abundance of money and of lands is often disguised poverty of the heart.' There is much emphasis on the inter-relationship between the king, great knights and unknown-but-worthy knights. In the end, blood will out and it is lineage which emerges as the determining factor.

Jane Martindale tries to reassess William IX of Aquitaine as a secular ruler, looking at many aspects of the rule and person of this most charismatic of medieval princes: the width of his authority, the public character of his government, his military performance, 'chivalrous' vocabulary in his own lyrics and in contemporary historical and literary sources, the phenomenon of the poet-prince, and so on. The paper tries to deal with too many important and varying topics, relating to Duke William himself, his lineage, his court and the society in which he lived, and can do no more than touch on each one. It is nonetheless stimulating and thought-provoking, and very well documented.

The harsh reality of military surgery forms the subject of Linda Paterson's fascinating contribution. Roger of Salerno's *Chirurgia*, dated 1180, and its early thirteenth century Occitan adaptation by Raimon of Avignon provide a wealth of spine-chilling detail about the kinds of injury sustained by knights and sergeants and their recommended treatment. One is left feeling that in most cases surgery only aggravated the patient's suffering without offering an increased prospect of recovery, and indeed part of the teaching concentrates on telling the surgeon which patients he must not attempt to cure for they are 'guaranteed to die'. The insight given into how the injuries were caused provides valuable information on medieval warfare and weaponry.

On the whole this is an interesting volume, though the historical material seems weightier than the literary papers, and the quality of writing and documentation is uneven. It is nicely produced, except for the illustrations in Paterson's paper where the quality of reproduction is poor, and one regrets the absence of any other illustrations to enliven one's progress through the book. Quotations, in all except the first essay, are in the original languages, with translations in small print, which enables the reader to assess the evidence for himself — a commendable facility not always offered in books of interdisciplinary material.

DIANA B. TYSON

A HISTORY OF PRIVATE LIFE Volume 2: REVELATIONS OF THE MEDIEVAL WORLD. Edited Georges Duby. 1988. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. and London, £24.95.

The first volume in this series was entitled *From Rome to Byzantium* and was edited by Paul Veyne. The theme of the second is the development of ideas of intimacy and privacy between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries, and draws its evidence from all types of written record and from literature, art, architecture and archaeology. There are six contributors, all of them French, but their fields of research cover Italy, Germany and England as well as France. This is in itself an object lesson to English medieval historians who, though they may occasionally venture into France, rarely cross beyond the frontiers of French-speaking states.

In the early courts and castles of feudal France and England, private life was barely possible and nobody did anything (except possibly die) alone. Here kinship was the key to one's position and progress through life and the world for 'family' in the nuclear sense was unknown. By the end of the period under review, the concept of self was fully developed. Men and women felt that more was owed to their own efforts than either to their family origins or divine providence. One the results of this was a flowering of literature, particularly autobiographical, and portraiture, of which Dürer's naked self-portrait of 1512 is perhaps the ultimate expression. Between these two extremes the authors provide an immensely detailed history of the social life of four centuries. The

use of living space, the role of each family member in relation to others, the physical design of houses as diverse as peasant huts and aristocratic palaces, the furnishings of each, are all chronicled in detail. The use of examples taken from literature enables us, in addition, to see people as they saw themselves and to recognise what they regarded as significant.

The sections by Georges Duby on feudal France and by Dominique Barthelemy on civilising the fortress contain a number of English examples, but students of fifteenth century England are likely to be particularly drawn to the chapter on Tuscan nobles on the eve of the Renaissance by Charles de la Roncière and to the last chapter, 'Towards Intimacy: The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries' by Philippe Braunstein. In each, it is the Italian examples that dominate. Much of what can be written about Italy in the fifteenth century cannot be applied to England until after the end of our period, and one particular example may suffice here. The distinction between commercial and household accounts, household records and personal memoirs had still not been clearly made in England by the end of the fifteenth century, as Lord Howard's well-known household books illustrate. Astute Italian businessmen in the preceding century would have drawn a very clear line between business books and domestic ones. Only Philippe Contamine's chapter on the design and building of homes in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries contains English examples from the later middle ages. Urban housing tends to reflect its period more than its place, while in contrast rural dwelling reflect local conditions and types of agriculture and therefore change little by period or class. Contamine, for instance, can cite examples of peasant long houses, designed to house beasts at one end and a family at the other, as far apart as Wharham Percy in Yorkshire and the Alps.

The most dazzling revelation for English readers will undoubtedly be the illustrations. We are accustomed to the paucity of English art of the period, which apart from the odd royal portrait and the honourable exception of the Beauchamp Pageant, consists mainly of manuscript illuminations. Here the profusion of German and Italian portraits and interiors are riches indeed, while almost the only illustrations from English sources are photographs of Norman castles and archaeological remains. Two very different, but equally striking examples are an early German portrayal of a couple kissing and a detail from Carpaccio's *Miracle of the Relic of the Cross*, which shows vast numbers of chimneys sprouting from Venetian rooftops in 1494.

It is perhaps inevitable in a book of this nature that there should be a certain amount of repetition and overlapping, and it does not seriously detract from the overall success of the book. Far more serious is the lack of footnotes. The source of each illustration is given beside it, but apart from a bibliography of printed sources, there is no indication of the whereabouts of any of the hundreds of letters, memoirs and accounts cited. Are we to assume that they are all in print? It may be possible to trace in the bibliography the correspondence of Alessandra Strozzi, but where, for instance, is the intriguing description of Edmund Beaufort's projected palace on the Seine to be found in the original? While we can only be grateful for Arnold Goldhammer's fine translation, there are a few minor infelicities which might have been avoided if he had been

English and not American. Edmund Beaufort provides a further example. The spelling of his name as Edmond and his description as Count of Dorset appear a trifle strange to the English eye.

Minor carping apart, this is a truly sumptuous, thought-provoking book, which greatly enlarges our understanding of the private lives of medieval men and women, and is to be whole-heartedly recommended to anyone willing to cross the mental barrier of the English Channel.

ANNE CRAWFORD

ASPECTS OF LATE MEDIEVAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY. ESSAYS PRESENTED TO J. R. LANDER. Edited J. G. Rowe. 1986. University of Toronto Press, Toronto, \$40; £24.50.

This well-produced volume forms a tribute to Professor Jack Lander, whose contribution to Yorkist and Early Tudor history needs little introduction. It consists of nine essays on rather divergent themes, some beyond Professor Lander's own areas of interest. The two opening contributions concern political theory rather than practice. Brian Tierney's able but highly technical discussion of William of Ockham plunges the reader into a specialist and rather difficult debate. Antonio Santosuosso provides a thoughtful if heavily textual analysis of one of Leonardo Bruni's major works, and its relationship to the tradition of civic humanism in Florence. At the other end of the volume Thomas Sea's general survey of the Swabian League seems a little disconnected from its predecessors.

The core of the book's interest is found in the six pieces that address more directly issues of government and politics in England itself. C. M. Crowder uses the struggle for redress of the Oxfordshire village of Wolvercote, ultimately destined for the papal curia, to discuss in more general terms notions of peace and justice in the early fifteenth century. Ralph Griffiths raises important new issues in charting the changing concept of the English 'nation' in the later middle ages. Roy Martin Haines surveys the political role of the archbishops in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century. Two articles of particular quality re-evaluate the role of the Exchequer in later medieval government. Gerald Harriss breaks new ground in his description of an able treasurer (Marmaduke Lumley) and his efforts to stave off Lancastrian bankruptcy, as does J. D. Alsop in his assessment that the Exchequer retained considerable vitality even in the early Tudor period.

Of especial interest to Ricardians is T. B. Pugh's survey of Richard Duke of York's career in France and Ireland. Pugh convincingly revises the view that York's loss of office in France marked the turning-point of his relations with the Lancastrian court. He has also made an important discovery in locating a fragment of the ducal accounts for 1443-4, that give a striking example of the expenditure of York's wife Cecily Neville. Nearly £608 was spent on the

Duchess, most of this being for clothes: a series of state robes made for her involved the purchase of nearly 60 yards of velvet, 325 pearls and 8½ ounces of gold. A craving for luxury of royal proportions perhaps helps explain why many years after her husband's death, Cecily deliberately referred to him as 'rightful king of England'.

MICHAEL K. JONES

FOUR MIDDLE ENGLISH MYSTERY CYCLES. TEXTUAL, CONTEXTUAL, AND CRITICAL INTERPRETATIONS. Martin Stevens. 1987. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, £27.50.

Reading Martin Stevens' *Four Middle English Mystery Cycles*, with its formidable subtitle has been a salutary experience. Since playing Lucifer/Satan in the Wakefield *Creation* I have been a devotee of medieval drama but I have had the opportunity of viewing only the York and Wakefield cycles in their entirety and I have read both of these scripts from beginning to end. The rest of my experience has been to see, read and study isolated pageants.

Stevens' work is aimed at correcting many attitudes since his purpose 'is to show that the Corpus Christi cycles are not so many interchangeable structures built to carry out the same function, but carefully constructed frameworks that, like cathedrals, have about them a unique beauty and understanding not only of the subject that they all have more or less in common but also of the way in which they make the subject come alive in each of their dramatic settings.' In his introduction the author outlines critical responses over the last 200 years and points out the dangers of including isolated pageants in anthologies, performing extracts, or studying individual plays with insufficient reference to the complete work. The four main chapters delve deeply into the texts of the earliest manuscripts and at the same time there is copious reference to other critics so that there are convincing conclusions about dating, 'the origin, nature and function' of surviving texts and the dramatic intention of the final author/redactor. By their very nature the plays of these cycles seem to have originated individually but in each case there was someone who took the plays and shaped them into an entity so that not only is each cycle 'a whole work of dramatic literature' but the four cycles 'are clearly the first major plays of the English dramatic tradition'.

I have enjoyed reading this book and my purpose here, in short space, is to recommend it highly though the task is difficult because there is so much to cover. I shall, therefore, give briefly my inadequate summary of each chapter.

The manuscript of the York text is a collation of original scripts 'by at least one author/redactor who gave coherence to the separate regynalls that make up the cycle' and it was only after this stage was complete that the existing manuscript was written up as a city register, albeit incomplete, so that there could be some control of what is essentially 'the first city play in English drama'. It must be remembered that during the fifteenth century York was in a period of

decline and this makes the maintenance of the quality of performance more remarkable, proving its importance to the city. The essential character of the work is its processional (pilgrimage) form and the citizens are not only audience but bystanders and participators in the action making it notable 'for the way in which it incorporates the essence of medieval urban life into the dramatised life of Christ'.

The Wakefield cycle is referred to as a 'clone' of York and the existing manuscript as a 'coffee table book', perhaps a presentation copy for the lord of the manor. It is not certain whether it belonged to or was performed in Wakefield but a few local topographical references suggest it is better to refer to it as Wakefield rather than Townley. Above all other qualities there is evidence of an author acutely conscious of language and the vitality of the verse form gives unity to the whole. Throughout there is a 'strong implicit argument against the enchantment of art and an equally strong affirmation of the artless'. The interest is in ordinary, local people who are suspicious of the 'sothren tothe' (of speakers with a southern tongue), the language of oppressors.

The N-Town cycle, its origins still a mystery, is different from those of York and Wakefield in that it requires a large stage and the plays do not have the same episodic nature. Although it may seem a fragmentary work and may not have been performed in its entirety it is essential we should consider its 'overall textual and dramatic unity' because it was at least 'designed to be read thematically and structurally as a dramatised life of Jesus within the larger framework of the salvation history'. There is a formal organisation based on act-like divisions and there are also several unifying features. Above all there is a formal organisation depending on typology, matching and balancing Old and New Testament stories so that the 'scenes are brought into harmony and the dramatic world synthesised'.

The Chester cycle suffers from a verse form with a too regular pause every four lines which confers on it a naivety suggesting an early date. The structure, however, has remarkably unifying features. The use of a narrator figure (*Preco*, *Nuntius*, *Expositor*, *Doctor*) provides an alienation effect which supports dramatic irony, the role of Mary is less than in the other cycles, there is a persistent elevation of man above woman and, throughout, God is the all powerful with Jesus emphatically divine, his humanity played down and a subsequent emphasis on plays featuring miracles. Perhaps this cycle was, in its final stage, composed as a defence of such plays which would account for its use of St. John's Gospel.

It is a pity to have to end on a sour note about the practicalities of reading this book. There is a reference to figure 7 for the Wakefield Abraham play but figure 7 shows the York Armourers' play, the illustration of the Passion of Memlinc is far too small to make its point and the word 'narrator' in the index does not include the important points on this subject in the N-Town chapter. Finally, especially for Ricardians, the one reference to Richard III in the index is for a misprint in the text, a mistake which is compounded in a note two pages later. Richard III is however mentioned in connection with the city of York on page 54.

ARTHUR COCKERILL

MEDIEVAL PAGEANT. Bryan Holme with introduction by Timothy Husband. 1987. Thames and Hudson Ltd., London, £12.95.

This is the latest addition to Thames and Hudson's magnificent series of books on medieval art which include *The Flowering of the Middle Ages* and *Les Tres Riches Heures du Duc de Berry*. Bryan Holme has enjoyed a distinguished career in art book publishing and has also, either as author, editor or designer, produced books covering a range of subjects including several for children, and for adults recalling childhood, notably *The Kate Greenaway Book*.

By its large format and sumptuous illustrations *Medieval Pageant* could easily be dismissed as yet another 'coffee table' production and indeed it would serve this function admirably. The colour reproductions are of exceptionally high quality including gold and gilt that actually reflects the reading light. Bryan Holme has drawn upon the collections of about thirty European and North American museums, galleries and libraries to illustrate the theme of pageantry in medieval life and its various manifestations in plays, tournaments, processions, royal entries, funerals, banquets, religion, hunting and war. Whilst a few of the pictures are familiar most appear for the first time in an English language book.

It would be unjust and wasteful, however, to consign the work entirely to the decorative category. Each illustration or related group is accompanied by a paragraph or two of interesting and informative commentary on the circumstances and thematic significance of the scene depicted. The illustrations and commentary are preceded by a ten page introduction by Timothy Husband, Associate Curator of Medieval Art and The Cloisters at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Husband's contribution turns out to be rather more than a mere introduction and in fact serves as a unifying text for the various groups of illustrations and commentary. His main theme is the use of pageantry as an instrument of propaganda to reinforce a social structure dominated by monarchy, nobility and church.

I would have welcomed more text in the form of more detailed articles on the various aspects of the subject but this would inevitably have increased the price. As it is, by today's values the book is very good value and its price probably just low enough to be bought on impulse without too much strain on budget or conscience!

ROBERT C. HAIRSINE

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 does not preclude its subsequent review. Items marked by an asterisk are in the Society's Library.

BOOKS

J. S. Cockburn and Thomas A. Green, editors, *Twelve Good Men and True, the Criminal Trial Jury in England, 1200-1800*. 413 pages. 1988. Princeton University Press, Lawrenceville N.J., \$44.

A collection of essays including for the fifteenth century 'Jury Trial at Gaol Delivery in the Late Middle Ages: the Midland Circuit, 1400-29' by Edward Powell. A retrospective is provided by Thomas A. Green.

Duke Humfrey's Library and the Divinity School 1488-1988. Catalogue of an exhibition at the Bodleian Library, June-August 1988. Illustrated. 155 pages. Bodleian Library, Oxford, £15.

The first part, on the history and contents of the library, discusses such matters as the *pecia*-system, the use of manuscripts as pledges and Humfrey of Gloucester's involvement with the University. His gifts and those of others, like John Tiptoft, are described in detail, as well as the ins and outs of the use of the library in the fifteenth century and its fate in the sixteenth. The second part briefly illustrates the history of the building (a detailed account has been published to coincide with the exhibition). Select bibliography and indexes.

J. Friedman, editor, *John of Foxton's Liber Cosmographiae (1408). An Edition and Codicological Study*. 396 pages. Illustrated. 1988. E. J. Brill, Leiden, Gld. 140.

Handsomely illustrated Latin encyclopedia by the Yorkshireman John of Foxton, covering scientific and mythological subjects. All the twelve well-known medical and mythographic miniatures are reproduced for the first time. An ascription to the painter John Siferwas is suggested.

P. A. Johnson, *Duke Richard of York 1411-1460*. 270 pages. 1988. Oxford Historical Monographs, Clarendon Press, Oxford, £27.50.

The first biography of Richard, Duke of York, with full scholarly apparatus.*

M. W. Norris (introduction), *Monumental Brasses, The Portfolio Plates of the Monumental Brass Society 1894-1984*. 213 pages. 1988. The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, Suffolk, £39.50.

Re-issue of plates in chronological order, 1301-1632, with an extensive introduction covering all aspects of the subject: origins, character, sources and users, as well as method of production and styles.

Roger S. Wieck, with essays by Lawrence R. Poos, Virginia Reinberg, John Plummer, *The Book of Hours in Medieval Art and Life*. Illustrated. 230 pages. 1988. Sotheby's Publications, Philip Wilson Publishers Ltd., London, £22.50.

General essays on social history and prayer as reflected in books of hours. Specific examinations of their texts and the art and type of illustration used for sections of the text. A catalogue of the books of hours held by the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore.*

ARTICLES

P. M. Ashman, Heraldry and the Law of Arms in England, *Journal of Legal History*, volume 9, May 1988, pages 50-86.

A discussion of the Law of Arms and of the Court of Chivalry which enforced it. Shows that the law of arms was civil law (i.e. Roman law), and not the common law, and describes how it was administered in the court of chivalry. Also contains a brief discussion of the court's view of the right to bear arms, and (slightly irrelevantly), information on heralds and on how to read a coat of arms.

Barbara A. Hanawalt, Seeking the flesh and blood of manorial families, *Journal of Medieval History*, volume 14, number 1, March 1988, pages 33-45.

Takes information from the coroners rolls to build up a picture of the life of the medieval peasant, demonstrating that a remarkably detailed reconstruction is sometimes possible for a group leaving few other records.

An issue devoted to the use of legal records in the study of the history of the medieval family. Includes M. M. Sheehan on 'English wills and the records of the ecclesiastical and civil jurisdictions', and M. Kowaleski, 'The history of urban families in medieval England.'

Alison Hanham, Edmund de la Pole and the Spies, 1499-1506: some Revisions, *Parergon*, Bulletin of the Australian and New Zealand Association for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, New Series, no. 6, 1988, pages 103-120.

Analysis of the careers of several 'spies' including Sir Robert Curzon, Thomas Killingworth, William Hussey(?) and Alexander Symson in the circle of Edmund de la Pole. In this context little evidence is found of loyalty to causes or princes in anyone except Killingworth. Motives are assessed as personal security and frustrated ambition. Examination of Henry VII's methods of luring back dissidents.*

Christopher Harper-Bill, Dean Colet's Convocation Sermon and the Pre-Reformation Church in England, *History*, volume 73, 1988, pages 191-210.

An assessment of the state of the English Church c. 1480 to c. 1530 with reference to the Dean of St. Paul's criticisms. On the whole, the author finds much to commend and a need to allow for Colet's own preoccupations, career and London based experience. A useful summary of the most recent research and thought on the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century church.

M. A. Hicks, The Last Days of Elizabeth Countess of Oxford, *English Historical Review*, volume 103, number 406, January 1988, pages 76-95.

How the personal lands of Elizabeth Howard, Dowager Countess of Oxford (died 1474) were conveyed by her to Richard of Gloucester 1473-4 and recovered by her son,

the Earl of Oxford in the 1485 Parliament on the grounds that the conveyances had been made under duress. In 1495 the Earl had the depositions describing the duress recorded to ensure his future title, the witnesses being Sir John Risley, Sir James Tyrell, William Tunstall, Henry Robson, William Paston and John Power. Argues that the Duke's conduct towards the Countess was harsh and affronted contemporaries including Chancellor Stillington and Edward IV, and that the substance of the depositions reflect the actual events of 1473-4 and not merely the Earl's wishes. Transcripts of documents.*

P. Holland, Cook's Case in History and Myth, *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, volume 61, number 144, February 1988, pages 21-33.

A further rehearsal of the trial of Sir Thomas Cook, mayor of London, in 1468, with an analysis of the political background, machinations and the motives of the parties involved.*

Michael K. Jones, Sir William Stanley of Holt: Politics and Family Allegiance in the late Fifteenth Century, *Welsh History Review*, volume 14, number 1, June 1988, pages 1-22.

The career of a very successful younger son using his family's influence to the full under Edward IV. Both the senior Stanley line of Storeton and Hooton and the Lathom line worked well together, as did the two brothers, Thomas and William. Emphasises importance of the north Welsh offices and estate put together by William. Analysis of the Griffith and Conway connections. Distrust of the Duke of Buckingham in 1483 seen as probably the main cause of Stanley's loyalty to Richard III. In 1485 the allegiances owed to the Stanleys in Wales and north-west England as well as 'concerted family strategy' supported William's leading role at the battle of Bosworth. Brief consideration of the causes for William's dissatisfaction at his rewards from Richard III and Henry VII.*

Albert Kiralfy, Custom in Medieval English Law, *Journal of Legal History*, volume 9, May 1988, pages 26-39.

Brief but useful description of custom and its relationship to the common law. Covers the manor, counties, boroughs, Kent and London. How the royal courts dealt with, recognised, set aside and learnt from local custom.

Mavis Mate, Pastoral Farming in South-East England in the Fifteenth Century, *Economic History Review*, second series volume 40, number 4, 1987, pages 523-36.

Fifteenth century England in general turned to pastoral farming. A particular study to illustrate this trend. A boom period was followed by a depression circa 1450. Partial recovery was achieved by the end of the century: population stabilised; demand for English cloth increased and sheep farming became profitable again; English horses were valued; and the increasing amount of meat in the English diet encouraged stock keeping.

Alexandra Sinclair, The Great Berkeley Law-Suit Revisited 1417-39, *Southern History*, volume 9, 1987, pages 34-50.

A re-assessment of the origin and early phase of the classic dispute studied in the seventeenth century by John Smyth, the Berkeley family historian. Uses sources unknown to or ignored by Smyth to invalidate his portrayal of the feud as a vicious episode in which a hapless Lord Berkeley is hounded by his over-mighty rival, the Earl of Warwick. Demonstrates the importance of political considerations in determining the course of the dispute and supports recent theories concerning the limited nature of the violence employed in private quarrels of the period.

Notes on Contributors

Catherine Batt. Her Ph.D. (1987) was on Malory and English response to French Arthurian Cyclic Romance. Lecturer in Middle English Literature at Birkbeck College, London, 1988-9. Undertaking further research in fifteenth-century literature.

Arthur Cockerill, a member for over twenty years, is a retired schoolmaster who specialised in English and Drama. Chairman of the Yorkshire Branch and also Chairman of the Leeds Civic Art Guild.

Margaret Condon is a graduate of Bristol. Currently working on an edition of the letters of Reynold Bray, receiver general of Margaret Beaufort and one of the chief councillors of Henry VII.

Anne Crawford. An Assistant Keeper at the Public Record Office. Working on a new edition of the Howard Household Books.

Keith Dockray. Senior Lecturer in History, Huddersfield Polytechnic. Author of *Richard III: A Reader in History* (1988) and recent articles on fifteenth-century England. Currently researching a book on *Yorkshire and the Civil War*.

Robert Hairsine. Author of articles in *Richard III, Crown & People*. Preparing editions of the Exchequer Warrants for Issues 1480-85 and fifteenth-century Customs Accounts for Poole, Dorset.

Michael K. Jones is a lecturer in the Department of Medieval History, University of Glasgow. He finished his Ph.D. in 1982 and is at present co-writing a biography of Lady Margaret Beaufort.

Timberlake Smith. Born USA. Freelance journalist, genealogist and amateur historian.

Diana Tyson. Mainly interested in Old French historiography. Author of *La Vie du Prince Noir*, by Chandos Herald and of the forthcoming new edition of the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal*.

Livia Visser-Fuchs is working on the literary background and propaganda of Anglo-Burgundian relations of the Yorkist period.

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R. Horrox and P. W. Hammond (eds.), *British Library Manuscript 433* (4 vols. Upminster and London 1979-83), vol. 1, pp.45-6.

Daniel Williams, The hastily drawn up will of William Catesby Esquire, 25 August 1485, *Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society Transactions*, vol. 51 (1975-6), p.48.

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