

Book Reviews

TEXTILES, TOWNS AND TRADE. ESSAYS IN THE ECONOMIC HISTORY OF LATE-MEDIEVAL ENGLAND AND THE LOW COUNTRIES. John H. Munro. 1994. Variorum, Aldershot, £49.50.

ISBN 0-86078-404-5

Professor Munro is a considerable expert on money, industry and trade in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and these essays represent a selection of his output over the last thirty years. All are reprints of already published articles and essays, which in the style of the Variorum publishing house have been reproduced photographically in their original format, without any attempt to standardise type or reference systems, and even without continuous page numbering.

The essays vary greatly in their readability and degree of specialisation, and it must be said at the outset that a number of them, for example on wool price schedules, are austere pieces of scholarship which perform a useful service to those working on late medieval wool, but which have little appeal to the general reader.

A group of essays offer a general interpretation of the period which makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of the processes of economic and social change. These are concerned with urban protectionism, monopolies, staples, and the origins of the late medieval depression. Here Munro is arguing from the experiences of the great towns of the Low Countries, such as Bruges, Ghent and Antwerp, that political developments – destructive warfare, internal quarrels, and the restrictive attitudes of the town governments – help to explain why the great expansion in towns and trade of the thirteenth century went into reverse in the fourteenth, and also show the mechanism by which, when economic revival came round 1500, the centres of trade shifted from the old boom town of Bruges to the new port of Antwerp. This may make Munro sound like a free marketeer, disapproving of protectionism, but in fact he shows that there was a certain rationality behind the policy of concentrating in the Flemish towns on a luxury cloth manufacture, in which such technical innovations as mechanical fulling were forbidden. The Flemish cloth makers did not take on their rivals in open competition, but they did establish a niche for their products at the top of the market, and continued to function for decades after the troubles of the early fourteenth century.

Two essays in this collection deserve special mention. One is the exploration of the meaning of the term 'scarlet', an essay originally written for the volume in

honour of Carus-Wilson. This is a wonderful example of historical detective work, in which a dedicated and undaunted professional displays his skills in reconstructing the texture and colour of a famous type of luxury medieval cloth. One is envious of the depth of knowledge, and the dexterity with which the sources are combed for evidence.

The second essay is of a completely different kind. This is the exposition of 'Textile technology' originally written for a dictionary, in which a master of his subject displays with exemplary clarity the techniques of cloth making in the middle ages. The essay reveals the remarkable skills and patience of medieval artisans. Economic historians use phrases such as 'labour intensive', but here we see what those words really mean – two people working for 12 days to weave one broadcloth; two fullers spending between 3 and 5 days on their stage of manufacture; and the simple task of raising the nap with teasels occupying 8 hours of a craftsman's time. But we are also impressed by the learning and skill of Munro's explanation of all this.

CHRISTOPHER DYER

THE PERKIN WARBECK CONSPIRACY, 1491-1499. Ian Arthurson. 1994.
Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd., Stroud, £17.99. ISBN 0-86299-742-9

The story of Perkin Warbeck's conspiracy offers historians some very fine riddles. Unlike many a historical tale of mystery and adventure, this one was central to the pattern of events during the period of eight years when Henry VII had to take his doings into account. Henry treated him with a certain amount of bravado, and could even turn his existence to advantage as a pretext for doing what he wanted. In 1492 French support for Warbeck was used to justify England's invasion of France; in 1496, by contrast, Henry used his presence in Scotland as an excuse to avoid being drawn by the Holy League into war with France. At the same time, Warbeck was a permanent nuisance – 'a parasite on international diplomacy,' as Dr. Arthurson calls him. Nothing demonstrates more clearly than his career how the instability of the English throne was taken for granted by neighbouring rulers in the later fifteenth century. In 1492 the Burgundian court took up with Warbeck as a way of countering English rapprochement with France, and Maximilian and Margaret of Burgundy in the spring and summer of 1493 momentarily contemplated a policy similar to the one that Margaret had hatched with Clarence in 1477 to tie England to Burgundian interests. It was an all-or-nothing sort of policy that implied the real possibility of successful invasion. Unlike Clarence,

Warbeck was useless as a bridegroom unless he could be made king of England.

Arthurson retells the story with abundant detail from a very wide range of sources and with a firm grasp of both its internal and international dimensions. He examines Warbeck's origins and upbringing in Tournai to set the scene for the main sequence of events that started at Cork in December 1491 and finished at Tyburn on 23 November 1499. Warbeck is presented as an actor whose own persona became obscured and eventually confused beneath the royal mask he had assumed. In his pretended role he had a wonderful career, living as a prince much of the time and mixing on familiar terms with some of the most illustrious figures of Europe. Perhaps he was enough of a philosopher to persuade himself that it was all worth dying young for. How good an actor he needed to be is one of the questions it is hard to answer. If he took in all the people who espoused his cause he must have been astonishingly good.

Did he really take people in? This is one of most difficult matters to assess. Arthurson argues that Warbeck's cosmopolitan background gave him the necessary skills for successful deception, but the argument cuts both ways. Someone who had been about so much, and who must have been an eye-catching figure, was not in a strong position to conceal his origins. There were people in prominent places who knew all about him before 1491, especially in Portugal, where he had been known to the king. Martin Behaim, who had served the Portuguese crown and knew about Warbeck, was personally known to the Emperor Maximilian. Anthony de la Forse and his father Bernard were in a position to supply information both to the Spanish monarchs and to Henry VII from the very start of the conspiracy. The king of France and at least some of his servants knew the truth about Warbeck from the start; the formal education that Warbeck required to prepare him for his royal role can, it seems, be attributed to Stephen Fryon, who was employed for the purpose by Charles VIII. Perhaps generous allowances should be made for uncertainties, imperfect communications and wishful thinking up to the summer of 1493, but there was little excuse for any European government being deceived by Warbeck thereafter. Henry VII was able to determine his origin with some accuracy by June 1493, and even brought some of Warbeck's childhood acquaintances to his court. If Margaret of Burgundy and Maximilian continued to accept his claims and to give him effective support between 1492 and the autumn of 1495 it must have been because it suited their purposes, since each of them had even better opportunity than Henry VII to establish the truth of the matter. Arthurson supposes that they both continued to be deceived, but in order to explain such lapses of judgement he has to resort to a psychological reading of international diplomacy. He makes Margaret's relationship with Warbeck hinge on her thwarted maternal instincts, and uses the claim that Maximilian 'existed in a world of astrology, horoscopes, zodiacs and pseudo-scientific Platonism' to argue against his being able to assess

plain factual evidence. It is incredible that the Scottish government between 1493 and 1496 should really have thought that Warbeck was a son of Edward IV given the amount of quite reliable information to the contrary to be had within European diplomatic circles by that time. And is it surely inconceivable that at the heart of the English royal household Sir William Stanley was still a true believer as late as 1495. Arguably, Arthurson is too ready to suppose that those who exploited Warbeck's claims really believed them. He is well aware of the problem here, however, and comments on the impossibility of any thick description of events in the context of so much uncertainty about the size of the gap between what people said and what they knew to be the case. He allows a degree of real doubt about the gullibility of James IV of Scotland that he does not extend to Warbeck's continental friends.

There seems little reason to doubt that Warbeck was accepted as genuine by some of the Cornishmen whose cause he espoused in September 1497. They were not in the best position to sound out his credentials. Even there, however, it is unlikely that dynastic loyalty was a prime mover. Arthurson is clearly justified in including an analysis of the risings of that year in his account of Warbeck's career. However, he is in danger of overplaying the significance of Warbeck's claims, particularly for the June rebellion. He does not doubt that that rebellion was caused by unacceptable tax demands, but he wants to place an increased emphasis on dynastic conflict as a cause of the revolt, reclassifying it from 'Tax Rebellion, Not Political' not simply to 'Tax Rebellion, Political' but to 'Tax Rebellion, Dynastic'. He employs the unconvincing argument that popular political opposition implied the need to mount a challenge to the ruling dynasty. The rebellion of 1497, he says, 'was recognised as a rising motivated by the only action men discontented with government could take: the replacement of one king by another'. Since no other tax rebellion of the later Middle Ages or early Tudor period had such a dynastic goal, this is a wholly unreasonable claim. Evidence in favour of his conclusion rests, to a worrying degree, on the argument that those who had supported Yorkists in the past (even Yorkist kings) may reasonably be supposed to have been Yorkist partisans in the 1490s. For example, he identifies Lord Audley as a Yorkist campaigner in 1497 on the grounds that his father had served Edward IV and Richard III, even though the family had fallen out of favour in 1483 because of implication in Buckingham's rebellion. This sort of argument will surely not do even for circumstantial evidence relating to known individuals. Even if it were accepted, such private loyalties amongst a few former royal servants would not illuminate the grievances that motivated the much more numerous body of rebels without such court connections. Nor should royal propaganda to the effect that the rebels aimed at the destruction of the king and the subversion of the realm be used as evidence of what the rebels' intentions really were: what else would a fifteenth-

century government say when faced with popular revolt? The case for a dominant dynastic element in the revolt of July 1497 is not very strong. However, the government's grotesque handling of that rebellion bred an intensified resentment against the king in some south-western quarters, and it was that resentment that Warbeck, lacking effective support from any more exalted source, was able to tap later in the year. At that point some west-country men – reputedly as many as 8,000 – were sufficiently disaffected to turn out for his cause. But by the time he had come to depend upon popular support in Cornwall, Warbeck's game was truly played out.

Thick description of these events may be difficult, but the account of them here is very rich. The story's many layers of significance leave ample room for differences of interpretation, as they always will, but Arthurson gives his reader plenty of scope for working round inside his text to find new connections and new arguments. The text is supported by a fine array of pictures – though, surprisingly, the list of illustrations does not state their sources. There are enough misprints for the point to be worth mentioning, though they do not seriously reduce the pleasure that readers will derive from this most interesting book.

RICHARD BRITNELL

WIFE AND WIDOW IN MEDIEVAL ENGLAND. Edited by Sue Sheridan Walker. 1993. *Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Civilization*, Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press, \$39.50.

ISBN 0-472-10415-2

Some years ago, Janet Loengard called for more research on the law as a window on the lives of medieval women. This collection answers that call admirably. It is dedicated to Michael Sheehan, a pioneer in the field, and explores many of the questions he raised. A wide variety of sources are examined, including law treatises, wills, plea rolls, church court records, records of English administration in Scotland and many others.

Marital status determined women's legal position. A wife was dependent on her husband and had no separate legal standing, but with widowhood came independent legal status. These essays focus on wives and widows and discuss their experiences with the law. Remarriage is also a central concern. Historians have often depicted widowhood as the best state for medieval women because of its legal status. These essays sound a note of caution; studies of the human face of widowhood show it was not always preferable to married life.

One central theme which emerges is the active role women took in pursuing their interests before the courts. In the litigious society of medieval England, knowledge of the law was necessary for any landholder. Many women sought professional advice, but some probably relied on the advice of other widows to help them.

Church attitudes to remarriage are the focus of James Brundage's essay. Early writers argued widow's spiritual interests were best met by a life of chastity. Renewed discussion by twelfth- and thirteenth-century theologians led to a rather confused position. Remarriage was allowed but the nuptial blessing was not to be conferred. Theologians had problems accounting for the prohibition and its meaning for remarriage; the weakness of their arguments is ably demonstrated by Brundage. Many priests simply ignored the prohibition, giving church blessing to what most people regarded as perfectly legitimate marriages. In this issue, as in others, people ignored those laws which conflicted with their needs.

Joel Rosenthal looks at the human face of widowhood, examining the stages through which the widow passed, from the initial bereavement and period of mourning, through the necessity of ensuring her economic well-being, to the choice of whether to remarry. The economic situation of many widows was precarious, making remarriage a common choice, especially for those with children. Probably many others who died as widows had not closed the door on remarriage. Rosenthal also explores the emotional life of those who did remarry, looking at the choice of burial site and the language of wills to see with which husband women identified most closely.

The world of dower litigation is examined in essays by Janet Loengard and Sue Sheridan Walker. Dower was the only civil plea which required that a woman be the plaintiff. Dower disputes were the most common reason for women to appear in court. Loengard examines the impact of Magna Carta on the actual lives of widows. She argues that women's dower rights were strengthened in the later thirteenth century, partly as a result of the changes introduced in 1215 and in subsequent revisions of the charter, although the new laws did not always work as their framers had intended. Walker looks in detail at actual cases, showing how cases proceeded and the legal arguments used by plaintiffs and defendants. Women's actions in defending their dower were central to the reconstitution of the family after husband's death.

The impact of war on the wives and widows of Scots who fought against Edward I in the War of Independence is studied by Cynthia Neville. Edward viewed these women as rebels against his self-proclaimed authority as overlord of Scotland, and as a result many were very harshly treated. Edward's reputation as a chivalrous king comes under serious question in the light of his actions. Neville's essay is a valuable contribution to the under-researched history of Scottish

medieval women and also to the impact of war on women, an issue ignored by most military history.

Barbara Hanawalt examines remarriage in town and countryside, although her discussion of urban women is largely confined to London. Some of her case studies will be familiar to readers of her article in an earlier volume in this series. Hanawalt argues that society encouraged women to remarry and looks at why women might follow this advice. Women often exercised independence in their choice of second husband; Hanawalt suggests this undermined patriarchal control. Noting that rates of remarriage varied across time, she suggests incidence of remarriage depended on local conditions; remarriage might be most common where there was a tight land market making a propertied widow an attractive marriage partner. In London women often married men within their former husband's occupational group. More research on other towns should show if this was a common phenomenon.

Canon law and common law were often in conflict over women's legal rights as Richard Helmholz shows. Church courts upheld the right of wives to make wills, despite the common law's insistence that they required their husband's licence. A decline in such wills in the fifteenth century suggests the common law view largely prevailed. Helmholz relates this to new ideas about married women's property and the growth of men's testamentary freedom over all property held during the marriage. Increasingly any property which wives held separately was held in trust and could not be bequeathed.

Charles Donohue suggests how quantitative evidence can be used to study some of the issues mentioned above. The source he chooses, the York matrimonial cause papers, has recently been used to great effect by P.J.P. Goldberg and Frederick Pedersen in studies of women and marriage in fourteenth and fifteenth-century York, and their conclusions can be compared with his hypotheses. Donohue suggests the changing proportion of male and female plaintiffs indicates the importance of marriage to women varied over time. Both Goldberg and he relate women's changing attitudes to economic factors, although in different ways. Donohue also discusses the implications of the fifteenth-century decline in marriage cases. Some historians have posited an increasing popular acceptance of church ideas on matrimony, or changes in the status of marriage for women. Donohue suggests it could also be due to a change in court jurisdiction or record-keeping practices.

Women's legal rights affected many more lives than just that of the widow. A woman's success or failure in defending her dower rights affected the very future of her family. By examining the experience of women with the law, this volume has opened a window on the experiences of medieval society as a whole.

ELIZABETH EWAN

FIFTEENTH-CENTURY ATTITUDES: PERCEPTIONS OF SOCIETY IN LATE MEDIEVAL ENGLAND. Edited by R.E. Horrox. 1994. Cambridge University Press, £30. ISBN 0-521-40483-5

Interpretations of Richard III differ not just because of inadequate sources and differing perceptions of the man, but because he lived in a world whose knowledge, assumptions, values, prejudices, and superstitions differed from our own. The attitudes which shaped his conduct sets him apart: to understand him fully, if such a feat can be achieved, demands an appreciation of the climate of ideas within which he lived and breathed. Hence this volume, the proceedings of the Richard III Society conference at York, deserves a place on every library shelf. It is to the credit of editor and authors alike that it is consistently brief, clear, jargon-free and hence accessible both to the general reader and to specialist, who will not find it unsophisticated or insufficiently qualified. Nor will potential readers be bored. All contributors build their case on examples, often unfamiliar to this reviewer, and the more experienced (Harriss, Richmond, Horrox, Aston) parade an impressive and sometimes staggering range, which cumulatively give the book a freshness, originality and unexpectedness that is very inviting. Several contributors argue for long-term change, somewhat unconvincingly, but the overall impression is one of static, inherited ideas, equally potent at each end of the century. Doubtless, therefore, it was wise if regrettable that the editor did not attempt to draw the threads together in preface or conclusion, but has instead chosen to discuss some additional attitudes and comment on Huizinga's *Waning of the Middle Ages*. No overview or codification of ideas, rather this book introduces, surveys, and suggests.

The twelve chapters are by specialists in the period: the King and his Subjects by Gerald Harriss; Law and Justice by Edward Powell; The Aristocracy by Kate Mertes; Education and Advancement by Michael Bennett; Information and Science by Peter Murray Jones; Women by Jeremy Goldberg; Urban Society by David Palliser; Rural Society by Mark Bailey; The Poor by Miri Rubin; Religion by Colin Richmond; and Death by Margaret Aston. There is no set format or formula. Authors have treated their subjects in differing depth, range, detail, and, inevitably, quality: thus Mertes's paper rests principally on the courtesy books, Palliser's on a few major towns, and Bailey's on East Anglian material. They will be valued for different reasons: Rubin treats a topic that is not generally accessible; Harriss, Horrox, Aston and Goldberg usefully summarise earlier work and/or what is known and Murray Jones what is generally unknown; Powell and Richmond search for more wide-ranging and challenging interpretations; and Bennett draws together a range of topics from nurture to careerism that are more commonly kept separate. Every reader will have preferences and some papers will be more read than others. The present reviewer can

see at once how to use some for teaching and finds in Powell's paper a challenging reinterpretation of law and order that he wishes had been longer.

Society is treated as much as ideas, sometimes more so, and the overall impression is surprisingly fluid. If two papers commence with static hierarchies, most plead for social mobility and two regard as a 'total failure' the sumptuary legislation, which sought to restrict movement by making people dress according to their rank. Such hasty judgements, however, do not explain why parliaments regularly updated the sumptuary laws in the light of prevailing fashions for nearly four centuries from 1363 and why the English were so readily pigeon-holed by their attire. Inevitably perhaps in such a short yet wide-ranging book there are uncorroborated assertions, bricks built without straw, and examples taken out of context. The sparing footnotes, obviously a deliberate policy, are sometimes quite inadequate and neither text nor the cursory bibliography introduce the debates of modern historians. For some, no doubt, that is a recommendation. It has certainly made it easier for these contributors to expound contemporary ideas so lucidly.

MICHAEL HICKS

CHRISTINE DE PIZAN, THE BOOK OF THE BODY POLITIC. Edited and translated by Kate Langdon Forhan. Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought. 1994. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, £27.95 (hb), £9.95 (pb). ISBN 0-521-41050-9 (hb), ISBN 0-521-42259-0 (pb).

The more editions of medieval texts like the present one are produced the better. Whether the excuse to publish them is their assumed importance as feminist manifesto, literary document or political tract is comparatively irrelevant, all that matters is that many medieval writings become available to the general reader, in an understandable, manageable and affordable form that is also as close to the original as possible, and allows the reader to enjoy the work, and more or less judge its value. What is needed is a readable translation with a brief but competent commentary in a low priced edition.

The price of the present book should present no problems. About the commentary and translation I have very few reservations. There is an excellent, brief introduction, describing Christine de Pizan's background, her early widowhood in 1390 and the political situation of her day and the Hundred Years War as the context of her work. The 'body politic' of her book is the state, the king being its head, the knights, nobles and the king's officers its arms and hands, the common people the feet that support it. The genre of the 'mirror for princes', to

which the *Book of the Body Politic* belongs, is explained by the editor and such major sources as Aristotle, Cicero, Vegetius and John of Salisbury mentioned; the influence of Giles of Rome on Christine's book is probably underestimated (he is also gone missing in the index). Christine's repeated use of 'Valerius Maximus' *Memorable Words and Deeds* and the authoritative value of *exempla*, exemplary stories, both from him and other sources is duly noted. The first part of Christine's text discusses the education and virtues of princes, the second those of knights and nobles, the third of the common people. Among the latter she included the clergy, and she also emphasised the economic and political importance of merchants, artisans and farmers. All her 'lessons' are illustrated by stories from the past.

The introduction to the edition is followed by a chronology of Christine's life, a useful bibliographical note containing also 'further reading', and a general glossary. The latter has rather a large number of errors, both printing and factual, in the entries concerning the classics. These errors correspond with the attitude taken throughout the translation to names and facts from ancient history. Though it is understandable that there are no notes to the text and that the commentary has been kept to a minimum, I cannot but wonder whether it is acceptable that names and people from classical times are treated as irrelevant oddities that no longer qualify for serious explanation and proper spelling of their names. Christine did not and could not know better – though I am convinced that she would have much preferred to get her facts right – but would modern readers not have liked to be informed that the modest warrior, 'Thenolanus', who was named after the town of 'Thenolon' (p. 79), is in fact Coriolanus, so called because he captured Corioli? This is only one example among many that could be listed.

The translator states that 'rather than attempting to render [Christine's] style, my aim has been a lively rendition of her thought'. This liveliness is debatable; certainly the style seems to improve in the course of the work and where Christine is 'good' the translation is also good, but Christine herself makes it difficult to turn her work into a text that sounds familiar to the modern ear. Perhaps we should accept her occasional prolixity and lack of logical sequence for the very reason that it was her own and proper to her purpose. To quote one example of Christine's style and subject (p. 81):

On this subject, that pleasure and too much ease soften and weaken the will, the authors [i.e. Valerius Maximus, *Facta*, 9, 1, Ext. 2, LVF] tell us that the city of Voulques [i.e. Volsinii, LVF] was rich and well-governed. It was the capital of the land of Accrusia [i.e. Etruria, LVF], but its enormous riches inclined it to pleasure and lechery for which reason the vices dominated it, and it declined by becoming so soft in defense and it was subjugated by slaves. And it is important to note that from one vice, others may follow, which is something the good knight should guard against, since vice may lead to loss of honour in princes and others.

On the whole this edition is very commendable; it is a pity that for lack of checking by an editor with some classical knowledge it does not quite reach *toute perfection*.

LIVIA VISSER-FUCHS

EVERYDAY LIFE IN MEDIEVAL ENGLAND. Christopher Dyer. 1994. The Hambledon Press, 102 Gloucester Avenue, London NW1 8HX, £35. £20 to members direct from the publisher. ISBN 1-85285-112-0

This collection of fifteen of Professor Dyer's published articles would be impressive if it was the cream of a lifetime's work. As in fact they appeared over only ten years (1982-92), during which the author's other publications included a substantial and important book, we can see both how rapidly our knowledge of English medieval social and economic history is expanding and deepening, and how considerably Professor Dyer is contributing to this. In his preface he says that he offers 'no innovations in historical methods' – this is true, but it veils his extraordinary flair for exploiting well-tried techniques, for an imaginative and innovative use of apparently uninformative sources to provide new evidence, new insights. The reader is not offered arcane statistical analyses, using words unknown to dictionaries – everything is straightforward, immediately interesting and thoroughly readable. Yet every one of these articles significantly advances knowledge.

The articles are divided into four groups. 'Settlement' looks at the social structure of the medieval village and how it functioned as a genuine community, at the contraction of cultivation and settlement after the Black Death (including the role of lessees as evictors – manorial lords on the whole tried to keep their tenants) and at Pendock, Worcestershire, as an example of dispersed settlement in a woodland area – a valuable case-study, which points forward to further work by Professor Dyer and others on places of this sort. In the second group of articles, 'Standards of living', are one article on peasant buildings and three on food – the trend from cereals to protein shown in what was given to harvest workers, the consumption of freshwater fish (chubb was as caviar or truffles to the medieval English gastronome) and the nature and use of gardens. The articles on 'Social relations' look particularly at the Peasants' Revolt – who took part at the local level and why – but also (in an article with S.A.C. Penn) at late-medieval wage-earners from records of cases before the Justices of Labourers. Finally, in a section on 'The Market' are articles on the significance of the cottages that Domesday Book records in towns, the role of towns in rural marketing and – finally – 'Were there any capitalists in fifteenth-century England?'

In this last article Professor Dyer shows, what is implicit throughout, that in detailed work on local records he never loses sight of the broader picture and is fully at home with the overall theories – the models – offered by the social sciences. But he is an empiricist through and through: the general theory is acceptable only if it fully reflects the facts on the ground. In what must be one of the most startling changes of key that historical writing can offer, he moves here in a couple of sentences from the varying concepts of capitalism to the personal economy of Roger Heritage of Burton Dassett, Warwickshire, who lived from about 1440 to 1495. Warwickshire and Worcestershire, Professor Dyer's home territory, are the area on which many of these studies are centred; that he can make new and interesting discoveries there does him especial credit, for in surviving medieval records they are not the best endowed of English counties. But he shows no less familiarity with the records of other parts of England as well and the result is work of scholarly importance and wide interest throughout. We look forward to more.

P.D.A. HARVEY

SIR RHYS AP THOMAS AND HIS FAMILY: A STUDY IN THE WARS OF THE ROSES AND EARLY TUDOR POLITICS. Ralph A. Griffiths. 1993. University of Wales Press, Cardiff, £35. ISBN 0-7083-1218-7

With this new volume, Professor Griffiths offers us two books for the price of one. The first is a detailed, even dense, account of the fortunes of the leading family of fifteenth-century Carmarthenshire: the family which spawned the Rhy ap Thomas of the book's title, but which will be well known to readers of Griffiths' other works as the progeny of Griffith ap Nicholas, the notorious figure who ran much of South and West Wales during the muddled decade of the 1450s. The second is a lavishly-annotated edition of a seventeenth-century *Life* of Sir Rhys, a rumbustious text which was written in the later stages of a century-long campaign to reverse the attainder of the hero's grandson. Both items are interesting enough in themselves, but the relationship between them is a slightly tenuous and unhappy one. The *Life* is not a work which throws much light on the real politics of fifteenth-century Wales: as Griffiths points out, most of it is based on the printed histories available in Jacobean England, supplemented by a small amount of King's Bench material and a handful of poems, many written under Rice family sponsorship. Its account of the Wars is a familiar tale – complete with 'bloodie usurper' Richard III – and, on the whole, the appeal of the work is more literary than historical, at least as far as medievalists are concerned. The *Life's* reconstruction of the waiting game played by the king and his leading Welsh subjects as the Buckingham rebellion

came and went and Henry Tudor arrived in Pembrokeshire is certainly a useful aid to our thinking about the period – how did landowners decide what to do with their influence in periods of political instability? – but it is important to remember that it is a reconstruction, based on imagination and complete with fake documents, and not a first-hand account of the events it describes.

The first part of Griffiths' book, meanwhile, supplies background information about Sir Rhys' family. It is much more than an introduction to the *Life* and, indeed, in some ways it does not serve that purpose particularly well: a vast weight of detail impedes the progress of the narrative and discussions of the big picture come relatively rarely and are easily missed; amid the profusion of pedigrees provided by the editor, moreover, there is not one which simply lays out the main line of Sir Rhys' family between the 1430s and the 1530s and gives the usual names and dates of the major figures (Welsh patronymics ought to be unproblematic, but to many an English reader it will be difficult to remember the relationship between – for example – Gruffydd ap Nicholas, Rhys ap Thomas and Rhys ap Gruffydd). Professor Griffiths' knowledge of the workings of fifteenth-century local politics in Wales is plainly unrivalled, and there is much to be learned from his reflections on the structures of this distinctive, partly colonial, society, but all this takes time and space to put across. In the opinion of this reviewer, most of the material in the first half of the book might have been better used elsewhere – as the basis of a full-length treatment of lordship and society in the Carmarthenshire region, perhaps. As the preface to Sir Henry Rice's tale of derring-do, it seemed to me to a little cramped and yet too extensive for its more immediate purpose.

JOHN L. WATTS

THE MEDIEVAL MANOR COURT OF WAKEFIELD. Mary O'Regan. 1994. Roasalba Press, 55, St. Michael's Lane, Leeds LS6 3BR £3 inc. p. & p.

ISBN 0-907604-03-X

The extensive manor of Wakefield in Yorkshire was amongst the properties given by Edward III to Edmund of Langley, and thereby became a possession of the House of York. From Sandal Castle, close to Wakefield and part of the lordship, Duke Richard of York sallied forth against his enemies on 30 December 1460, with devastating consequences for his cause. No such excitement disturbed the flow of local litigation and law enforcement recorded in Wakefield's important series of court rolls, stretching impressively from 1274 into the present century. Though Wakefield is remembered for its battle rather than its records, Yorkshire Archaeological Society has published many of the rolls in translation, and it must be largely a matter of time before we have some substantial monograph concerning

the economy and society of the lordship in the Middle Ages. The present study does not attempt to fill this gap. It is orientated chiefly to readers with no knowledge of the later medieval legal system and its records, and a large part of it is concerned to impart elementary knowledge of legal procedures. The author shows no interest in the way in which court-roll analysis has been developed during the last hundred years, and she does not pose the sorts of questions about Wakefield society that historians would want to ask. Nevertheless she imparts a good deal of information about the jurisdiction the rolls describe, especially for the period 1274-1347, described here as 'the heyday of the court'. A reader wanting to find out from scratch about some of the characteristics of medieval manorial court records might profitably start with this work and the edited volumes of Wakefield court records.

RICHARD BRITNELL

RELIGIOUS WOMEN IN MEDIEVAL EAST ANGLIA. History and Archaeology c. 1100-1540. Roberta Gilchrist and Marilyn Oliva. 1993. Studies in East Anglian History 1. Centre of East Anglian Studies, University of East Anglia, Norwich, £6 including p. & p. ISBN 0-160345-616-1

The first in a series of studies in East Anglian history, *Religious Women in Medieval East Anglia* reflects the best traditions of local history. Well supplied with figures, tables, and photographs, the book will be of interest to a general audience as well as to readers specifically concerned with female religious. Individual chapters deal with female piety, its relationship to patronage, the archaeology and structure of monasteries, and distinctions between different classes of religious women. It is the wealth of specific documentary detail, rather than the more general treatment of female piety, that makes the work particularly valuable. Although the book's subtitle *History and Archaeology c. 1100-1540* suggests a wide chronological sweep, most of the evidence postdates 1350. Gilchrist and Oliva have classified 572 nuns into six categories (Tables 1-6): those with formal status – nuns, hospital sisters, anchoresses, vowesses; and those whose status is much less easy to define. The latter women, until now mistakenly labelled beguines, have been segregated into two categories, informal groups of women and other religious women, and receive special treatment in chapter five. Especially useful is the archaeological gazetteer of East Anglian nunneries, the best documented of the six groups.

Religious Women in Medieval East Anglia makes a significant contribution to medieval studies by correcting a number of misconceptions about female religious. The authors' prosopographical study of 250 nuns reveals that the majority did not

belong to socially elite families; instead, 64 per cent were lower gentry, the majority of abbesses and prioresses coming from this group. The records also reveal that the normal age of entry was between 14 and 17, that dowries were modest rather than high, with special provisions for the poor, and that the women managed their meagrely endowed houses with impressive efficiency. It is less easy from the sort of evidence the authors use to establish that the women had 'genuine vocations', but conversely it is curious that we have so long believed that they did not. Like Chaucer, visitation records were more concerned with failings than piety, but we have all read Chaucer, while a few have dipped into *The Myroure of our Ladye*, a far better source for the understanding of female monastic piety. East Anglian wills not only demonstrate the value testators placed on the prayers of nuns, but also challenge the facile objection made by some feminist critics that medieval religious were dependent on men for liturgical service. Although passages asking the nuns 'to celebrate' or 'to sing' for one's soul refer primarily to the celebration of high mass, it is significant that the focus is on the act of the sisters – their singing of the texts of the mass, rather than simply on the priestly action.

Gilchrist and Oliva state in the introduction that their research reveals a gender-related piety (p. 11), a thesis well beyond the bounds of this slim volume, and presumably one that Oliva will address in her forthcoming *The Convent and the Community in Late Medieval England* (publication now projected for 1996). In the current work the authors argue that there existed a symbiotic relationship between the convents and the local communities to which they were bound by familial ties, a thesis supported with evidence from archaeological, documentary, and iconographic sources. Convent architecture and organization reproduced that of the secular manor house, and wills reveal that yeomen farmers left gifts only to female houses, the middle gentry also favouring female over male houses. The iconographical evidence adduced is less convincing, in part because it is minimal, but more so because it in no way differentiates female religious piety from what we know about medieval piety in general and East Anglia in particular. The three-figure crucifixion is so commonplace that it can hardly be used as evidence for special female devotion to the cross when it appears on a monastery seal. Similarly, to suggest that the occurrence of female saints in parochial art at Wiggshall (St Mary the Virgin) may represent heightened awareness of local female monasteries and anchorholds (p. 78) ignores the fact that female saints are ubiquitous on rood screens and in painted glass in East Anglia. It was conventional to use sets of female martyrs to fill tracery lights, and where there is evidence of motive, for example, inscriptions on screens, it is clear that female donors typically selected their own patron saints for representation.

Since this volume is the first in a series, it may not be impertinent to suggest

that more rigorous editorial standards be applied in the future. Surely one of the readers should have queried the absence in the bibliography of significant and easily available works on East Anglian iconography. Similarly, a number of factual errors should have been corrected. Baptism was not performed on the church porch (p. 63); the little hours were not the same length as Vespers and Lauds (p. 53); and to relegate the mass to a subordinate status suggests a weak understanding of conventual piety. These are minor problems but troubling ones since the audience for the series will undoubtedly include readers whose understanding of the medieval liturgy is limited. Finally, although the general audience for whom the work is intended dictated minimal documentation, it is frustrating for specialists to look in vain for important information. For example, on what grounds was Phillipa de Beauchamp eliminated from the table of vowesses? She is buried at Necton and published work places her at Shouldham Priory.

Although the series being published by the Centre of East Anglian Studies will not be limited to the Middle Ages, the first three volumes scheduled for publication are medieval in scope. Readers of this first volume will look forward to Carole Rawcliffe's study of medieval hospitals, in which it is to be hoped that a number of the tantalizing questions raised by Oliva and Gilchrist about 'hospital sisters' will find more extensive treatment.

ANN ELJENHOLM NICHOLS

TRADE, DEVOTION AND GOVERNANCE: PAPERS IN LATER MEDIEVAL HISTORY Edited by D.J. Clayton, R.G. Davies and P. McNiven. 1994. Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd., Stroud. £30. ISBN 0-7509-0594-8

The latest volume in the series of fifteenth-century conference proceedings derives from the conference held at Manchester in 1989. It breaks with precedent by explicitly concerning itself with 'later medieval history', a form of words which allows the inclusion of papers on the fourteenth century. Otherwise it is very much the mixture as before: ten papers, mainly by younger scholars, which range widely in subject matter, and (it must be admitted) in quality. But the volume gets off to a high quality start with the paper by Edward Powell, who argues for less attention to patronage and more to constitutional issues in the study of the late middle ages. It is an argument which has been developed in print by other historians since he spoke, but Powell's comments remain worth reading – not least because he does not throw the baby out with the bathwater. As a legal historian, he is well aware that patronage interacts with constitutional principle and that neither should be studied in a vacuum.

The other mainstream 'governance' paper in the volume is John Watts' discussion of 'When did Henry VI's minority end?' which complements his article on royal counsel in *The English Historical Review* 1991. As in that article, Watts bases his argument on the belief that *any* formally constituted royal council (as distinct from informal counsel) denotes a limitation on royal authority and hence a response to political crisis. But this is an artificial distinction. No king could ever take (or would wish to take) all decisions for himself. Rather than two alternative models of decision-making, there was a spectrum of responsibility, with the uncounselled king at one extreme and continual councils with executive authority at the other. The mere existence of a council is therefore less important than the nature of the business it handled unilaterally. But this is not to belittle the central importance of counsel/council, and the paper has sensitive and valuable points to make about the nature of the challenge which Henry VI's inadequacies posed to accepted political behaviour.

Those inadequacies also crop up in Mary-Rose McLaren's paper on the London chroniclers, which, after some preliminary remarks about the nature of the London sources, focusses on the way in which chroniclers describe royal entries into the city. She argues that such passages can tell us something of the chroniclers' aims in writing history – although, disappointingly, she does nothing to test this perception against other (less descriptive) passages. Two papers are concerned with English involvement in France. John Milner looks at the largely forgotten campaign of 1412-13 led by Thomas Duke of Clarence, and argues that although the pro-Orleanist policy behind it was immediately abandoned, its demonstration of French weakness may have shaped Henry V's policy in 1415. Neil Jamieson gathers some examples of the recruitment of northerners to fight in France in the first half of the fifteenth century.

'Devotion' is the subject of two papers. Churchwardens' accounts have usually been quarried for evidence of changing liturgical practice. Julia Carnwath uses those of Thame to demonstrate their value for the social historian, particularly when combined with other evidence, and enters an appeal for fuller editions of the surviving manuscripts. Patricia Cullum explores the evidence for northern *maisonsdieu* and points out, justly, that many were intended to be no more than temporary measures, so that the short life of many of them should not be interpreted as 'failure'. This implies that some, at least, may have had particular beneficiaries in mind. A number of Beverley founders of *maisonsdieu*, for instance, seem to have seen it as a way of providing for elderly family servants.

The remaining papers are concerned with trade. Stephen O'Connor studies the careers of two fourteenth-century London merchants for what they tell us about contemporary perceptions of mercantile status, although his conclusions are flawed by a failure to get to grips with the rural gentry hierarchy against which he is

measuring the urban elite. Helen Bradley looks at the London business interests of Francesco di Marco Datini, and draws on his archive for useful evidence about trade and shipping at the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Foreign merchants are also the subject of Terence Adams' paper: a collection of examples drawn from the water bailiffs' accounts of Yarmouth. The text does not inspire confidence: irritatingly peppered with stray words kept in the original English and Latin for no apparent reason, which in places strongly suggest mistranscription.

As this suggests, the volume is something of a lucky dip: the best papers signposting new lines of study; the worst gathering detail apparently as an end in itself. The sheer range of subject matter means that most readers will find something of interest, but it is a book to borrow rather than buy.

ROSEMARY HORROX

MEDIEVAL LONDON WIDOWS 1300-1500. Edited by Caroline M. Barron and Anne F. Sutton. 1994. Hambledon Press, 102 Gloucester Avenue, London NW1 8HX, £37.50. For members direct from publisher, £20.

ISBN 1-85285-085-X

Researches into social history often say that accounts of individuals' experiences are not taken into account enough when studying themes in history. This superb book supports this theory, and indeed Caroline Barron alludes to it in her introduction. It is always enjoyable to read accounts of individuals' lives – and there is much storytelling to enjoy about these interesting women – but at the same time these biographies break new ground in the history of women in the Middle Ages. The readable and scholarly biographies, which are sketched out as much as is possible from surviving documentary evidence, are fascinating for what they tell us about the status and roles of widows in the mercantile City of London, and how they fitted into the largely male commercial world.

The book starts with an excellent introduction, which provides an in-depth commentary on the status of widows, and the value of the evidence used, in the various accounts which follow. It lays down the foundation for such research, and as such, would be of great value to students wanting to follow these themes further.

The opportunities for personal and economic independence open to a widow in the City of London in the period of 1300-1500 were greater, at least for the wealthy, than elsewhere. The City recognised the value of a widow being able to carry on her husband's business without interference, and there were sound business reasons behind its customary law. It entitled her, on the death of her husband, to dower which included her home until she remarried or died, a third share of land and tenements as a life interest and a share of his goods and chattels,

which might have included the tools and goods of his trade. This gave her immediate economic security, and personal security was furthered by her entitlement to be a Freewoman of the City providing she did not remarry.

Against this background, the subjects chosen led independent and self-sufficient lives. Alice Lynne, who was a vowess, had the remarkably lengthy widowhood of fifty-nine years, continuing her husband's wool business and customs house. Lady Joan Bradbury founded a chantry and a school, and endowed the Mercers' Company which still brings in an income today. Alice Claver, a silkwoman, wove a pattern of business and social relationships.

Equally interesting in these accounts are the range of sources used to add information. Household accounts, such as those for Elizabeth de Burgh, the records of the Mercers' Company, apprenticeship records, title deeds, letters and even surviving church bells are all testimony to the widows' entrepreneurial skills. However, wills and inventories provide the most information, and several of the contributors remark that the wills of women tend to be more diffuse than those of their male counterparts – summed up neatly and aptly by Caroline Barron in the case of Johanna Hill: 'she painstakingly unpicked the threads from which the fabric of her life had been woven'.

CAROLINE ADAMS

CHIVALRY: THE PATH OF LOVE. Introduction by Jeremy Catto. 1994. The Aquarian Press, Harper Collins, London, £4.99. ISBN 1-85538-375-6

This tiny book (only 61 pages), with an introduction by Jeremy Catto and an anonymous text, is part of a series entitled *Medieval Wisdom*, covering topics from Alchemy to Zen. It provides a vigorous, if very basic, account of the history of chivalry from the eleventh century to the end of the Middle Ages, pleasantly illustrated throughout both visually and by means of quotation from contemporary literature (notably the twelfth-century *Art of Courtly Love* by Andreas Capellanus).

Originating in ecclesiastical determination to tame the warlike aristocratic society of the Dark Ages, chivalry received a major boost from the First Crusade (preached by Pope Urban II in 1095): the combination of military prowess and militant religion unleashed by the crusading ideal soon gave birth to a code of honourable knightly conduct that found its most characteristic expression in the Knights of the Temple (established in 1118). Chivalry enjoyed its greatest flowering in southern France in the twelfth century when, under the patronage of aristocratic women like Eleanor of Aquitaine and her daughter Marie of

Champagne, the troubadours softened its military edge and transformed what had begun as a code of practice for Christian fighting men into a celebration of courtly love and heroic idealism. This new stress on love – and, not infrequently, adulterous love at that! – sat uneasily beside the church's teachings on marriage and chastity and, perhaps appropriately, it was the Papal-inspired Albigensian crusade of the early thirteenth century that went far to destroy the society in which it had most flourished.

By then, however, chivalry had spread throughout Western Europe and, indeed, continued to enjoy great popularity in aristocratic circles in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, albeit less as a code of love than a model of honourable behaviour in an age of increasingly professional warfare. Orders of chivalry like the Golden Fleece and Garter, and the tournaments of the times, put much stress on virtuous knightly conduct; popular histories like Froissart's *Chronicles* sought to present men like Edward the Black Prince as veritable paragons of chivalry; and, a sure sign of its continued prominence, chivalry was even parodied by Geoffrey Chaucer in his 'ideal' knight of the *Canterbury Tales*. Moreover, although chivalry probably never touched the lives of most men and women and, even in gentle circles, there tended to be a considerable gap between honourable conduct in theory and the actual practice of war, its importance should not be underestimated: even in the England of the Hundred Years War and Wars of the Roses, as Maurice Keen has put it, the cult of chivalry 'sought to touch and did touch a genuine chord in the martial traditions of aristocratic society'.

KEITH DOCKRAY

THE BATTLE OF TOWTON. A.W. Boardman. 1994. Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd., Stroud, £18.99.

ISBN 0-7509-0771-1

The battle of Towton on March 29 1461 was undoubtedly one of the most important in the whole of the 'Wars of the Roses'. It was essential for Edward of York, who had just been proclaimed king, to win the battle since if he lost he would have been named as a traitor with no possibility of pardon. Similarly the Lancastrian party had to win to keep any real chance of retaining power. This book is the first full length account to be written of the battle. It not only covers the battle but sensibly starts earlier to set the scene and also describes the campaign leading up to the battle, although up to 1460 it is a somewhat breathless sprint through events. The second battle of St Albans is the first to be described in any detail.

From the end of February 1461 onwards events are described as they happened using contemporary sources, starting with the march to the field and a useful discussion of the confusing skirmishes at Ferrybridge and Dintingdale on the day before the main battle, when the Lancastrians attempted to prevent the Yorkists from crossing the river Aire. The ground around and on which the main fighting took place is described with the eye of someone who knows the ground well, always useful when talking of a battle.

The course of the battle is described in detail. It was fought in a snowstorm, which must have added to the horrors. The placing of the troops is not such a problem in this battle as it is with many others from this period, it was fought on a plateau and the approximate position which all the troops occupied can be worked out relatively (only relatively) easily. The question of the numbers involved is discussed thoroughly. This is particularly important in this battle since it is always cited as the one in which more troops fought than at any other time in these civil wars. It is good to see that the author scales down some of the more outrageous figures, settling on about 25,000 men for the Lancastrians and about 20,000 for the Yorkists. This seems to me to still be too high, it seems unlikely that each of the peers present would be able to raise 2-3,000 men as Boardman assumes for example and we really do not have enough evidence to say how many (or which) towns raised how many troops for each side. The question of victualling this number of men (and indeed many horses) needs to be thought of too. However the author's reasoning is set out and can be agreed with or not.

It is slightly puzzling why the author discusses at some length the 'ambush' which the Lancastrians are said to have set on the left flank of the Yorkist army, rather similar to that set by the Yorkists at Tewkesbury. As he rightly says this 'ambush' has been mentioned in passing by many authors but that there is absolutely no contemporary reference to it. Some *very* slight evidence is brought forward for believing there could have been an ambush but it does really seem unnecessary to take up two pages discussing how sound would have been the tactical decision to set an ambush if one had been set.

One problem with this book is the restricted range of books and articles used (although the major contemporary sources are cited) and the over reliance on some secondary sources. This is illustrated in the author's discussion of the burial site of Lord Dacre. Dacre was killed at Towton and buried in Saxton churchyard where his tomb still exists. The inscription is damaged and Dacre's title is obscured. As Boardman says the correct title is 'of Gilsland', which his source transcribes as 'of Greystock'. This cannot possibly be correct, as T.M. Fallow, 'The Dacre Tomb in Saxton Churchyard', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, vol. 10 (1889), pp. 303-308 made clear. Boardman says that the confusion of titles does not matter anyway because in 1461 they were both held by the same man, but this was not true until

1525, when the then Lord Greystock succeeded the title of Dacre of Gillesland. Oddly Scofield's *Edward IV* and Ramsay's *York and Lancaster* are not in the list of secondary sources, nor such useful modern works as A.J. Pollard's *North-East England during the Wars of the Roses*, (1990). Not all statements are given a source, although it is difficult to be sure, and references are in general treated in a rather cavalier manner.

To conclude, this book has been written by a man who has thought long and deeply about the battle of Towton, and what warfare in the middle ages meant for the participants and the wounded. He is not entirely at home with the wider picture within which the battle was fought and the phrasing is sometimes infelicitous or unclear (a 'dissipated army' (?) for example, p. 46 line 8) but as an account of the battle it will certainly be essential to consult it in any future work. There are good maps, the index is adequate and the book is well illustrated.

PETER HAMMOND

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.

BOOKS

William Calin, *The French Tradition and the Literature of Medieval England*, University of Toronto Romance Series. 1995. 587 pages. University of Toronto Press. US\$ 75 (cloth), US\$ 29.95 (paper) ISBN 0-8020-0565-9 (cloth), 0-8020-7202-X (paper)

An extensive and detailed survey of the 'French presence' in English literature; chapters on 'Anglo-Norman narrative', 'the continental French legacy', 'English court poetry' and 'middle English romance' with analyses of many texts and genres.

Karin Tilmans, *Historiography and Humanism in Holland in the Age of Erasmus: Aurelius and the Divisiechroniek of 1517*, Bibliotheca Humanistica et Reformatorica, volume 51. 1992. xiv and 409 pages. De Graaf Publishers, PO Box 6, NL-2420-AA Nieuwkoop, the Netherlands. DFL 125, £50. ISBN 90-6004-419-3

The first major study of Aurelius and his historical work. He was a friend of such as Erasmus and Gaguin, and his world and national chronicle contributed greatly to the growing sense of Dutch national identity in his own time and later.

ARTICLES

Clive Burgess, 'A service for the dead: the form and function of the Anniversary in late medieval Bristol', *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, volume 105, 1987, pages 183-211.

Detailed study of the funeral services held on the anniversary of the death, their form and all their financial and social aspects.

Helen Castor, "'Walter Blount was gone to serve traytours": the sack of Elvaston and the politics of the North Midlands in 1454', *Midland History*, volume 19, 1994, pages 21-39.

Re-examines the events and Blount's career and concludes that the violence was the result of the 'political vacuum' and local enmities in the area, and not part of national controversies. Buckingham did support the perpetrators after the event but Warwick had no interest in the region.

James A. Doig, 'A new source for the siege of Calais in 1436', *English Historical Review*, volume 110, number 436, April 1995, pages 404-416

Discussion and edition of a letter from Henry VI to the abbot of Bury St Edmunds requesting soldiers to assist in the defence of Calais, another letter thanking the abbot, and a short Latin account of the siege. Explains their context and the subtleties of governmental and factional propaganda, especially Humphrey of Gloucester's.

D.A. Luckett, 'The Thames valley conspiracies against Henry VI', *Historical Research*, volume 68, 1995, pages 164-172.

Attempts to explain why there was disaffection at Oxford and Abingdon in 1486, focussing on Bishop Stillington and the University, Abbot John Sant and particularly Francis Lovell, linking them to many minor figures and suggesting a network of people, originally from outside the area, who had little hope of personal advancement after Richard III's death.

Philip Morgan, 'The death of Edward V and the rebellion of 1483', *Historical Research*, volume 68, 1995, pages 229-32.

A late fifteenth-century note stating that Edward V was killed the day after 26 June 1483 – the end of his reign – and his body *submersum* ('drowned') is linked to members of the Culpeper and Lewkenor families who took part in the 1483 rebellion and it is suggested that they may have been well informed.

David Roffe, 'The *Historia Croylandensis*: a plea for reassessment', *English Historical Review*, Notes and Documents, volume 110, number 435, February 1995, pages 93-108.

Examines the sources and importance of the so-called 'Ingulf's Chronicle', covering the years 1085 to 1108 but compiled in the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century, and therefore often neglected.

Anne F. Sutton, 'Civic livery in medieval London: the serjeants', *Costume*, number 29, 1995, pages 12-24.

The multifarious duties, the livery, maces, and fees of the serjeants of the mayor, chamber and sheriffs of the city of London from the twelfth century to *circa* 1500. The development of their official dress or livery and the increasingly symbolic nature of their maces or staves. Some details of the Power family, headed by Richard Power, swordbearer 1442-64, members of which held several offices around Guildhall in the later fifteenth century. Illustrated.

Notes on Contributors

Caroline Adams is an archivist working at West Sussex Record Office. Her first degree specialised in medieval history and she has an MA in Local and Regional History.

Richard Britnell teaches history at Durham University. He studies the social and economic history of the Middle Ages, and has written a book about Colchester between 1300 and 1525.

Keith Dockray Author of *Richard III: A Reader in History* (1988) and recent articles on fifteenth-century England. Currently a freelance lecturer and writer in Bristol.

Christopher Dyer Professor of Medieval Social History at University of Birmingham. Author of *Standards of Living in the Later Middle Ages* (1989).

Elizabeth Ewan is Associate Professor of History at University of Guelph, Canada. Her current research is on townswomen in medieval Scotland. She is author of *Townlife in Fourteenth-century Scotland* (1990).

Peter Hammond Co-editor *British Library Harleian Ms. 433, Coronation of Richard III, Road to Bosworth Field*. Editor of *Walpole Historic Historic Doubts*, and author of *The Battles of Barnet and Tewkesbury*.

P.D.A. Harvey is Professor Emeritus of Medieval History in Durham University. He works on the social and economic history of medieval England and also on the general history of cartography.

Michael A. Hicks teaches at King Alfred's College, Winchester, and is author of *Who's Who in Late Medieval England, Richard III and his Rivals* and *Richard III: The Man behind the Myth*.

Rosemary Horrox. Fellow of Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge. Author of *Richard III: A Study of Service*, Cambridge 1989.

Kenneth G. Madison teaches history at Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa, USA, and has had a recurring interest in the Woodville family for nearly forty years.

Sharon D. Michalove. Ph.D. candidate in history of education, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Currently working on the education of the English upper classes, 1399-1530.

Ann Eljenholm Nichols. Professor of English at Winona State University. Author of *Seeable Signs: the Iconography of the Seven Sacraments 1350-1544*, Boydell Press 1994.

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

John L. Watts is a lecturer at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth. He has just finished a book on politics and political ideas in the reign of Henry VI.

Instructions to Contributors to the Ricardian

Contributions are welcomed 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 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. Details need not be given in full for second and subsequent references to the same source. They must take the form of the following examples:

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.

Anyone interested in taking display advertisement space – full, half or quarter page – or in placing an insert should contact the Editor. (Classified advertisements should be sent to the Editor of the Bulletin).

Contributions for the December 1995 Ricardian must reach Miss Anne Sutton, 17 Enfield Cloisters, Fanshaw Street, London N1 6LD, by 30 September. Articles should be sent well in advance. Further advice on presentation may be obtained from the editor.

RICHARD III AND YORKIST HISTORY TRUST

The Politics of Fifteenth-Century England: John Vale's Book

Margaret L. Kekewich

Colin Richmond, Anne F. Sutton, Livia Visser-Fuchs, John L. Watts



An edition/calendar of BL, Add. Ms. 48031A, a memoranda book produced in the household of Sir Thomas Cook, mayor of London 1462-63, by his man-of-affairs, John Vale. Contains copies (often unique) of broadsides, private and public letters and literary and political texts c. 1420 to 1483: the manifestos of the Yorkists and Lancastrians, including those of Cade's rebellion, in the 1450s, letters concerning the northern wars of 1461-64 and the troubles of 1469-71; Sir John Fortescue's *Governance*; documents relating to the Cook family. Unique items include letters from Margaret of York and the Kingmaker.

Introductory essays relate the documents to their background: the evolution of Richard, Duke of York's political aims; the first reign of Edward IV; the dedication and dating of the *Governance* and the particular significance of this copy; the failure of Edward's second reign as exemplified by the collapse of the French alliance. The provenance and purpose of the book are assessed by studying the careers of the collectors of the documents: Thomas Cook (died 1478), his family, notably his son-in-law, John Forster; John Vale, his Bury St Edmunds background, his copy of Lydgate's *Serpent of Division* and his association with John Multon, stationer of London.

Approx. 300 pages; illustrated.

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