

Book Reviews

VIOLENCE, CUSTOM AND LAW: THE ANGLO-SCOTTISH BORDER LANDS IN THE LATER MIDDLE AGES. Cynthia J. Neville. 1998. Edinburgh University Press, £16.95. ISBN 0-7486-1073-1.

Those familiar with Dr Neville's work might have expected that this book would have brought together her series of important articles on law and society in the borders in one summative overview. In reality the title disguises the fact that she has struck out in a slightly different direction to provide for the first time a clear narrative of the development of a code of international law in the later middle ages which sought to deal with the intermittent violence and breaches of the truce which regularly punctuated Anglo-Scottish relationships throughout the period. Her thesis is as follows. The rudimentary process for dealing with cases involving subjects of two realms was first codified in the mid-thirteenth century. But the Wars of Independence launched by Edward I set these aside. Only after the release of David I were attempts to provide a peace keeping system revived as Edward III sought to forge a new *modus vivendi* with the Scots. Although sorely stretched during the later decades of the century as the Scottish counter-offensive gathered pace, it survived until 1399. Following the deposition of Richard II, however, the English abandoned all efforts to live peaceably with their northern neighbour so that under both Henry IV and Henry V conditions reverted to the level of lawlessness experienced in the early fourteenth century. It was the minority government of Henry VI, taking advantage of the release of James I in 1424, which restored the custom of holding regular tribunals, or march days. Indeed it was at this time that the system which was deployed throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth-centuries was finally set in place. Thereafter, with tinkering here and there, it operated largely unchanged until the union of the kingdoms.

The thesis is founded on a painstaking analysis of the series of agreements drawn up during successive treaties between the kingdoms. It lays bare the thinking of both English and Scottish governments as they moved to an uneasy acceptance of long periods of truce and responded to the demands of their subjects for an effective

system of curtailing and containing the worst excesses of cross-border violence. How much violence there was during nominal truces, Dr Neville acknowledges, is hard to determine because of the paucity of evidence left by the proceedings of march days which were customarily unrecorded. The work of cross-border tribunals was supplemented by the assizes and sessions of the peace, which from time to time received cases against the enemy, but their records are sparse, especially for the fifteenth century and moreover the justices of assize frequently declined to visit the northernmost counties of England because of the supposed insecurity.

Nevertheless the case is convincingly made from the surviving evidence, including complaints of the commons and letters to the crown, that the counties of Northumberland and Cumberland were particularly lawless during the reigns of the first two Lancastrians. This is a salutary conclusion for members of the Henry V fan club to take note. Why this was so is harder to discern. Dr Neville argues that it was because Henry IV revived the claim to sovereignty with serious intent and that he and his son, who followed his father in this respect, were determined not to compromise with the Scots. This may be so, but it is a shame that she has not explored local politics in greater detail. The assumption that Henry, first Earl of Northumberland, as the head of the most powerful family in the region, was an advocate of peaceful co-existence may not be valid. His claim to Jedforest, his long-standing dispute with the Earl of Douglas, the glorifying of his, and especially his eldest son's, military exploits by Hardyng and in ballad all suggest an alternative explanation that perhaps he was the one who wanted to revert to an aggressive policy towards Scotland which Henry IV had little choice but to endorse; and that after 1405 the exile of his family in Scotland and the continuing flirtation of their hosts with the claims of phantom Richard IIs committed the Lancastrian regime, at least until 1416, to an aggressive policy towards Scotland. This would not explain the refusal of Henry V to reverse his policy thereafter, but it might suggest a more complex explanation than given here. However, while one might wish to discuss the politics that lay behind it, the fact of Lancastrian intransigence, and of the consequent damage it did to the borders and borderers, now appears indisputable.

On Richard III readers will find little that is new. Unfortunately Alexander Grant's essay on Richard III and Scotland was published too late for Dr Neville to use. But she is broadly in agreement. She confirms that while Richard was initially belligerent towards the Scots, and, as Duke of Gloucester, not always conscientious in his observation of the truce and defusing of tension, once he determined on peace in 1484, he took steps to make sure that the truce was effectively kept and cross-border incidents quickly handled. Because the narrative is brought to an end in 1502, the question of whether conditions deteriorated on the borders after the accession of Henry VIII and the renewal of more frequent war cannot be explored.

In the light of the words of caution about the paucity of evidence from the earlier centuries one still cannot be certain whether historians of the early Tudors are confronted with fuller and more graphic evidence of an old and continuing problem generated by governments more anxious to impose their authority, or whether conditions actually worsened as a result of royal policy. One suspects that the vital correlation after 1292 is with open war. The more frequently border warfare occurred, prosecuted for the most part by licensed border privateers, the more difficult it may have been for a government to recover control thereafter. But one thing is clear. No longer can any historian of the late-medieval borders claim that matters improved with the Tudors. The sustained development of systematic procedures of international peacekeeping was the achievement of the all too often unjustly maligned government of the minority of Henry VI, sustained during his majority and under the Yorkists. This is an excellent and stimulating essay about the borders which will be indispensable to their late-medieval historians for years to come. One hopes that a second edition will give Dr Neville the opportunity to clear up some unfortunate confusion over the title of John of Lancaster, Duke of Bedford, the second son of Henry IV, who in many ways emerges as the man who might be credited with laying 'the foundations of the fifteenth-century, and later still, the Tudor, system of border law'.

A. J. POLLARD

THE ALIEN COMMUNITIES OF LONDON IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY. THE SUBSIDY ROLLS OF 1440 & 1483-84. Edited by J. L. Bolton. 1998. Richard III and Yorkist History Trust, Paul Watkins, Stamford, £25. Special price to members from the Sales Office, £22.50, including p. and p.

ISBN 1-900289-15-6.

The study of late medieval urban migration is, at least as far as continental Europe is concerned, greatly distorted by the fact that most of the registers of new townsmen only reflect a fragment of what must have been a much larger immigration. New townsmen do register and pay for citizenship, either because they expect to stay a long time in their new town, or because they want to occupy an important position among its economic or political elite, or for both reasons. Sources that inform us about all foreigners present in a given town at a certain moment are relatively rare. The English fiscal documentation, in many respects exceptional, contains such sources: these are the rolls of a subsidy, a levy resembling poll-tax, on all aliens in London. First levied in 1440 for a period of

three years, the tax became a permanent annual institution (here the originality of the English model comes to a halt), surviving even the changes of dynasty in the fifteenth century. Since survival of the rolls (conserved in the PRO Class E 179) is patchy and some are less legible, the present edition offers two of the better examples, for the years 1440 and 1483-84. The value of the records edited goes beyond the obvious utility they have for the study of socio-economic or demographic history or onomastics. The list of 1440 allows us to correlate the aliens mentioned in it to the lists of 'Flemings' suing for letters of protection in 1436. The rapidly changing political relations between the Burgundian dukes and the English kings were responsible for serious 'ethnic' clashes in the English capital. Changing politics often had direct economic consequences and popular feeling in London turned against the alien community (it did so in 1436 and again in 1468) which was seen as a threat to the livelihood of Englishmen. Violence against the alien community was a bargaining chip used by the crowd in its relation to the city's ruling elite in the sixteenth century, and it may have been so long before. In order to understand this often very real violence, a more complete view of the alien community has been needed. Thanks to Bolton's edition of the two subsidy rolls, this is now available.

The elegant introduction tries to determine first the importance of the alien presence in London: in 1483-84 aliens represented, all groups exempted from the tax included, at least six per cent of the population (a sharp increase compared to the two to four per cent previously suggested by Sylvia Thrupp). The distribution of the aliens throughout the city was less surprising. Immigrants were concentrated around the point of entry or in the poorer suburbs, hence a great concentration in the waterfront parishes, Southwark and in the suburbs to the north and east: the exact location of the better known cases of 'xenophobia' of the sixteenth century. The London aliens were part of an artisan-craftsman population based on the family unit of production. A majority of them catered for the basic needs of the Londoners, but wealthy immigrants working in the luxury trades were not absent, and formed a distinct minority. Most of the householders employed male live-in servants, the most important group among the immigrants. They were presumably needed, (though the question of the permanency of the migrants is a very tricky one), to make up shortages in the labour market, more as part of a general need for male workers rather than because a specialist skilled workforce was required. The question of nationalities is again a difficult one: 1,307 out of the 1,595 aliens whose nationality is mentioned in the 1483 subsidy are registered as Germans. A closer look at the places of birth given in the letters of protection sold to the 'Flemings' in 1436 reveals that most of the immigrants indeed came from the Burgundian Netherlands and thus reflect a North Sea migration, most importantly from Holland and Brabant, with Flanders and Zeeland in third and fourth place.

Bolton has done a fine job as far as the edition and identification of persons and places is concerned. The strange 'Warmenhuizen' may read palaeographically as Arnemuiden (p.32), and for Zierikzee read Zierikzee (p.33), 'Lewe' (p.132, n.314) should perhaps be Zoutleeuw (Brabant). Most of the Burgundian principalities (even to some extent Flanders) belonged to the German empire, which may explain the confusion in the sources. The subsidy rolls however confront us not with evidence for the massive immigration of impoverished Flemish weavers, as traditional historiography, drawing on older examples of emigration, would have it, but rather with evidence of chain migration, young workers looking for economic and political security, followed by wives, children and parents along established routes. Bolton rightly makes the hypothesis that the cross-channel migration might be part of a larger European pattern. Ongoing research – one thinks about the Swiss programme (under R. Schwinges) about the registration of new burghers in the old Empire – may well confirm that.

The introduction (and the edition) is a definitive step forward in our knowledge about migration movements in a late medieval Europe. These were characterised by greater mobility of men (and women) than is traditionally accepted. This study ties in with the current debate about the integration of aliens. The rarity of intermarriage between English and aliens, the lack of generosity towards alien servants by London employers in their wills, the threatened and sometimes very real violence, allow us to doubt Thrupp's idea of a tolerant London society. We know that ordinary Londoners in the fifteenth century did involve themselves in party-politics and that violence against aliens, sometimes against Italians, at other times against 'Flemings', was one way of making their views known to civic and state authorities. The better known of sixteenth-century outbursts of anti-alien feelings may have had late medieval beginnings.

MARC BOONE

THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN KINGDOM, 1200-1500: THE STRUGGLE FOR DOMINION. David Abulafia. 1997. Longman, London and New York, £44 hb, £14.99 pb. ISBN 0-5820-78-201 (hb); 0-5820-78-202 (pb).

David Abulafia has here put together a number of different aspects of his research into the politics and economics of the Mediterranean world in the later Middle Ages to describe the interplay of powerful ambitions that led to recurrent conflict in the western Mediterranean, and drew non-Italians into the Italian arena long before the outbreak of the Italian Wars in 1494. The prime foci of his attention are

the kingdoms of Naples and Aragon, whose histories he carefully weaves together from the twelfth century through to the end of the fifteenth, though the French royal house, the German imperial house, and the papacy are also frequently involved as actors in his narrative. He describes the establishment of a Norman kingdom in southern Italy, its successful invasion by the German Hohenstaufen in 1194, and the triumph of the French Angevin dynasty there under Charles of Anjou after 1266. Meanwhile the kingdom of Aragon had emerged as a major political and economic power in the western Mediterranean. The Angevins and Aragonese entered a period of repeated military engagement when Charles of Anjou lost Sicily to Peter III of Aragon after the Sicilian revolt of 1282. The book then describes how during the fourteenth century royal authority decayed both in southern Italy and in Sicily. In Aragon, too, though the earlier fourteenth century was a period of continuing Aragonese empire-building, the crown was weakened by social conflict, economic crises and an uncertain succession to the throne after the death of Peter IV in 1387. The years around 1400 were exceptionally unstable both in political and economic history. However, descent into disorder was arrested, notably in southern Italy, by the Aragonese king, Alfonso the Magnanimous, who in 1442 conquered the kingdom of Naples by an invasion from his Sicilian base and so united under his rule Aragon, Sicily, southern Italy and Sardinia. In the kingdom of Naples he laid the foundation for a revival of royal authority that continued under his son, Ferrante. The comparative neglect of Spanish affairs in Alfonso's reign was corrected later, notably under Ferdinand II ('Ferdinand of Aragon'). The succinct account of these changing fortunes is interspersed with numerous discussions of related economic developments and of changing political attitudes towards Jews and Muslims in these unusually cosmopolitan lands.

The book contains vivid accounts of the rulers who shaped the political fortunes of southern Italy and Aragon, and illustrates the many complex and Protean combinations of chivalric idealism, family pride and personal ruthlessness that drove them. There is a particularly valuable chapter on Robert the Wise of Naples (1309-43), and a superb picture of him on the cover. Of Richard III's contemporaries, King Ferrante of Naples (1458-94) is the most vividly described. Here was a king who used to have his enemies destroyed, embalmed and preserved in a 'museum of mummies'. He earned a reputation as the most duplicitous and cruel monarch of his age. Yet even he had his bright side; he encouraged economic recovery in southern Italy, valued his Jewish subjects (unlike his cousins in Aragon), and was an important patron of music and literature.

The study is well served with up-to-date bibliographies and bibliographical references, including relevant works in modern European languages. There is also a useful series of maps and genealogical tables, and an index of names.

RICHARD BRITNELL

In this book, Professor Coss focuses his attention on the Lady, on the daughters, wives and widows of the titled nobility, knights and gentry of medieval England. It is essentially an interdisciplinary study, making use of visual material and literature, as well as a wide range of historical records, in order to discover what was meant by gentility in the Middle Ages, and how far ladies participated in contemporary culture. Professor Coss is concerned to set these women in context, and therefore a large part of the book is concerned with examining a variety of social relationships; he concludes that women were very much integrated into noble society, and that they did not lead separate social and cultural lives from their male relations.

The book covers the period between 1000 and 1500, five centuries which saw both continuity and change in medieval society. Although much more material survives from the thirteenth century onwards, it is clear from treatises, sermons and literary works that women throughout the period were regarded as weak and easily tempted, and were subordinate to fathers and husbands. At the same time, many ladies in the absence of their menfolk took on the tasks of bringing up their families, running estates, and maintaining the family's reputation in the locality. Change is to be seen in the legal developments which clarified the law of inheritance, defined a woman's dower, and allowed her to hold lands jointly with her husband. Cultural changes occurred with the growth of chivalry in the late twelfth and early thirteenth century and the higher status accorded to knighthood. The widening of the concept of gentility to include esquires and gentry in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries made for increasing differences in wealth and position and heightened the sense of hierarchy. Ladies therefore did not belong to a homogeneous economic group, but similar social ideas and cultural attitudes are found among them all, whether they were married to a gentleman, a knight or an earl.

Marriage was crucial to the lady's identity, even though she had little say in the matter owing to the prevalence of the arranged marriage. Her identity stemmed from her position as the wife or widow of a particular lord. In examining identity, Professor Coss makes effective use of heraldry, and the ways in which ladies were depicted in illuminated manuscripts, on seals, on tombs and brasses, and in stained glass. Many women were concerned to show their ancestry as well as their connections by marriage, as were Margaret Paston, and the women of the Clopton family at Long Melford in Suffolk. The weepers on the tomb of Richard Beauchamp Earl of Warwick (died 1439) show both men and women in the context of the Beauchamp family. Ladies were thus seen as belonging to and taking their status from their natal and marital families.

Within families, the lady, both as wife and widow, had a positive and constructive role to play, in land-management, litigation, hospitality, recreations, and religious practices. Professor Coss makes clear the way in which both men and women participated in these activities, and there was no rigid distinction between the public and private spheres. Public office in the vast majority of cases was reserved to the man; in other areas of activity women were involved. It is likely that the lady also had an important role in transmitting cultural values to her children. What is inevitably far less clear are the emotional relationships existing within families. The idea of partnership is emphasised, but at the same time tensions existed within the family, especially in relation to the widow's dower and jointure which could lead to the impoverishment of the heir, sometimes for years. Extreme instances of marital breakdown are highlighted, such as the case of Juliana Murdak, accused of the murder of her husband Thomas in 1316, of which a graphic description is given. Numerous references are found in the Middle Ages to abductions and rapes, often reflecting the pressures brought to bear on ladies by suitors, family or the Crown. The variety of ladies' experience is vividly brought to life in the book.

The Middle Ages had a clear perception of what was expected from the lady, in behaviour, lifestyle and attitudes. By treating the subject in an interdisciplinary way Professor Coss has provided a detailed, in-depth picture of the lady set in the context of her family and household. The book is illustrated by thirteen colour plates and eighty black and white photographs, and these are fully integrated with the text, and add much to our understanding. The book is intended for the general reader as well as the professional historian, and can be recommended as a good read.

JENNIFER WARD

GEORGE CHASTELAIN AND THE SHAPING OF VALOIS BURGUNDY. Political and Historical Culture at Court in the Fifteenth Century. Graeme Small. 1997. Royal Historical Society Studies in History, New Series. The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, £39.50. ISBN 0-86193-237-4 ISSN 0269-2244

George Chastelain (c. 1414–1475) was the first of the historians *subventionnés* — as they were called recently — at the court of the dukes of Burgundy of the house of Valois. In June 1455, the year in which perhaps 'the pinnacle of Burgundian achievement' was reached, Philip the Good named Chastelain his official chronicler with a salary of 36 *sols* a day. Chastelain's origins had been humble: the present study for the first time reveals that his formative years were spent as Joris

Kastelein, son of Jan, *scipman* (shipper, bargeman) of Ghent, and sketches the political interests of his relatives and associates as well as the business milieu in which these people moved, a milieu where successful townsmen were able to mix with the minor nobility. Once he had entered ducal service Chastelain was to emphasise his mother's lineage, mentioning the noble families to which she was distantly related and misleading modern historians.

Though a graduate of the arts faculty of Louvain university, Chastelain chose to become a soldier in Duke Philip's army, and after the peace treaty with France in 1435 he turned to a career in trade in his home town of Ghent. This ended in disaster in 1440 and was followed by a (badly documented) stay of several years in France in the service of the famous Pierre de Brézé, seneschal of Poitou, and known in England as the champion of Henry VI's queen, Margaret of Anjou, whom Chastelain also claimed to have met during this period. As Dr Small emphasises, service in France was not unusual among ducal servants, and a few years later Chastelain, who had proved himself a useful and versatile retainer, 'slipped back into Burgundian service'. In his work Chastelain was to use to full effect the prestige that his 'French years' and the acquaintances he made then gave him.

Chastelain's rise as a courtier is fully discussed, using evidence from many sources, including analogies from the careers of other 'new men'; data about Chastelain himself become more numerous from 1454, when he reappears in the ducal accounts. The first of his many literary works, most of which were in verse, date from a few years earlier and their continuing success in the right circles may have led to Chastelain's career taking off, not only as chronicler but also as diplomat. He was part of the court elite for the rest of his life, thriving in its history-orientated cultural climate that inspired many chroniclers and memorialists and was fostered by Duke Philip himself. Shortly before his death Chastelain was knighted for his literary achievements and made official chronicler, *indiciaire*, of the Order of the Golden Fleece.

Chastelain was well versed in older, literary sources, but like most of his 'non-subventioned' colleagues, he also made use of other historians' work — particularly that of Enguerran de Monstrelet, the self-styled continuator of Froissart. Chastelain had influential contacts who kept him informed, both by letter and by word of mouth, and he sometimes used official documents, but he never refers to his sources. The erratic survival of the text of his chronicle makes it difficult to be certain, but it is likely he had a clear overall concept of how his work was to be laid out and divided, and what it was to include. He regularly cross-referenced his own text, he disliked repeating himself and worked quickly.

As might be expected in the case of a commissioned work, and in spite of the fact that Chastelain at times criticised the dukes, especially Charles the Bold, Dr

Small states that 'the Chronicle may be read as a work of propaganda'. Chastelain's depiction of Philip and Charles of Burgundy and Charles VII and Louis XI of France, their characters and their relationships, is analysed in order to seek answers to larger questions. Was Burgundy a nation? Did the dukes seek full independence from the French crown? What were the chronicler's views on these matters, considering the circle in which he moved? Was Chastelain as pro-French as historians have thought?

Little is known about who read Chastelain's chronicle, let alone about what people thought of it. Dr Small lists and describes the surviving manuscripts and gives the result of textual comparison, in an attempt to establish the number of copies that may have existed and how popular the book was. The fragments that survive appear to have been copied in their turn, as fragments, and led a life of their own, while the more complete original faded into oblivion. Dr Small concludes that there was an intense, but short-lived interest in the chronicle in the region of its origin, the northern parts of present-day France; most of the fragments that survive concern Philip the Good, the creator of the Burgundian Golden Age and the focus of the interest of later generations. The number of decorated extant manuscripts appears to be remarkably small, and known owners are few: even for Louis of Gruuthuse, with the exception of Duke Philip the biggest book-collector at the Burgundian court, no copy of Chastelain's *Chroniques* survives. His poetical work, however, is extant in numerous and comparatively elaborate manuscripts.

Dr Small's study is a long-awaited and very necessary addition to the literature of Burgundian historiography; it is as well for European integration and cross-fertilisation that it was written in English: no one has an excuse not to read it. It is heavily based on archival research and meticulous in its detail, but in spite of its new evidence about Chastelain's background and his snobbism, the one thing it did *not* do for me — and perhaps I should not have expected that from a thoroughly scholarly book entirely focused on Chastelain's historical work — is bring to life as an individual the 'second Livy' and *l'amy privé d'Apollo et des Muses*.

LIVIA VISSER-FUCHS

THE ART OF COOKERY IN THE MIDDLE AGES. Terence Scully, 1997 (reprint pbk). The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, Suffolk, £16.95; \$31.

ISBN 0-85115-430-1

In *The Art of Cookery in the Middle Ages*, Terence Scully surveys what wealthy people ate in the late middle ages, why they ate it, and how it was cooked and

served. Scully, a professor of French, is a leading figure in the field of medieval French culinary history. His publications include editions of the *Vinandier*, a late thirteenth-century cookbook, perhaps revised in the fourteenth-century by the French royal cook 'Taillevent' (Guillaume Tirel), and of the early fifteenth-century *Du fait de cuisine* by the duke of Savoy's cook, Chiquart. Much of Scully's material in the present book, which covers the cuisines of England, France, the Low Countries, Iberia, Italy and Germany between 1300 and 1500, is drawn from Taillevent and Chiquart. Among non-French sources, he gives particular attention to *De honesta voluptate et valitudine*, a mid fifteenth-century Latin treatise on food and diet by the Italian chef 'Platina' (Bartolomeo Sacchi di Cremona).

Scully focuses on two main themes. The first is that the food eaten by wealthy people in the late middle ages was similar in many ways to modern Western European and North American cuisines, and that 'our perceptions of what makes good eating have not really changed' since the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (p. 26). Scully argues that medieval cuisine 'was good and ... is still good' (p. 2), and he urges his readers to try medieval recipes for themselves: 'The Europeans of the late Middle Ages knew how to eat well. It would be a shame, for us and our taste buds, not to avail ourselves of their experiences' (p. 4).

Scully's second major theme is that, like many modern cooks, professional household chefs in the late middle ages chose their foodstuffs and prepared their dishes in accordance with prevailing scientific theories of what constituted a healthy diet. Medieval cooks followed the dictates of humoural medicine, which held that good health depended on maintaining a balance among the body's four natural humours (hot, cold, dry, moist). Diet was a major component in any health regimen, and it was the cook's duty to see that the food served did not produce a humoural imbalance. At least one medieval physician like some modern ones, compiled a collection of recipes designed 'to maintain the body in health and in good appetite and relish' (p. 43), and the culinary texts of non-physicians such as Platina show that lay writers, too, were influenced by contemporary dietetic theory.

Scully begins by identifying similarities between late medieval and modern Western cuisines, foodstuffs and cookery technologies (Chapters One and Two). He discusses the influences of religious requirements and humoural theory on medieval cookery (Chapter Three), and examines foodstuffs, cooking technologies and kitchen equipment (Chapter Four). Scully then turns his attention to showpiece dishes ('subtleties' or *entremets*), culinary aesthetics, and the influence on menus of religious regulations and theories of digestion (Chapter Five). This is followed by a survey of beverages (Chapter Six); a description of the great hall and the table manners expected there (Chapter Seven); and a brief glance at cookery for the sick and the 'delicate' (Chapter Eight). The penultimate chapter surveys international foods and regional favourites, and includes some sample recipes to show contrasts

among the various national cuisines (Chapter Nine). Scully concludes with a look at the organization of a great magnate household, especially the arrangements for food preparation and service, and a short summary of the role of professional cooks in medieval households, the practical utility of their cookbooks, and the high quality of the cuisine that they produced.

This is an uneven book, evidently aimed primarily at a popular readership, but including much material of interest to the scholar. The result, exemplified by Scully's twin themes (comparability with modern cuisine; influence of humoural theory), is an uneasy compromise. Writing in simple, non-technical language, Scully provides a handy overview of the basic technologies and categories of medieval cookery. His discussion of the influence of humoural theory on aristocratic cuisine is thought-provoking and valuable, and his descriptions of Continental culinary texts form a very useful survey, especially for anglophone readers whose knowledge of medieval food may derive largely from English sources.

However, Scully's discussions are at times weakened by skimpy research and superficial analysis. This is especially true of topics that lie outside the French and Italian cookery texts on which he concentrates. For example, Scully never really analyzes why recipe collections were made at all, or why they suddenly appear in significant numbers in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Instead, he asserts vaguely that these collections were compiled not for the use of professional cooks, for whom 'written recipes were not really necessary' (p. 5), but rather 'to document certain standards of an elite class' (p. 8; see also p. 25). Scully bases this assumption on the fact that most of the extant manuscripts are in pristine condition, and thus must have been kept in the library, not the kitchen. However, he does not discuss the possibility that the cooks also had copies, but that much-used 'kitchen' copies would seldom have circulated into elite libraries where they would be preserved. Similarly, Scully never tests his assumptions about the influence of humoural theory on aristocratic cuisine by investigating medieval account rolls to determine what foods were actually purchased and consumed in magnate households on a daily basis. Some of his discussions are also based on limited sources such as his treatment of holiday foods (pp. 203-5).

This book also suffers in places from poor organization and simple carelessness. In discussing regional food preferences, for example, Scully says (p. 218) that rice and dates were rare in English cookery, and that wine was not commonly used as an ingredient in England. However, of the sample 'English' recipes that he gives (pp. 221-22), forty per cent use rice flour, sixty per cent use dates, and eighty per cent use wine. The footnotes are haphazard, citing some sources, especially culinary texts, in detail, while omitting many others entirely. For example, in discussing culinary chauvinism (p. 233), Scully documents a

remark taken from the French household manual known as the *Ménagier de Paris* that the Germans cooked carp twice as long as the French. In the next sentence, however, he provides no reference at all for the poet Eustache Deschamps' sneer that Lowlanders and Germans smothered their food with mustard, and that Flanders and Bohemia stank of beer. Readers who wish to pursue further research in culinary history will find themselves frustrated by the Bibliography (pp. 257-64), which, like the notes, is very incomplete. Much of its contents are duplicated pointlessly in the notes on pp. 220-33, and the citations in those notes are often fuller and more useful than those in the Bibliography.

In sum, this is a book that has much to offer in its broad, synthetic overview of medieval European cuisines, its lively discussions of the influence of humoral theory on aristocratic cookery, and its survey of surviving medieval cookery texts. Despite some unevenness in organisation and documentation, it remains a very useful introduction to the field.

MARTHA CARLIN

ATLAS OF MEDIEVAL EUROPE. Edited Angus MacKay with David Ditchburn, 1997. Routledge, London and New York, £55 (hb); £15.99 (pb).

ISBN 0-415-01923-0 (hb); 0-415-12231-7 (pb)

Using some 140 maps as a jumping-off point, this *Atlas* aims to provide an 'essential tool' for those studying Europe between the late fourth and the early sixteenth centuries. It is not in fact really geographically based. Apart from an introductory section describing the physical features of Europe, it deals with a selection of topics ('Politics', 'Religion', 'Government, Society and Economy' and 'Culture') under broad chronological headings, covering approximately 400 AD to 1100 AD, 1100AD to 1300AD, and 1300AD to 1500AD. Moreover, the editor, quite reasonably, did not feel that it was possible to deal adequately with 'Europe' without including Eastern Europe and Byzantium, and topics such as these inevitably drew in the Mongols and the Muslims.

There is no suggestion that a work such as this, with fewer than 300 pages of clearly laid-out text and maps and some quite detailed discussion at times, could be anything other than selective. That selection was determined by 'years of undergraduate teaching by the editor and contributors'. Twenty-two of the thirty-five contributors were based at Scottish universities at the time they produced their articles. Therein probably lies the explanation for a potential limitation on the

value of this *Atlas* to some students. Its subjects appear to have been chosen at least in part on the basis of the editor's network of acquaintances and colleagues, what they happened to teach or be interested in, and, no doubt, whether they were willing to contribute.

As a result, it is an eclectic collection of subjects, ranging from the major to the minor (from the Roman Empire in 395 AD to Margery Kempe, for example) and with some curious omissions (admitting that this is an *Atlas* for British students, and that there are therefore discussions about both the Hundred Years War and the growth of the Burgundian state, it still seems odd not to have an article dealing specifically with French politics in the period 1300-1500). Themes do not continue across the chronological divides: for example, popular Christianity, a theme which might be of interest to students of the late medieval and early modern period, is the subject of an article dealing with the thirteenth century, but for further information one has to make do with the observation in the article on Mrs Kempe (under 'Culture') that she was not entirely untypical of her period.

On the whole, the articles are terse and omit all but the essential information: an example is Alexander Grant's 'The Scottish Wars of Independence'. There are exceptions, however. One such is Michael Jones' article on the Hundred Years War. In this context, a little more really basic information, and a little less detail, might have been helpful. Students are quite often very confused by references here and elsewhere to Guienne (according to the map) or Guyenne (as the text has it) and Gascony, not to mention Aquitaine, and need to be able to identify readily places mentioned in the text on the maps (Maine, for example). Students who already possess the background knowledge, however, will find that this article provides a good overview. It would, incidentally, have been useful to have either a list of maps and their locations, or to have map locations highlighted in the Index.

It is of course very easy to criticise a reference book of this sort for a lack of continuity, even coverage or balance; extremely difficult to achieve such things in real life. The editor has identified a gap and has attempted the difficult task of filling it. For some, he will have achieved his aims admirably. The articles which will probably be most useful are those which deal with issues that are not central to the course: most of them work best as sources of background, collateral or comparative information. Even for students on courses which have a different focus, at least some of the articles will be valuable, and they may well find others interesting and capable of stimulating new approaches to their own subjects.

In summary, this *Atlas* can be recommended to anyone who studies on courses which have a content similar to those taught by the editor and the contributors. The only way to determine just how useful the *Atlas* will be to a particular student or group of students is to buy it and look. As a relatively inexpensive volume, in

paperback at least, covering a wide range of topics over a large timespan, it is certainly unlikely to be a waste of money.

PENNY TUCKER

ENGLISH LONGBOWMAN 1330-1515. Clive Bartlett. Revised Edition 1997. Osprey Military Warrior Series: 11. London, £8.99 (pb). ISBN 1-85532-491-1

Like all Osprey publications, *English Longbowman* is striking for its many illustrations and particularly its full colour plates of an artist's impressions — in this case by Gerry Embleton. In this respect, such books are immediately attractive, and with a subject of such surprising complexity, it is in fact enormously helpful. For this is a highly involved matter — including as it does bow and arrow construction, shooting techniques, nocks, spacers and bracers *etc.*, along with archers' clothing and armour: aspects that really need illustrations to achieve understanding.

Bartlett's book is not however merely a series of pictures for within its sixty-four pages, he is able to demonstrate his considerable knowledge in a text that is partly supported by footnotes and a bibliography, but which plainly do not reflect the extent of the author's reading. Of greatest interest to those not absorbed by toxophilic technicalities, are those sections dealing with recruitment, victualling, service and unit formation. These sections are of course quite brief as they are bound to be in such a book, but they are interesting for the examples they use.

If asked to quibble, one could advocate a modified analysis of the controversial issue of the disposition of archers in the battle line, depending as this does on our understanding of the enigmatic term *herce* ('hearse', *pace* Bartlett) — over which the author is wisely guarded. More generally, one could have wanted some comment on the tradition of English archery dating back long before 1330 and the role it played in earlier battles, but the reader may at least infer that Bartlett's period was the *apogee* of the archer because of the escalating numbers used in war (see p. 14 for a brief discussion on ratios of archers to other 'troops') — an *apogee* which probably reached its climax — interestingly — in the Wars of the Roses rather than at Agincourt which was, nonetheless, a spectacular victory for English archery. Similarly, it is not explicitly stated that the 'longbow' was not a new, wonder weapon in the early 1300s as was once — and perhaps commonly still is thought — but again the reader may infer this from the absence of claims to the contrary.

These are points of some importance which warranted clarification, but other

'omissions' can not be criticised. The book does not include, most obviously, a detailed analysis of the role played by archers during each of the battles and sieges of the period, but that would have required another book twice as long, and anyway has been written — for battles — at least, in 1985 by Jim Bradbury (*The Medieval Archer*) in a book of 198 pages. Clive Bartlett's book, on the other hand, has more of the technical aspects — as intimated above, so in fact complements Bradbury's work, and of course has its counterparts on specific battles in other books from this excellent Osprey series.

JAMES PETRE

ROYAL BLOOD, RICHARD III AND THE MYSTERY OF THE PRINCES.

Bertram Fields, 1998. Regan Books/HarperCollins, New York, \$25.

ISBN 0-06-039269-X

This is, on the whole, a well written book. New Ricardians will find in it a generally clear and comprehensive introduction to the complexities of the issues involved, and more experienced Ricardians may also benefit from its systematic summary of the evidence. In his introduction, Bertram Fields sets himself an impressive list of questions to answer, of which the rôle of Richard III in the fate of the so-called 'princes' is merely the chief. He tackles his list of problem questions methodically, and brings his legal training to bear upon the criteria by which guilt or innocence are to be judged. It is probably fair to say that his book contains little that has not been said before by others, but it is a very readable and a thorough re-examination of the issues, in which Mr Fields draws many threads together and presents the evidence and counter-evidence cogently.

There are mistakes. Mr Fields appears at times to misunderstand the basis of Henry VII's claim to the throne; a claim — however weak it may have been — into which the heirs of York did not enter. Occasionally the author appears to find himself a little at sea amongst the niceties of the English system of titles. Thus it is not clear why Lord Hastings should be referred to as a 'knight', or why the earls of Oxford and Warwick are occasionally promoted to the rank of duke. Presumably these are minor slips, like the date of Richard II's death, which is given incorrectly in the royal pedigree printed on the end papers, and the reference to John of Gaunt as Edward III's second surviving son. Perhaps more unfortunate is Mr Fields' misunderstanding of the term 'precontract', but having myself once stumbled at this hurdle I can sympathise with this error, which seems to be rather a common one!

Mr Fields nevertheless gives the issue of the precontract a thorough airing and,

while fairly considering the possibility that the story was an invention, musters a strong array of evidence in support of the presumption that Lady Eleanor was in fact married to Edward IV. I appreciated some of the details of his argument, such as the way in which he handles the problem of whether the assembly of 1483 was really a parliament, the evidence of Stallworth's letter to Sir William Stonor, and his contention that Henry VII's reference to 'shedding of Infants' blood' may actually have been intended as a reference to the 'princes'. It is pleasing to see that in some cases of difficulty, Mr Fields has looked at actual source material rather than published reports of what the sources say. As a result, he is able to demonstrate convincingly that the works of some earlier authors have been selective and *parti pris* in their editing and presentation of source material. It is a pity, therefore, that Mr Fields did not search for source material in the case of Elizabeth Lucy. As a result he perpetuates earlier writers' myths about her 'low birth', calling her a courtesan and even referring to her as 'Mrs Lucy'; misconceptions which I hope to dispel in my forthcoming article on her. Mr Fields also accepts without question the tale of Edward IV's promiscuity although in fact there is only quite limited evidence for this.

It is perhaps a pity that the book does not include footnotes, and that only a 'selected bibliography' is published: a bibliography that actually omits important articles which the author has clearly consulted. For me personally, another matter of regret was that some use was made of recent illustrations. I particularly dislike Millais' horrible painting of the 'princes', but that, perhaps, is a matter of taste.

JOHN ASHDOWN-HILL

Notes on Contributors

John Ashdown-Hill. Member of the London Branch and Norwich and South Essex Groups. Currently researching the identity of the bones from the 'Whitefriars' site, Norwich.

Marc Boone teaches medieval social and economic history at the University of Ghent, as a 'senior research associate' of the Fund for Scientific Research Flanders. Currently researching how the central Burgundian state was built in the context of the highly urbanised Netherlands.

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Martha Carlin. Associate Professor of History, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Author of *Medieval Southwark* (London, 1996), and co-editor of *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe* (London, 1998).

Keith Dockray. Formerly Senior Lecturer in History at Huddersfield University, now a freelance lecturer in Bristol. Publications include *Richard III: A Source Book* (1997), and *Edward IV: A Source Book* (1999).

James Petre. Head of Operations for the Institute of Legal Executives. A Chartered Secretary; he has been a member of the Society since 1967, and currently is Secretary of the Richard III and Yorkist History Trust.

A. J. Pollard. Professor of History, Teesside University. Author of *North-Eastern England during the Wars of the Roses: Lay Society, War and Politics 1450-1500*, Oxford 1990, and *Richard III and the Princes in the Tower*, Alan Sutton 1991.

Gordon Smith, medical librarian, member since 1993. Publications include *The Evan Bedford Library of Cardiology* (Royal College of Physicians, 1977), and 'Alfano and Turandot' (*Opera* 1973).

Penny Tucker has recently completed the medieval (1247-1633!) section of *The History of Bethlem Hospital*, a celebration of the Hospital's 750th anniversary in October 1997. Currently working on London's lawcourts.

Livia Visser-Fuchs is finishing a thesis on Jean de Wavrin's historical work and the reputation of Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, in the Low Countries.

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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. 45-46.

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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Contributions for the June 1999 issue of the Ricardian must reach Miss Anne Sutton, 44 Guildhall Street, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 1QF, by 31 March 1999. Articles should be sent well in advance. Further advice on presentation may be obtained from the editor.

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