# Book Reviews

**ENGLAND AND THE LOW COUNTRIES IN THE LATER MIDDLE AGES.** Edited by Caroline Barron and Nigel Saul. 1995. Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd., Stroud, £35. ISBN 0-312-12589-5

As Caroline Barron observes in her succinct introduction to this collection of essays originally delivered to the ninth colloquium of fifteenth-century historians at Royal Holloway and Bedford College in 1991, there was throughout the later middle ages a symbiotic relationship between England and the Low Countries founded on close economic ties and reinforced by political links. As is usual with collections of essays originally delivered at a conference the topics are diverse, but the focus here is on commercial and cultural aspects of this relationship of different kinds and at different levels, largely from the English perspective. Vanessa Harding reveals the close links already established by the mid-fourteenth century between London and the Netherlands; over half of the dutiable cargoes coming into London in the later part of the century, carried by a large number of independent shippers, both English and 'Dutch', were loaded in the Low Countries, bringing in a whole range of manufactured goods of modest value for everyday use. The leading traders with the Netherlands, Alexandra Johnson demonstrates in a discussion based largely on the York records, were also closely involved in the development and production of the mystery plays; but while there were Flemish influences on English theatrical development, the two communities developed and sustained different dramatic traditions. Laura Wright, in an intriguing but brief examination of linguistic influences shows how several terms used in boat building and brewing were 'Dutch' in origin; and in particular she suggests that the famous 'Tabard' in Southwark was named not after the short sleeveless jacket of heraldic association, but a beer tank or barrel.

Most of the contributions concentrate not on bricks and beer, but luxury goods for aristocratic consumption and courtly influences brought over to England from the Low Countries. Scot McKendrick traces the manner in which from the late fourteenth century to the end of the fifteenth Netherlandish tapestries supplanted home produced wall hangings in noble houses, especially the royal palaces. 'Arras', he reminds us, applied to all finely woven illustrative tapestries from

northern France and the Low Countries, and was not just produced in the city of that name. Andrew Martindale discusses the wall paintings in Eton Chapel. Loosely Flemish in style, the works are of two different artists, the first influenced by Roger van der Weyden, the second, and later similar in style to Hugo van der Goes. The paintings concentrate on the miracles of the Virgin. One very complex legend of 'The Betrayed Empress', it is pointed out, involves gullible rulers, evil brothers, wronged queens and murdered nephews and just may have been executed, perhaps with politically-correct reference to the recent past, in 1486-7. Thirdly, Andrew Wathey, in a short piece which is slightly out of place in this volume, links the early fifteenth-century composer John Pycard with the recruitment of French musicians by John of Gaunt at the time of the Amiens peace negotiations in 1392.

And then there are books. In a discussion of book collections Anne Sutton and Livia Visser-Fuchs make two particularly valuable points: one, by comparing the lists of William Caxton and John Multon, the leading London scrivener, that at first stationers were well able to compete with the new technology, even to the extent of controlling the supply of texts; and the other that Edward IV was an independent collector with a discernably different taste, not unduly influenced by Louis de Gruthuyse. A similar point is reinforced by Malcom Vale in his comparison between the stone oratory built by Gruthuyse in the collegiate church of Our Lady at Bruges and Edward IV's royal pew, or oratory in St George's Chapel, Windsor. Contrary to received wisdom, he argues, it is unlikely that Edward was influenced by Gruthuyse's work, but was building on English precedents. Both these essays lead to an important suggestion; that Yorkist court culture was not, as has been supposed, an imitation of Burgundian style, but that both were manifestations of a common courtly culture.

This collection provides a stimulating, if inevitably incomplete foundation for a fuller examination of the relationships between England and the Low Countries in the Later Middle Ages. This was, Caroline Barron emphasises, an unequal economic partnership; the Low Countries were the more sophisticated and advanced, the supplier of finished and luxury goods. It is perhaps significant that by the fifteenth century there was already a migrant Flemish population in England of considerable size, not only traders, but also settlers, setting up prosperous new businesses. In contrast the only permanent English presence in the Low Countries was the small merchant community at Bruges. While the nobility and London bourgeoisie seem to have welcomed the Flemish connection, the commons seem to have been less enamoured. How are we to approach popular attitudes towards the Flemings in the south-east? From time to time, especially in the 1430s and 1460s, a virulent anti-Flemish feeling manifested itself (popular opinion which Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester and Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick respectively were happy

to exploit). The commercial links discussed here were with the eastern seaboard of England, and especially London, not the whole of the kingdom. Did the Flemish influence give the south-east a particular distinction, helping to mark it out from other parts of the realm? And thirdly, what significance should we attach to the distinction between the economic and social ties with Flanders and the political and courtly links with the dukes of Burgundy? Albeit they were the rulers of Flanders, the dukes of Burgundy were great princes of France, the trend-setters of French courtly life. When we discuss the influence of Burgundy on English aristocratic life-styles, are we really discussing the relationship with the Low Countries?

A.J. POLLARD

**A VICTIM OF ANONYMITY: THE MASTER OF THE SAINT BARTHOLOMEW ALTARPIECE.** Neil MacGregor. 1993. Thames and Hudson, London, £6.95. ISBN 0-500-55026-3

There is an entry in *Missing Persons*, the latest supplementary volume of the *Dictionary of National Biography*, which would gladden the heart of Neil MacGregor. Under 'The Alexis Master' we have a 'biography' of a twelfth-century English illuminator whose career can only be recovered from stylistic evidence, and has, like most medieval artists in northern Europe, only a *Notname*. This essay in the Walter Neurath Memorial Lecture series is devoted to a person whom MacGregor sees as one of the greatest of these anonymous artists, the Master of the Saint Bartholomew Altarpiece, who was working in Cologne in the late fifteenth-century.

As a result of the secularisation of religious property during the French revolutionary occupation of Cologne works of art lost their provenance and archives which might have facilitated the identification of their artists were destroyed. It is only because of a chance reference by Dürer that a name can be attached to the work of the leading Cologne artist of the mid fifteenth century, Stefan Lochner. For the rest we have to make do with clumsy titles such as the Master of 1456, the Master of 1458, the Master of the Lyversberg Passion, and the Master of the Saint Bartholomew Altar. So, as Stange has observed, we have to rely exclusively on stylistic analysis to determine the character of the artist. Neil MacGregor points out that anonymity precludes a biographical interpretation of the type to which the works of Dürer or Leonardo are subjected. However, it does not preclude speculation. Several of the Master of the Saint Bartholomew Altar's paintings were executed for the Cologne Charterhouse, and it has been suggested that he was himself a Carthusian. MacGregor mentions features such as the careful

observation of flowers which could be given a Carthusian gloss. However, the artist's delightfully characterised pairs of saints conversing seem to point to a more worldly, ebullient personality.

In his recent reordering of the early Renaissance paintings in the National Gallery Neil MacGregor has largely disregarded the conventional divisions into national schools, hanging works from Germany, the Netherlands, France and even Italy side by side. This has undoubtedly served to illuminate international stylistic and thematic links. In the same spirit MacGregor challenges the usual classification of the Master of the Saint Bartholomew Altarpiece as a Cologne artist, belonging to the 'German school'. It is true that the Master probably came from Gelderland, and is best described by that vague late medieval adjective 'Duche', which covered a variety of Germanic peoples. His earliest known work, dating from *c.* 1475, are the miniatures in the Hours of Sophia van Bylant, who lived at Doorwerth Castle near Arnhem. A book held by St Columba in one of his latest works is inscribed in an East Netherlandish dialect. The church tower in the background of the Portrait of a Man in the Wallraf-Richartz Museum, Cologne certainly resembles the Domtoren at Utrecht (although it could equally well represent O.L.V., Amersfoort, the Cunerakerk, Rhenen, the Janskerk, Maastricht, or the lost tower of St Adelgundis at Emmerich near Kleve). It is true, moreover, that Cologne art of the fifteenth century is strongly influenced by Netherlandish developments, as MacGregor demonstrates by a comparison between a Virgin and Child by Dieric Bouts and one by the Master of the Saint Bartholomew Altarpiece. Furthermore, certain features of the Master's style, such as the high domed foreheads, can be traced in North Netherlandish illumination. Despite all this, his work is best understood within the context of Cologne art, and displays several features which could be called typically German. This is illustrated by another of MacGregor's comparisons, between the Prado Deposition by Rogier van der Weyden, and the Master's Deposition in the Louvre. The emotion is heightened and the gestures more theatrical in the Master's version. There is a directness of expression, which as so often in German art can seem like a deliberately cultivated ugliness. In a Mass of St Gregory in the Diocesan Museum at Trier the profile of the pope is as grotesque as a Lutheran propaganda print. The artist's delight in convoluted, one might even say tortured, drapery, and in architectural forms that consciously evoke the entangled branches of a forest, are also typical of late fifteenth-century German art.

Thanks to the researches of Johann Jacob Merlo (not Merlos, as it is printed on p. 15) and Eduard Firmenich-Richartz we are well provided with the names of medieval Cologne artists. Glancing through Firmenich-Richartz's edition of Merlo's *Kölnische Künstler in alter und neuer Zeit* several possible candidates emerge. A link with the Carthusians is provided by the Meister Christoph who is

recorded in the Annals of the Cologne Charterhouse as having painted an altarpiece for them in 1471. However, this is more likely to be an artist of an older generation, such as the Master of the Life of the Virgin. Of Netherlandish origin, like the Master of the Saint Bartholomew Altarpiece, is Lambert von Luytge (fl. 1491-1500), who lived in Schildergasse. Others residents in that street included Clais Stoultze (fl. 1467-d. by 1505), who married the wonderfully-named Blytzgin Gutgin, and Johann von der Duyren the elder (fl. 1474-1494). Peter Alde, from Ahrweiler, fl. 1484-1504, is another artist working in the right period, though his place of origin may argue against such an identification. It may well be that renewed examination of the documentary evidence may well provide us with the name of the Master of the Saint Bartholomew Altarpiece. However, beyond establishing a firmer chronological framework it is doubtful whether an identification will contribute much to an understanding of the artist, whose character is most clearly revealed in his works themselves.

NICHOLAS ROGERS

**ENGLAND, ROME AND THE PAPACY 1417-1464: THE STUDY OF A RELATIONSHIP.** Margaret Harvey. 1993. Manchester University Press, £40.

ISBN 0-7190-3459-0

For some thirty years, Margaret Harvey has ploughed a rather lonely furrow as one of very few English scholars working in the field of fifteenth-century Anglo-papal relations. She has now brought the fruits of this research together in a book covering the half-century or so between the accession of Martin V and the death of Pius II. Most of us interested in the late medieval English church and its relations with the papacy have been content with the immensely valuable published *Calendars of Papal Letters.* As her extensive bibliography reveals, Dr Harvey has gone further than this, making particularly telling use of the newly opened archives of the papal Penitentiary and those of the Venerable English College in Rome.

Her study is divided into three sections: the first looks at the day to day contact between England and Rome. She then moves on to tackle the high politics of the period, before concluding with a study of the theory and belief which underlay the actual contact between England and Rome. As its title ('Personnel') implies, her first section is largely prosopographical. She first examines the careers of royal proctors, concluding that, in order to proceed smoothly, Anglo-papal relations needed a resident royal representative in Rome, a fact confirmed by their increasing permanence and importance later in the century. She next discusses

other Englishmen resident in Rome and the parts they played in central papal administration, pausing briefly to examine how such personal contact between England and Italy affected cultural developments. These English *curiales* were closely associated with the hospices of St Thomas and St Edmund, soon to combine into the English College. Dr Harvey has made interesting use of the College's archives in considering the hospices' role as a base for English visitors, touching on those who came as pilgrims to Rome, their motives and what they might expect to find there.

Moving her attention to England, she examines the role of the papal collector and other papal agents; methods of conveying revenue to Rome without coming into conflict with English law; and the means and dangers of communication between England and Rome. Dangers and difficulties of a different kind, in the form of English statutes and general opposition to papal provisions, were encountered by those papal and royal servants who might fairly have expected to be rewarded with English benefices. Serving the king in England was a much surer way to material promotion than serving either him or the pope in Rome. Nevertheless, papal grace was necessary for those seeking more spiritual benefits; and in a chapter which moves away from the strictly clerical personnel who dominate most of the first section, Harvey investigates papal dispensations and privileges sought by individuals and institutions, considering in some detail the long campaign for the canonization of St Osmund of Salisbury and Henry VI's tireless pursuit of privileges for Eton and King's Colleges.

It is against this background of constant day to day contact, that Dr Harvey's investigation of the 'high politics' of 1417-64 is set. From the papal point of view, relations were dominated by the desire to secure the abolition of the statutes against papal provisions and to negotiate peace between England and France so that those two countries could join together in Crusade. It is a fascinating story. In some instances, particularly with reference to disputes with Martin V over provisions, Harvey is repeating work undertaken elsewhere by herself and others. Nevertheless, occasionally one feels that too much knowledge has been assumed and one would like a fuller narrative of events. Most satisfying, perhaps, is her discussion of the role played by Pius II and his legate Francesco Coppini in the events leading to the accession of Edward IV. Here she clearly explains how Coppini's actions, and papal reactions to them, largely developed from Pius II's Franco-Italian policy: a useful reminder of the need to avoid insularity in history.

In her concluding examination of the theory and belief which reflected and influenced workaday and diplomatic contact, Dr Harvey considers the English contribution and reaction to the conciliar movement. She concludes that, while interested and, in some cases (notably Thomas Gascoigne) opinionated, the English were not extreme conciliarists. Rather, English opposition to the pope, such as it

was, depended on a high view of the episcopate, largely derived from Grosseteste. There was, however, general agreement that the English church, and its bishops, owed obedience to the pope, even if that obedience was not always such as the pope desired.

Dr Harvey's stated intention is to fulfil the need for 'a study ... of the normal relationship before the tension of Henry VIII's divorce and continental heresy intervened'. Although it is still desirable that someone (Harvey herself?) should satisfy her original intention of carrying the study on to 1517, clearly an attempt to have done so, in one volume would have produced too unwieldy a book. As it is, one's main criticism of the present book is that it touches on too many subjects too lightly. In almost every instance one would like both more detail and more discussion. However, if she does not always give the full story, Dr Harvey's very comprehensive footnotes and bibliography indicate where more information can be found. I have seldom read a book which has made me want personally to set about researching so many of the areas it touches on. If the work has a similar effect on others, Dr Harvey may no longer find herself so alone in the field. Henceforth, this book will be an essential starting point for anyone, student or scholar, interested in any aspect of the English church and the papacy in the period.

ROSEMARY HAYES

**GOTHIC TO RENAISSANCE: Essays on Sculpture in England.** Phillip Lindley. 1995. Paul Watkins, Stamford, £30 (hbk), £19.95 (pbk).

ISBN 1-871615-23-2; ISBN 1-871615-76-3

Over the last decade Phillip Lindley has established himself as a very considerable scholar of later medieval and early Renaissance sculpture in England, as this collection of his recent papers amply demonstrates. In a substantial introduction (well over a third of the book's length), Lindley examines the development of English sculpture in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, as the prelude to a significant reinterpretation of the important contribution of Italian sculptors (especially Pietro Torrigiano) at work in England during the reigns of Henry VII and Henry VIII. This is followed by eight essays on specific subjects or themes, ranging from a bishop's tomb (William de Luda, died 1298) and a late fifteenth-century statue of an anonymous king in Ely cathedral to the early sixteenth-century sculptural programme of Bishop Richard Fox's chantry chapel in the great cathedral at Winchester. Both in the introductory survey and the specialist chapters there is incisive and thought-provoking discussion of historiography and current

debates engaging the attention of art historians, sculptural materials and methods, the place of sculpture in architectural settings, and the relationship between patrons and artists. There are no fewer than 127 well-produced plates and a range of helpful drawings and diagrams, all securely anchored to the text, as well as careful analysis of surviving documentary evidence. Throughout, however, Lindley is also concerned to make us aware of just how much has been lost, particularly as a result of the Iconoclasm so disastrously unleashed by the Protestant Reformation: for instance, only one undamaged figure remains of the 262 statues that once decorated Bishop John Alcock's chantry chapel in Ely cathedral, while virtually all Bishop Fox's sculptures at Winchester were smashed or very seriously damaged on the orders of his Elizabethan successor Robert Horne.

Of most interest to non-specialists, perhaps, are the four introductory essays. Lay figure-sculptors moving from one commission to another, Lindley argues, already existed in England by the late twelfth century. Static, secular workshops, probably specialising in a single category of images such as tomb effigies, clearly began functioning during the thirteenth century: indeed, by the end of the century, professional figure-sculptors might choose either to continue a peripatetic existence or operate from a fixed location. Such men tended to be indigenous English craftsmen and there might well be collaboration on major commissions: for instance, the magnificent tomb of Richard Beauchamp Earl of Warwick in St Mary's church, Warwick, seems to have been the work of several artists operating under the careful direction of patrons. By the later fifteenth century, however, Englishmen were beginning to be challenged by foreign sculptors, first from the Netherlands and then, in early Tudor times, men trained in Renaissance Italy. It is the latter who most engage Lindley's attention. Italian sculptors, he suggests, brought to England a taste for realistic portrait busts in terracotta and the employment of white marble; the design and execution of gilt-bronze effigies and their marble tombs tended to become, for the first time, the responsibility of a single individual; master-masons, indeed, increasingly gave way to artists who designed and supervised whole monuments, men proficient in architectural design, sculpting and painting, whose versatility transformed medieval conceptions of art and artists along humanist lines. Most important, by far, was the Florentine Pietro Torrigiano, contemporary and rival of Michelangelo, whose self-confidence and profound belief that sculpture was no mere mechanical art helped secure him commissions – notably those for the tomb of Henry VII's mother Margaret Beaufort (1511) and the double tomb of Henry VII himself and his wife Elizabeth of York (1512), both in Henry VII's chapel in Westminster Abbey – which were both lucrative and prestigious.

Two of the eight *detailed* studies here, both co-authored with the sculpture conservator Carol Galvin, also focus on Torrigiano's work: the portrait bust of

Henry VII now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, a notably life-like terracotta representation of the king in early middle age, and the wall tomb of Dr John Yonge (Dean of York and Master of the Rolls, d. 1516) in the Public Record Office, recently restored to its full Renaissance glory. Three essays concentrate on sculpture in Ely cathedral, the subject of Lindley's 1985 PhD thesis: the elaborate free-standing monument to Bishop William de Luda, the imagery in the cathedral's early fourteenth-century Octagon, and the high quality royal statue in Bishop Alcock's chantry chapel. There are also interesting chapters on the now lost funeral effigy of Edward II (and its probable influence on that of Edward III in Westminster Abbey, the first surviving funeral effigy of a medieval English king, a self-contained image deliberately intended to convey the third Edward's likeness); two late fifteenth-century statues in Eton college, the only known figure-sculptures outside Westminster by the master-sculptor of Henry VII's chapel; and the scant surviving evidence of the images once gracing Bishop Fox's chantry at Winchester.

Certainly, this collection provides considerable insight into the fascinating world of the art historian, particularly the problems of dating sculpture, establishing the identity of sculptors, and the painstaking task of restoring scant and often badly damaged medieval work. It is a pity, though, that virtually all the illustrations are in black and white. The only two in colour serve strongly to whet the reader's appetite for more, especially as Torrigiano's terracotta image of Henry VII (front cover) is so very realistic and Guido Mazzoni's bust of the young Henry VIII (rear cover) seems so graphically to capture the nascency of a bombastic tyrant.

KEITH DOCKRAY

**THE WARS OF THE ROSES: And the Lives of Five Men and Women in the Fifteenth Century.** Desmond Seward. 1995. Constable, London, £25.00

ISBN 0-009-474100-X

This book owes its unusual sub-title to the fact that it describes the events of 1455 to 1487 from the point of view of five particular men and women who lived during this period. The five are 'a squire' (William Hastings, later Lord Hastings), 'a nobleman', (John de Vere, thirteenth Earl of Oxford), 'a great lady', (Margaret Beaufort), 'a priest' (John Morton, later Archbishop of Canterbury), and a 'harlot', ('Jane' Shore). These are perhaps slightly eccentric descriptions, Hastings was also 'a nobleman', nor is 'priest' the best description of Morton's status. These five

were chosen because they all opposed Richard III, all being accused by him of plotting against him, and were partly instrumental in bringing about the battle of Bosworth where he was finally defeated and killed. The book also aims to show the world which these five people inhabited.

It is a competent and very readable account of the period covered, giving an overview of events. To judge from his Bibliography the author has read the sources and probably most of the work published in the last few years. However since he frequently does not give his sources it is often not possible to check his statements. This leads to a feeling of unease in some places where it looks as if he has gone beyond the source. The author favours the 'anecdotal' approach to events, picking out personal stories from the chroniclers. This is fair enough, it can bring people to life, or illuminate events, but used without care can lead to misleading statements. Quoting a line from the Edward IV death bed scene from Shakespeare, with the comment that the 'affecting scene is true enough' (p. 253) is certainly going beyond your contemporary sources. Seward also makes much use of Thomas More's work.

The book is divided into chapters written from the point of view of each of the five men and women mentioned above. Describing the course of events in this way works quite well, although it does make it rather disjointed at times, and it might be difficult for someone coming fresh to the period to pick up the thread each time. It must not be read uncritically. Seward has a very irritating habit of repeating stories which he well knows are not true, as if reluctant to give them up – for example that Richard and Anne were anointed naked from the waist up, despite having just cited the *Coronation of Richard III,* (Sutton and Hammond) where this is conclusively disproved. To avoid giving 'too archaic an impression' the author uses 'Mr' and 'Mrs' throughout – 'Mrs Shore' and 'Mr Lambert' for example. This may be found irritating rather than helpful.

The book has a useful 'Who's Who' at the beginning with brief biographies of everyone mentioned and a 'Chronology' of events from 1420 to 1527 (the latter the possible date of death of 'Jane' Shore). The production is excellent and the book is a pleasure to handle. It is well illustrated, with excellent colour plates, and if the author hardly pioneered the use of brasses as illustrations as he claims, he makes excellent use of them in this book.

PETER HAMMOND

**THE ENGLISH HOSPITAL 1070-1570.** Nicholas Orme and Margaret Webster. 1995. Yale University Press, Newhaven and London, £35. ISBN 0-300-06058-0

A familiar English proverb warns readers not to judge a book by its cover. On the jacket of this particular volume is a striking full colour reproduction of Adam Elsheimer's painting of St Elizabeth of Hungary tending the sick. Executed in about 1598, it depicts a hospital ward, probably at Marburg, dominated by a statue of the infant Christ in his mother's arms, while beneath them the saint and her female attendants give food and drink to the patients. Our expectations are immediately aroused. The first comprehensive study of the medieval English hospital to appear for almost ninety years will, surely, adopt a European perspective? It will, we assume, examine the role of women as dispensers of charity and healing. And the sometimes uneasy relationship between spiritual and earthly medicine will certainly merit consideration, along with the intriguing question of medicalisation. Why did England lag so far behind the continent in this respect? By this point the prospective reader may be asking more challenging questions about the impact of demographic change, of rising and falling living standards among the poor, and, crucially, of the late medieval shift towards 'care in the community' with all its dismal implications for the truly destitute. In that event, he or she will need to consult another book. None of these topics receive more than passing comment from Professor Orme and Dr Webster, whose principal concern is to present an institutional history, charting the origins, functions, inmates, finances and eventual demise of the hospital before 1570. In this, they adhere loyally – even doggedly – to the model chosen by R.M. Clay, whose *Mediaeval Hospitals of England* appeared at the beginning of the century, and has, *faute de mieux*, served as a basic reference work ever since.

In offering a replacement, complete with the scholarly apparatus which Clay's work lacked, the authors have performed a valuable service. They are to be congratulated on the production of a book which is handsomely illustrated, accessible and carefully structured with the student or general reader in mind. But it is a pity that they did not venture further beyond the format of the original. Hospital history has travelled a long distance over the last two decades, impinging on many other disciplines in ways not fully explored here. The task of producing a survey which will take account of developments in economic, social, urban, medical and religious history is certainly a challenge, and no single volume is likely to satisfy on all counts. One might expect, however, that a survey which will undoubtedly figure on many undergraduate reading lists would show greater familiarity with recent research. Peregrine Horden's lively review of the historiography, in *Social History of Medicine* I (1988), is not listed in the bibliography; nor is any reference made to the vast literature on continental

hospitals as discussed there. The authors' contentious (and to this reviewer untenable) argument that the founders and governors of hospitals were bound by 'mental restrictions' which made them parochial in outlook (p. 74) may explain their own reluctance to look across the Channel. Yet, for example, the 1263 statutes of the Heiligen Geist Hospital in Lubeck, with their emphasis upon the confession of sins before admission and daily prayer for the souls of benefactors, reflect exactly the same preoccupation with the next world as most English foundations of the period. Some lacunae are striking: joint and separate publications by Katherine Park and John Henderson, whose work touches directly upon Henry VII's plans for the Savoy hospital in London, are nowhere cited, nor have the authors used any of the major studies produced in France over the last two decades reassessing the place of the leper in society.

Students of women's history may feel especially aggrieved at the disproportionately small space occuped in this book by nurses and female patients. In view of the attention paid by American academics, such as Monica Green, to women's role as health providers, rather more might perhaps have been said about levels of care, the implementation of the *regimen sanitatis* and the use of herbal preparations. 'The Book of the Active Life' of the sisters of the Hotel Dieu in Paris contains fascinating information about the quotidian round of the nurse, which would apply equally well to hospitals such as St Leonard's, York, or St Mary's Bishopsgate, in London. It is, moreover, hard to agree that little was done to accommodate women as patients: Patricia Cullum's findings for York show that many late medieval almshouses preferred to accept elderly women rather than men; and the same is true of Norwich. Some of these omissions may result from the unfortunate decision to split the book into two parts, the second of which offers a detailed survey of hospitals (but not other forms of charitable provision) in the South West, along with a gazetteer of houses in Devon and Cornwall in the style of the Victoria County History. This section, although of considerable interest, ought perhaps to have been published separately, leaving more space for a discussion of wider issues.

In other respects, however, the book has much to recommend it. The style is clear and blissfully free of jargon. The authors provide interesting insights into hospital life, and use an impressive range of local examples to illustrate the different functions of an institution which we today have come to associate solely with the care of the sick. Sections on education, finance, proposals for reform and the effects of the Dissolution are especially informative. One would like to know more about the effects of lollard propaganda on larger hospitals, which may well have been bastions of religious orthodoxy, used by the Church Militant in its fight against heresy. An exploration of the liturgical and musical activities of these institutions (not essayed here) suggests that such was the case, and also places the

role of hospitals as guarantors of the titles of new ordinands in a rather different light. Some of the plans and photographs, handsomely produced throughout the text, give the unmistakable impression of opulence and splendour, of overambitious building schemes and the 'hye towres' villified by lollard preachers. In fact, rather more could have been made of the illustrative material, which is not always fully integrated into the text. Roberta Gilchrist's illuminating study of the material culture of the medieval hospital in *Contemplation and Action: The Other Monasticism* (Leicester 1995), which appeared shortly after this book, shows the way.

CAROLE RAWCLIFFE

# 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.

## ARTICLES

*Angleterre et les pays bourguignonnes: relations et comparaisons (XVe-XVIe s.). Rencontres d'Oxford (22 au 25 septembre 1994), Publications du Centre Européen d'Etudes Bourguignonnes (XIVe-XVIe s.),* number 35, 1995, contains the following articles of Ricardian interest:

M. Vale, 'England and the Burgundian dominions: some cultural influences and comparisons'; G. Small, 'Angleterre et Bourgogne: deux voies pour la croisade aux XIVe et XVe siècles?'; J.H.A. Munro, 'Anglo-French competition in the international cloth trade, 1350-1520'; M. Boone, 'Les toiles de lin des Pays-Bas bourguignons sur le marché anglais (fin XIVe-XVIe siècles)'; M. Ballard, '"... Du sang de Lancastre je suis extrait ..." Did Charles the Bold remain a loyal Lancastrian?'; L. Visser-Fuchs, '"Il n'a plus lion ne lieppart, qui voeulle tenir de sa part": Edward IV in exile, October 1470 to March 1471'; L.-E. Roulet, 'Présence et engagement des combattants anglais à Grandson et à Morat'; C.S.L. Davies, '"Roy de France et roy d'Angleterre". The English claims to France, 1453-1558'; S. Gunn, 'State development in England and the Burgundian dominions, *c.* 1460-*c.* 1560'; D.A.L. Morgan, 'The cult of St George *c.* 1500: national and international connotations'.

Wendy R. Childs, '1492-1494: Columbus and the discovery of America', *Economic History Review*, volume 48, number 4, 1995, pages 754-68.

A review of literature provoked in particular by the recent burst of quincentenary activities. Concentrates on Columbus, the immediate European economic setting and the literature most easily available in England. For Ricardians this includes works dealing with exploration in the Atlantic before Columbus, the sophisticated maritime economy already capable of exploiting far-distant markets, shipping and navigation, and the background of intellectual inquiry that produced Columbus's own 'mental furniture'.

C.S.L. Davies, 'The Crofts: creation and defence of a family enterprise under the Yorkists and Henry VII', *Historical Research*, volume 68, number 167, October 1995, pages 241-65.

Detailed examination of the careers of Sir Richard Croft and his brothers, Richard (sic) and Thomas. Sir Richard was treasurer of the household of Edward, Prince of Wales, of Richard III and Henry VII, and a leading figure of the West Midlands and West Marches; he died aged about eighty in 1509. Their careers embraced not only politics (the Crofts were in most camps), administration and violence, but also commerce and the search for 'the Isle of Brasile'.

Mary C. Erler, 'English vowed women at the end of the middle ages', *Medieval Studies*, volume 57, 1995, pages 155-203.

A detailed examination of this profession, its origins and popularity, as well as the reasons behind its adoption by a large number of well-to-do women. Includes a list of the 251 vowesses known to date, 1231-1537.

John Finlayson, 'Guido de Columnis' *Historia Destructionis Troiae, The 'Gest Hystorial' of the Destruction of Troy,* and Lydgate's *Troy Book:* translation and the design of history', *Anglia,* volume 113, 1995, pages 141-162.

Argues against the accepted view that the *Gest Hystorial* is *merely* a translation; like Lydgate's *Troy Book* it is 'heroic tragedy', asserting its fidelity to truth and presenting the Trojan ancestors of the English as models to follow. (Richard III owned a copy of Guido's text.)

Linda Georgianna, 'The Clerk's Tale and the grammar of assent', *Speculum,* volume 70, 1995, pages 793-821.

An attempt to explain this 'most elusive and least reassuring' of Chaucer's Tales (one which Richard of Gloucester owned). Concludes that Griselda's steadfastness in the face of her husband's cruelty is a 'numinous experience' experience – she is a type of Christ himself whose suffering is exemplary and redemptive of the frailty of her husband and all mankind.

Olga Horner, '*Fulgens and Lucres:* an historical perspective', *Medieval English Theatre*, volume 15, 1993, pages 49-86.

Imaginative and elaborate description, partly inspired by actual performance, of the 'entertainment' and its background: the 'dichotomy between public display and sobriety evident in the Tudor court'; links it particularly to the life and life-style of Lady Margaret Beaufort, and emphasises its legal aspects. *Fulgens and Lucres* was a dramatic adaptation of the *Declamacion of Noblesse* printed by Caxton in 1481.

Derek Pearsall, 'Chaucer's tomb: the politics of reburial', *Medium Aevum*, volume 64, part 1, 1995, pp. 51-73.

Gives reasons for Chaucer's wish to be buried in Westminster Abbey; discusses the evidence for the location of the first tomb before the chapel of St Benedict, and for the epitaph written by Surigone and printed by Caxton, *c.* 1478, with the additional four lines which have proved so troublesome to commentators. Concludes that Caxton may be worthy of the credit he frequently receives for the placing of the tablet and epitaph by the tomb. The reburial by Nicholas Brigham in 1556 was part of the Marian campaign to reimpose the traditional religion and reclaim England's greatest poet to the old faith; a detailed appraisal of the new tomb.

John Scattergood, 'Skelton's *Magnyfycence* and the Tudor royal household', *Medieval English Theatre*, volume 15, 1993, pages 21-48.

Links Skelton's morality play closely to the expulsion of some of Henry VIII's favourites from the court in 1519 and to theories about the proper running of the royal household as laid down in the ordinances of Edward IV and Henry VIII; with detailed references to the texts of these ordinances.

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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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