

1. The Middle Dutch text reads:

Artoys wilde messe horen besonder,/ Ende deet te weten sinen caplaen / Dat hi Gode wilde ontfæen,
Eer hi vard ten wigeward./ Die priester die las messe ter vard,/ Ende alse messe was gehent,/ Ende alse
Artoys soude ontfæen tsacrament,/ So was dit sacrament verloren./ Dies had die pape groten toren /
Ende sprac: 'Here! Wats ons gesciet?! Gods lichaem en vindic niet!'/ Dies was Artoys te barenteert,
Ende sprac: 'Dat ic heb geordincert,/ Dat salic inden op desen dach,/ Comer mi af dat comen mach! Ic
sal Gode op een andren tijt/ Ontfæen, alse gehent es die strijt.'/ Des mach hi sijn al sonder hope.

Leiden, University Library, Ms.B.P.L.14 E, f.47 (b); I. le Long, ed., *Spiegel Historiaal, of Rym-Spiegel* . . . , Amsterdam 1727, p.243; V. Fris, ed., with assistance from W. de Vreese, *De Slag bij Kortrijk*, Ghent 1902, pp.146-7; H. vander Linden *et al.* eds., *Lodewijk van Velthem's Voorzetting van den Spiegel Historiaal (1248-1316)*, 3 vols., Brussels 1906-38, vol. 2, pp.295-6; W. Waterschoot, ed., *Lodewijk van Velthem. De Guldensporenslag* . . . , The Hague 1979, p.60.

2. L. Delisle and N. de Wailly, eds., *Extraits d'une chronique anonyme intitulée Anciennes Chroniques de Flandre, Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France*, vol. 22, Paris 1865, p.377; H. Moranvillé, ed., *Chronographia regum Francorum*, 3 vols., Paris 1891-7, vol. 1, p.107.

Book Reviews

YORK HOUSE BOOKS 1461-1490. Edited Lorraine C. Attreed. 1991. Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd., Stroud, for the Richard III and Yorkist History Trust, £75. ISBN 0-86299-936-7. Special price to Members of £40 the set, £25 the volume, incl. p. & p. from Miss A. Smith, 14 Lincoln Road, Guildford, Surrey GU2 6TJ. Cheques payable to Richard III Society. Overseas Members to add 10% for postage.

The importance of the late medieval York House Books has long been recognised thanks to the partial edition by Angelo Raine for the Yorkshire Archaeological Society's Record Series. There can be no doubt that Attreed's present and comprehensive modern edition completely supersedes that earlier version. This is a scholarly and thorough transcription of the earliest surviving house books and, in a series of appendices, of closely related material. The edition also contains a very thorough index and a glossary of terms and place names. Given the indifferent state of much of the material the task of transcription can have been no easy matter; Attreed has performed an important service to scholarship.

Some effort has been made to make this edition accessible to students and interested non-academics. There is a short introduction that provides reference to some of the published literature on the late medieval city and wherever the house books use Latin an English translation follows. Attreed has also provided brief subheadings with dates to distinguish different entries. This is a satisfactory enough arrangement, though it would have been clearer had the translated sections appeared in a different, perhaps slightly smaller typeface. Certainly all the original text should have appeared in the same size of typeface. In at least one instance the subheading provided was misleading or actually mistaken (p.367) and there were several places where, in the absence of a more detailed introduction, an explanatory note would have been helpful. These are minor quibbles; they do nothing to invalidate the value of the whole.

The house books in their present form are a somewhat jumbled and motley collection of minutes variously in Latin and English of council business and related memoranda. These last include numerous bonds to keep the peace or accept arbitration, lists of debts owing (in fact franchise payments), and copies of letters sent to or received from the king or other important personages. As contemporary memoranda their context is not always apparent and one or two entries must remain enigmatic. In December 1480 a number of butchers were imprisoned '*pro sua obstinencia*'. The nature of this 'obstinacy' is not recorded, though the effective exclusion of butchers from civic office must always have made for tensions. Similarly the 'riot' of vicars choral noted early in 1487 probably follows from a dispute between the city and the Minster chapter. Despite these difficulties, the source throws light on many aspects of civic government and mirrors its particular concerns and obsessions: The Scottish threat, the need to maintain good defences, and the consequent hostility to Scots all feature prominently; a number of persons who were defamed by being called Scot looked to the city for redress. The city's fierce protection of its rights, even against royal interference, and of the good name of its officers against slander is apparent. The long-running campaign to remove fishgarths so as to improve navigation, and presumably trade through the city, likewise features regularly, as does maintenance of law and order, the regulations of trade, and the registration of guild ordinances (cf. p.272).

The relationship between the city and Richard as Duke of Gloucester and later as king is well documented. York was effectively retained by Richard who in return exercised good lordship. The city could provide soldiers and financial support, even to the extent of a present of plate to Richard and his queen worth 500m. and £100 respectively (a gesture that puts the city's pleas of impoverishment into perspective). Richard in return helped promote the city's interests, in respect of the fishgarths for example, and to reduce the city's regular financial obligations to the crown. The council's chagrin at Richard's death seems genuine and is clearly evident in the record (pp.368-9). The very day after news of Richard's death was received the city wrote to Henry, Earl of Northumberland 'our moost honourable, especiall and singler good lord' appealing for his protection at that moment of crisis. (Here, so far as one can ever penetrate the formal language of medieval letters, I cannot agree with Attreed's view that the city's relationship with Henry Percy was cool.) Equally significantly, within weeks the city was writing to Henry VII claiming long-

standing loyalty. In the sordid world of late fifteenth-century politics self-interest and self-preservation were to the fore.

This can provide but a partial picture of what can be gleaned from this edition of important source material. There is much here for the urban historian, for the student of civic, regional, and royal government, and for the social, economic, and local historian. University libraries should not be daunted by the cost. Teachers of medieval history will find much that they can use with their students here. The present reviewer at least looks forward to the scholarship that Dr. Attreed has helped facilitate.

P. J. P. GOLDBERG

WOMAN IS A WORTHY WIGHT: WOMEN IN ENGLISH SOCIETY c.1200-1500. Edited P. J. P. Goldberg. 1992. Alan Sutton Publications, Stroud, £28.00. ISBN 0-86299-864-6.

This collection of essays covers many aspects of women's lives in medieval England, spanning the classes, the centuries, and the stages of the life-cycle. Indeed, despite the sub-title, several articles, notably those by Richard M. Smith and P. P. A. Biller, also examine the lives of women outside England and demonstrate the insights gained by taking a comparative approach. The volume shows the diversity of sources to be culled for evidence on the lives of medieval women, including wills, manorial and town records, pastoral manuals, advice treatises and archaeological evidence. Historians considering the use of such sources will appreciate the care which is taken to indicate the problems which arise from them, as well as their potential.

The volume will be of interest to all those who study medieval Europe. Smith, for example, finds a contrast between women's marriage patterns in northwest Europe and southern Europe. This is perhaps not surprising, given the findings of family historians about such differences, but it is important to substantiate, as too often in the past, as Smith points out, historians have simply assumed that women's experience was reflected in the history of the family as a whole.

Similarly, historians need to be cautious about assuming that the experiences of women in one society were the same in other societies. This point is underlined by Goldberg who shows that studies of different areas in northwest Europe suggest that marriage patterns varied within the region as well. Smith shows how concepts of marginalisation can differ between cultures and over time, giving as an example different attitudes to the relative prestige of work and marriage for women in Florence and England. Biller's study of pastoral manuals shows the wide range of attitudes throughout Europe on such topics as infanticide, prostitution and wifely obedience.

Smith also demonstrates how women's history can be used to throw new light on older historical questions, by suggesting that economic change could

result from different customs of marriage and women's work as well as from more familiar causes such as the Black Death. Both the economic theme and the comparative approach are taken up by Goldberg in his articles, one examining patterns of marriage, migration and servanthood in late medieval Yorkshire and the other considering the effects of increased economic autonomy for women on the age of marriage, contrasting the experience of rural and urban women. He also finds differences from the Mediterranean pattern, with English marriage occurring generally at a later age. Some might question his conclusion that increased financial autonomy for women is the main factor leading to late marriage age. Some studies have argued that women might marry earlier as they could save the resources necessary to set up a new household more quickly. The correlation of female economic autonomy and delayed marriage is still an open question, but studies such as Goldberg's should encourage further research.

Helena Graham examines the peasant women and their work in Alrewas in Staffordshire. In an interesting discussion of brewing she compares her evidence to that of Judith Bennett's important study of fourteenth-century Brigstock. Graham points out the difficulty of assessing married women's public contribution to the economy when they were represented in court by their husbands. She suggests that different rates of female participation in brewing may not be due to different agricultural practices as Bennett suggests, but rather to variation in the extent to which husbands acted for their wives in legal matters.

The law is a theme common to many of the articles in this volume. Rowena Archer's study of aristocratic women's role in the administration of landed estates points out a recurring theme in women's history, the difference between the legal ideal and the reality of women's lives. Legally, married women's property came under the control of their husbands, but in practice, many aristocratic women were deeply involved in the administration of their estates and those of their husbands. Advice manuals were written to help women in this role which grew out of their responsibility for the administration of the household.

Many of women's charitable activities developed out of their household responsibilities. P. H. Cullum uses late medieval Yorkshire wills to examine women's charitable giving and points out that many bequests were a continuation of their charitable works during life. One interesting fact which emerges is that the poor women who benefited from these bequests were almost always single, either spinsters or widows. This suggests the economic importance of marriage for women, as well as the feminisation of poverty, and contrasts with Goldberg's more optimistic findings on the economic opportunities available for single women.

Charity was a common form of female lay piety. Roberta Gilchrist uses archaeological and architectural evidence to examine women's convents and to assess the extent to which women could influence the pattern of their religious life. The article suggests interpretations rather than firm conclusions, and acts as an important reminder that documentary evidence is not the only path into women's past. Indeed, one of the strengths of this volume is that it shows how much can be uncovered by innovative use of the sources — it is an important model for future work on the women of the medieval world.

ELIZABETH EWAN

COURTING DISASTER, ASTROLOGY AT THE ENGLISH COURT AND UNIVERSITY IN THE LATER MIDDLE AGES. Hilary M. Carey. 1992. Macmillan, London, £45. ISBN 0-333-53293-7.

From the very earliest times, man has been fascinated by the idea that his destiny is controlled by the heavens, and has, as a result, devoted considerable effort and energy to discovering his fate in the stars. Even in today's ostensibly rational society, world leaders and royalty flock to astrologers, although they and other advocates of the current 'new age' philosophy possess little, if any, of the intellectual rigour and dedication to abstract scientific enquiry which characterised their medieval predecessors. Surprisingly, given the growing enthusiasm for astrology in fourteenth and fifteenth-century England, and the wealth of documentary evidence about it, this is the first full-length academic study of a phenomenon which has been neglected for far too long. In confining herself almost exclusively to the Court and universities the author has presented us with a rather narrow and selective view, but her work still constitutes a major contribution to our understanding of the period, and she is to be congratulated on a notable scholarly achievement.

In the space of nine short chapters, Dr. Carey explains how changing intellectual and political circumstances (as well as scientific improvements) brought astrology out of the universities and into the popular domain. From being a strict academic discipline, pursued by a handful of learned schoolmen, it became something of a cultural fad among fashion-conscious courtiers and noblemen; and, after a brief but extremely dangerous period of notoriety during the dynastic struggles of the mid-fifteenth century, was institutionalised by the Tudors. Although faced with large quantities of complicated and often esoteric data, the author deploys her facts and arguments with admirable skill and cogency. Her decision to consign a good deal of detailed information to footnotes and appendices (which together account for well over a third of this volume) is a wise one, since it makes the main body of the text accessible to general readers and students. In certain respects, however, Dr. Carey seems to have been rather unsure about her intended readership, as although she translates most Latin quotations into English and writes with enviable clarity for the benefit of non-specialists, she assumes a general familiarity with the terms and techniques of medieval astrology, which is these days even rarer than a sound classical education. A glossary would have been most helpful, as, indeed, would a decent index, covering footnotes and appendices in systematic and consistent detail. Like the practice of astrology at Merton College, the indexing of academic monographs is an exact science, and we can only be grateful that the compiler of this eccentric and astonishingly incompetent specimen is not in the business of casting horoscopes.

Not quite all the omissions are confined to the index: there are two areas which the author might profitably have explored in greater detail, if only for comparative purposes. Although she entertainingly informs us that the English viewed the Scots as the 'cruel, proud, excitable, luxurious, bestial, false and underhand' subjects of Scorpio, we are not told what manner of national horoscope the Scots drew up in revenge. On the contrary, Dr. Carey devotes only a few lines and one footnote to astrologers over the border, and does not even

mention James III's celebrated soothsayer, Andrew Alaman (even though pages are devoted to the French). Since James reputedly lost his throne because of his predilection for dabblers in the occult, and certainly proved a far more zealous patron of astrologers than any of the late medieval English monarchs, it would have been interesting to learn more about him. A more serious criticism lies in Dr. Carey's approach to medical astrology: although she promises to consider exactly how diagnostic techniques changed as practitioners became more adept in the use of astrological instruments and tables during the fifteenth century, such an explanation is nowhere clearly forthcoming. The cover of this book displays an exquisite colour reproduction of the 'zodiac man' from *Les Tres Riches Heures du Duc de Berri*, but we are never told precisely how these diagrams were employed by physicians, or, significantly, when they first became popular. The fact is, that medical men were consulting devices of this kind long before the study of astrology as an abstract science obtained the grudging toleration of the Church, and actually helped to reconcile theological objections to it. Rudimentary astrological guides for phlebotomy, the administration of purges and other basic forms of treatment were circulating in the vernacular by 1400, which makes it hard to accept Dr. Carey's pronouncement that 'the appeal of medieval astrology did not reach across the classes'. Although made towards the end of the period, the York Barber Surgeons' Book (British Library, Egerton Ms. 2572) contains unmistakable evidence to the contrary: the elaborate blood-letting chart, with its volvelle and delightful drawings of the guild's patron saints ought surely to have earned a place among the illustrations, even though it was commissioned by artisans rather than aristocrats. Nor can one necessarily accept the author's view that the growing popularity of astrology followed *after* the arrival of the printing press, since recent research has disclosed a widespread, if comparatively unsophisticated, interest in the subject from the early years of the fifteenth century.

On the other hand, Dr. Carey's treatment of the fraught, sometimes lethal relationship between politics and astrology, which is one of her principal themes, is quite exemplary. Her assessment of Richard II's character and alleged passion for necromancy is judicious; and her chapter on the doom-laden atmosphere of Henry VI's Court provides a valuable insight into the factional intrigues of those who held or sought power. At the beginning of the book she protests that historians, influenced no doubt by the meretricious banalities of today's star-gazers, tend to dismiss astrology as 'an irrational disease suffered by western culture, which subjected it to bouts of insanity of varying intensity', and have thus seriously underestimated its importance. Clearly, we can now revise our opinions.

CAROLE RAWCLIFFE

ENGLAND AND THE HANSE, 1157-1611. A Study in their Trade and Commercial Diplomacy. T. H. Lloyd. 1991. Cambridge University Press, £45. ISBN 0 521 404428.

This study is as monotonous as the aspect of the North Sea on a dreary autumn day: the ships that are supposed to be sailing it are mere phantoms; they are manned by nameless, fleshless skeletons and their holds are filled with numbers, dates and statistics. There is not one illustration, not even a document or a plan of the Steelyard, to help the reader visualise the reality of the diplomacy and trade that this book is about. Even the chapter divisions are based on dates, and, in more than page-long paragraphs, fact follows fact in strictly chronological order.

The *Hansa* was a successful association of merchants and their cities in Germany and the Low Countries that endured for almost five centuries and all this time was one of the major trading partners and enemies of England. It is true, as the blurb claims, that the whole period of Anglo-Hanseatic relations is covered, and for the persistent reader with a good memory and considerable prior knowledge, much valuable information is available, but since little is explained, surveyed or drawn together one is left floundering in an endless series of franchises and taxes, booms and recessions, commissions, treaties and embassies, without even a map to show where all these events happened, where people came from, how they travelled or where their interests lay.

As is evident not only from the text itself, but also from the sparse footnotes and the meagre bibliography, much of what the author says is based on primary sources. This is commendable — though I venture to claim that the text of, for example, the *Hanserecesse* themselves makes fascinating reading by comparison — but as a result Lloyd often omits to mention any modern source and sometimes appears to be contradicting non-existing predecessors: a phrase like '... historians have tended to maintain that the king was unduly influenced by Warwick ...' (p.203), without actually contradicting this statement and without reference to any previous secondary work, seems tantalising and unacceptable and adds to the general tendency of the reader to lose interest again and again. The description of the negotiations at Utrecht in 1474 leaves one with the impression that they were never studied before — Ricardians can safely and more excitingly stick to Scofield (not mentioned, not in bibliography). Seasoned experts on the Hanse and English trade will know where to find other secondary sources, but the less knowledgeable still in *search* of information would like to be given some assistance.

The general lifelessness of the book is exemplified by small things: the useless mention of a 'Dr. John Norton' (p.174) who is not identified or explained, not mentioned again and not in the — generally unreliable and unhelpful — index, or in the equally empty reference to 'John "Chelley", merchant of the Staple' whom the author does not trouble to put in context or even name in a less 'foreign' way. The same lack of details that would help the user of the book is found in the 'list' of British Library ms. sources: 'Additional Manuscripts. Lansdowne Papers. Cotton Manuscripts'.

Because of its starkness and lack of consideration for the reader who does not know 'everything' already, this study fails to be either a reference book or a

new, revealing survey of Anglo-Hanseatic relations, and it does not make any earlier work dispensable.

LIVIA VISSER-FUCHS

JACK CADE'S REBELLION OF 1450. I. M. W. Harvey. 1991. Clarendon Press, Oxford, £30. ISBN 0-19-820160-5.

The Kentish rebellion of Jack Cade is a puzzling episode in the story of the fall of the house of Lancaster: a popular rebellion which, unlike those of 1381 and 1549, was rooted primarily not in economic or religious grievances but rather in revulsion against governmental mismanagement of foreign and domestic policy. As Harvey succinctly puts it, Cade's rebellion 'acts as [a] mirror in which is caught a reflection of the disastrous failure of kingship of Henry VI' (p.vii). It also gives us a fleeting glimpse of that which is generally hidden from historians: the political maturity and articulation of a class of minor landholders below the gentry, a group of men who, in Harvey's words 'were not the knights of the shire but who voted for them, who did not own villages, but who carried weight in their communities as village notables' (p.185). The chief value of Harvey's careful dissection of the local context and events of the rebellion is that it gives us a rare and valuable insight into this class in a county where the peculiarities of gavelkind tenure ensured that property holding was widely diffused. Their prominent role in the rebellion is clearly demonstrated both by the pardon roll — although, as Harvey warns, its evidence must be used with great caution — and by the first list of grievances drawn up by the rebels. The appearance there of such complaints as the denial of free election of knights of the shire (a complaint of particular relevance to the 40s freeholders enfranchised by the statute of 8 H VI, c. 7) and the inconvenience of long journeys to sessions of the peace (a grievance, one imagines, of the lesser landholders who routinely served as jurors) clearly identifies the petitioners as men with a stake in the local political community.

And yet, if Cade's rebellion has a general lesson to teach us about the political awareness of landholders sandwiched between gentry and peasantry, it also reveals much about the peculiarities of Kentish society, peculiarities that were by the late-fifteenth century to secure for the county an unenviable reputation for rebelliousness. While Cade's rebellion serves as an indictment of national government, and was by no means confined to Kent, it was Kent that lay at its heart. Harvey brings out how much it owed to local circumstances which, although in part common to the south-east of England as a whole, were of particular significance in Kent: the demands of purveyance for the supply of the Calais garrison ('a parasitic neighbour . . . in times of stress', p.14); the vulnerability of the south coast to French raids in the wake of the English collapse in Normandy (exemplified on the eve of the rebellion by a French attack on Queenborough); the depression in the cloth industry (felt particularly in the Weald); and, above all, the oppressions of a court clique, whose leader in Kent was the notorious James Fiennes, Lord Saye and Sele. These grievances came

together in a county with a social structure markedly receptive to unrest. Here Harvey could have given us more. She remarks the absence of a great temporal lord in the county (the precondition for Saye's rapid rise) and notes that the county gentry were both abundant and of quite modest means. But she does not pursue these insights. Very little, for example, is said about the effects of partible inheritance, an ancient Kentish tradition, on the structure of the gentry and sub-gentry society. What, however, Harvey does do in the local context is to establish the importance of one area of Kent, the Weald, not only in the rising of 1450 but also in other Kentish disturbances through the 1450s. It was an area 'peculiarly subversive and independent of mind' with a strong Lollard tradition which had produced serious disturbances in 1438. It was, moreover, an area whose economic fortunes were closely tied to cloth manufacturing. These factors combined to make it 'the most precipitant region of a more than usually rousable county' (pp.174-5), something that was to manifest itself once more in October 1483, when disturbances in the Weald served as the prelude to a more general revolt, and had perhaps been in evidence as early as the mid-thirteenth century, when resistance to Henry III had continued in the Weald after his victory at the battle of Evesham.

It is a minor criticism of Harvey's work that, while she has placed Cade in the context of Kentish disturbances throughout the 1450s, she has not drawn extended comparisons with Kentish involvement in the events of 1471 and 1483. Here she would, no doubt, have found further evidence to support her important conclusion that the 'commons of Kent . . . were a remarkably independent political force' (p.184). Such criticisms aside, however, her work is an important contribution to an understanding both of the workings of political society in late-medieval England and, more particularly, of the reasons behind the fall of the house of Lancaster. As she points out, the harsh suppression of Cade's rising served to alienate a whole region from Lancastrian rule and to ensure that Kent would respond positively to the return of the Yorkist earls in 1460. Her work also very clearly shows that the political history of fifteenth-century England cannot be written solely in terms of interaction between crown, baronage and parliamentary commons. The voice of the yeomanry could on occasion make itself powerfully heard, at least in a county with Kent's distinctive social structure.

S. J. PAYLING

EMBROIDERERS. Kay Staniland. 1991. British Museum Press, London, £6.95. ISBN 0-7141-2051-0.

Henry VII bequeathed to the Abbot, Prior and Convent of Westminster, 'the hoole sute of Vestiments and Coopies of clothe of gold tissue, wrought with our badgies of rede Roses and Poortcoleys, the which we of late at our propre costs and charges caused to be made, bought and provided at Florence in Italie: that is to say, the hoole Vestements for the Preist, the Deacon and Subdeacon, and xxix Coopes of the Same clothe and worke'. These vestments and copes were

massively expensive works, of which the cloth of gold was woven to shape in Florence (and, perhaps, Lucca) and then, as Lisa Monnas has recently shown (New Documents for the Vestments of Henry VII at Stonyhurst College, *Burlington Magazine*, May 1989, pp.345-9), made up and embroidered in England by embroiderers headed by one Robynet (undoubtedly of alien origin) and William More, senior craftsmen in the royal workshops. Two hundred and seventy years earlier, King Henry III, the great rebuilder of Westminster Abbey, also planned a donation to the convent, an embroidered chasuble commissioned from Mabel of Bury St. Edmunds. The chasuble took two years to complete, when, after some delay, Henry ordered that it was to be appraised for the value of the finished work, the cost of its materials and the amount Mabel merited for her work 'ita quod nec rex peccatum inde habeat, nec ipse dampnum aliquod incurrat.'

The contrast between these two donations illustrates some of the key points made in Kay Staniland's useful little book on medieval embroiderers, surely the most eagerly anticipated of the series of five booklets recently issued by the British Museum. First, the production of richly woven cloths, particularly Italian ones, helped to undermine the embroiderer's craft in the later middle ages, and embroidery increasingly became concentrated in particular areas, such as the orphreys, instead of spreading across the whole garment as in the thirteenth century. A second point, and one which underlines the sexism of the title of this series of booklets, *Medieval Craftsmen*, is that in the great days of *opus anglicanum* (the only craft incidentally for which England was so famous that it gave its name to it), in the second half of the thirteenth and first half of the fourteenth centuries, many of the most important embroiderers were certainly women. Embroidery from the earliest times was regarded as an occupation suitable for noble women and for nuns (as early as 747 an attempt was made to check the number of hours they spent on embroidery) but by the mid-thirteenth century laywomen of less exalted rank worked as lay professionals. The high esteem in which Mabel was held by Henry III testifies to his respect for her work and has been much commented on by embroidery historians; perhaps too much, as Kay Staniland emphasises, arguing that other contemporary embroiderers have consequently been overlooked. There is, of course, a tendency for historians to concentrate on particular individuals rather than on the unnamed workshops such as those supplying Adam of Basing from 1240 onwards, but Mabel was exceptionally important: there are two dozen references to her in Henry's reign. Mabel's lifetime seems to have witnessed the beginning of an explosion of demand for *opus anglicanum*: by the end of the thirteenth century there seem to have been perhaps half a dozen large professional workshops in London, supplying a national and international demand, and it has been estimated that as many as seventy or eighty workers may have been employed in the craft in the city alone.

In contrast with the personalized tone of Henry III's writs, we rely largely on Henry VII's account books for information on the embroiderers in his employ. The frequency with which Robynet's name occurs in connection with payments for secular embroidery helps to illustrate the dramatic growth of secular commissions in the later middle ages, the development of royal workshops to supply this demand, and the employment of alien artists in England. Kay Staniland illustrates how the haste with which royal commissions frequently had

to be fulfilled led to the development of new techniques, enabling a large workforce to concentrate simultaneously on the same commission: she also shows that women were paid considerably less than their male counterparts, and that the designers earned significantly more than other workers. From the thirteenth century onwards there is widespread employment of heraldry and badges even within the ecclesiastical context, and Henry VII's display of Tudor badges and devices on vestments, designed to emphasise the supremacy of his new dynasty, and to buttress his very tenuous dynastic claims to the throne within the royal mausoleum which Westminster had become, has a pedigree going back to the time of Henry III, although now employed with staggering ostentation.

Kay Staniland's well-illustrated booklet provides a very helpful introduction to the craft and to its practitioners: it also includes a chapter on techniques which must, by novices at least, be read in conjunction with the glossary at the back. Although heavily slanted towards England, the book contains much European material. It is a very long time indeed since there was any general survey of medieval embroiderers, and this work provides a welcome new introduction to the subject, one which helps to show the medieval historian how and why embroidered cloth was so important in the middle ages. Perhaps at last the craft will receive the attention it deserves.

PHILLIP LINDLEY

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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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