

Books Reviews

THE ENGLISH EXPERIENCE IN FRANCE, c. 1450-1558. War, Diplomacy and Cultural Exchange. Edited by David Grummitt. 2002. Ashgate Publishing Ltd, Aldershot. £39.99 ISBN 0-7546-0535-3

The editor in his introduction gives a clear resumé of the relevant events and issues of 1450-1558 in the fields of war, diplomacy and cultural exchange, paying more attention in all three sections to the post-1500 years than to the half-century before.

In her 'The loss of Lancastrian Normandy: an administrative nightmare?' Anne Curry studies British Library MS Add. 11,509, a partial but fascinating account book of the receiver-general of France and Normandy from Michaelmas 1448 to Michaelmas 1449, the year the English lost Rouen and Normandy. The book demonstrates almost tangibly what the loss of the duchy meant to the English settlers and soldiers, but also how its administration passed seamlessly into the hands of the French. Next David Grummitt, "'One of the mooste pryncipall treasours belonging to his Realme of Englande": Calais and the crown, c. 1450-1558', gives a very useful overview of the importance of the town and 'pale' of Calais to the crown and discusses in particular the Calais Act of 1536 which – he argues – was not so much an attempt to consolidate 'the Englishness' of the territory and change its constitutional position, as to make its government more efficient.

Edward Meek, in his 'The practice of English diplomacy in France 1461-71', looks at the practical details and problems of English embassies to France in the first reign of Edward IV and illustrates the 'patchy' and 'pretty constant' flow of diplomatic missions, which were often quite informal and emanating not from the crown directly, but from such as the earl of Warwick in particular, his importance partly due to his being captain of Calais and in control of the Calais based network. This paper suffers a little from being clearly taken from a larger study: a number of names are 'dropped' of men whose background and importance cannot be explained in such limited space.

In his well argued 'The myth of 1485: did France really put Henry Tudor on the throne' Michael K. Jones puts later emphasis by the French and by modern historians on the decisive importance of French help for Henry at the battle of Bosworth in perspective. This otherwise sensible study features for the first time the illusionary 'Swiss trained' pikemen that are supposed to have spelt the doom of Richard III, who had apparently never heard of such people (see also my review of Jones' *Bosworth*, above). One of Henry VII's own military expeditions and its huge preparations are described by John Currin,

"To Traffic with War"? Henry VII and the French campaign of 1492', a campaign that seems to me a repeat of Edward IV's *voyage* in 1475 – both in terms of genuine warfare and of greed. Currin concludes: '[Henry] found himself back where he started in 1485: isolated in Europe, dependent on the goodwill of France, and mistrusted by the Habsburgs'. (One quibble: the prophecy of the 'Son of Man' existed long before Henry VII; it probably goes back to Edward III's time).

The first paper concerning the sixteenth century is Charles Giry-DeLoison's "Une haquenée ... pour le porter bientost et plus doucement en enfer ou en paradis": the French and Mary Tudor's marriage to Louis XII in 1514', which lists and extensively quotes from all surviving accounts and regards the marriage as the beginning of normalisation of Anglo-French relations, 'opening up' French fashion and novelties to the English nobility. Robert Knecht's chapter on 'Sir Nicholas Carew's journey through France in 1529' provides a fascinating insight into the 'more mundane' [and timeless? LV-F] aspects of 'Renaissance' diplomacy, showing how close were the informal contacts between Englishmen and Frenchmen at certain levels of society. This picture is elaborated upon, given a more general meaning and its changing nature pointed out by Luc MacMahon in his 'Courtesy and conflict: the experience of English diplomatic personnel at the court of Frances I'. For Henry VIII's embassies to France a different class of men was needed – usually gently or nobly born – to cope with Francis' very personal style, which included his 'use' of women in diplomatic communication.

Finally David Potter, 'The private face of Anglo-French relations in the sixteenth century: the Lisles and their French friends', using some less well known Lisle letters and helped by extensive footnotes, presents the attractive and intimate side of friendship between the provincial gentry of northern France and their English counterparts at Calais.

Over all this is a thorough, revealing, pleasant and at times entertaining collective picture of early modern relations between the English and the French; as usual little appears to have changed. My only reservations are the editor's tendency to favour the spelling 'sise', 'siseable' and 'seise', and the price of the volume.

LIVIA VISSER-FUCHS

MEDIEVAL HUNTING. Richard Almond. 2003. Sutton Publishing Ltd, Stroud. £20. ISBN 0-7509-2162-5

Hunting was a core aspect of medieval life in a way that modern readers may find difficult to comprehend. The population was predominately rural and found the acquisition of some ready protein a valuable dietary addition. Not

that everyone depended upon hunting for this reason, though, as for the social elite it was a sport, a ritual bonding activity and an excuse for display. In this book Richard Almond explains how hunting was central to the life of all classes and both sexes, to be inclusive and not exclusive.

Of course, hunting came in many different forms. Almond's key (and concluding) point is made by reference to an early sixteenth century German book of hours (BL MS Egerton 1146). One of the twelve-picture cycle (Plate 47 and in colour on the dust cover) shows a wealthy young man galloping through woodland chasing a hare with hounds while a poor man shoots rabbits at the field edge with a crossbow. Hunting was not just about what game was sought, but about how it was won: as a noble pursuit or ignoble necessity. For a man like Gaston Fébus, a Gascon lord who wrote the definitive *Livre de Chasse* (1389) to hunt was to live. Literacy was becoming a crucial factor in transmitting the knowledge, skills and proper conduct in hunting. Edward, Duke of York, provided an English version, *The Master of Game*, a few years later. Almond uses this work to reinforce his point about the involvement of women in hunting. It has long been understood that ladies engaged in falconry, but Almond produces both literary and visual evidence to suggest that they might be found actively engaged in more dangerous pursuits.

Hunting was dangerous. Apart from the risks of the mounted chase, the quarry could turn. Fébus describes having his horse brought down and killed by a boar. Yet, the mature male red deer was most feared – 'after the boar the leech (doctor) after the hart the bier' went the old saw – and therefore the most noble game. The ritual of butchering (unmaking) the carcass, took on an almost spiritual tone. Everyone was honoured by the kill, not just the nobles and the professional huntsmen, but any youngsters who had blood smeared on their faces. (Almond comments that this custom went on until the mid-twentieth century, although the tabloid furore when the current royal princes were so 'blooded' in the early 1990s suggests otherwise.) The horsemanship, hardship, comradeship and common endeavour, together with the kill, made hunting of large game an excellent training for war. Almond acknowledges an element of bloodlust (although he is nervous about attributing it to modern hunters).

The hunt was also an excuse for other lustful activities, a couple of the plates showing scenes of dalliance involving the young (human) bucks and their female companions, excited by the chase and blessed with some unusual privacy. But the women were not just there for the ride. Almond emphasises their role as participants and even experts in hunting. True, they are mostly depicted chasing birds or trapping rabbits, yet in his chapter devoted to 'Medieval Dianas' Almond does much to rescue their hidden history. (Although his website reference may have misled him to accord them too great an active role in warfare.)

This is a thoroughly enjoyable book with many insights into medieval society. It owes a (fully acknowledged) debt to John Cummins' *The Hound and the Hawk, the Art of Medieval Hunting* (1988), yet takes the topic much further and provides a strong and convincing thesis for the universality of hunting in the period. Almond stresses that the class divisions which came about were due first, and in part, to that would-be autocrat Richard II's little-enforced 1390 Game Law (explored in an unpublished communication by his mentor Professor Tony Pollard). Ricardians will doubtless be unsurprised to learn that it was actually Henry VII and his successors who created the social divide (still evident today) by further legislation in the sixteenth century.

Just a couple of points about presentation are disappointing. The very useful half-hundred, black-and-white plates contain illustrations, which are alluded to frequently in the text yet never clearly identified (as in: 'See Plate N'). There is also quite a lot of quotation in Middle English, which could really have borne translation (either in the text or in the notes) to make it more comprehensible and an easier read. Some of the Modern English is equally arcane (although I am sure that Ricardians will not be foxed by 'vulpicide'). It is understandable keeping the technical vocabulary (ancient or modern), but this could have been handled by including a glossary.

These are minor quibbles, though, in the face of an otherwise excellent achievement in bringing a vital facet of medieval life – pungent with the sweat, dung, blood (and occasional sex) associated with the chase – into finer focus.

MATTHEW BENNETT

LETTERS OF MEDIEVAL WOMEN. Edited by Anne Crawford. 2002. Sutton Publishing, Stroud, £20. ISBN 0-7509-2798-4 (hardback)

Although letters of laymen and women survive in relatively small numbers for the central Middle Ages, by the fifteenth century the collections of the Stonor, Armburgh, Paston and Plumpton letters provide considerable information on landed society. Women letter-writers came from the gentry, nobility and the royal family; other women were largely precluded from letter-writing because of their lack of education, and had no need to make use of letters in the course of their daily lives and business activities. In this volume, Anne Crawford concentrates on the period from 1200 to 1500, although she includes one letter of 1130 from Adela Countess of Blois to her son Count Theobald; apart from this letter, the majority are concerned with English rather than continental affairs. More letters have been found for the thirteenth than for the fourteenth century, and the increased survival of material for the fifteenth century has been handled by limiting the letters of any one woman to a maximum of six. As a result, a large number of letter-writers has been included, and a woman

like Margaret Paston does not dominate the volume. A few early sixteenth-century letters have been included, the latest dating from 1506.

The volume opens with an Introduction which discusses literacy and the practice of letter-writing, the format of letters, and the languages used; by the fifteenth century letters were written in English, whereas earlier they were written in Latin and French. Anne Crawford then goes on to discuss the position of women in theory and practice, bringing out the contrasts between the two, and commenting on women's lifecycle and the nature of their lives and responsibilities. She sees husband and wife as forming an interdependent partnership, and considers that women were capable of administering and protecting their estates, and enhancing the fortunes of their families. Some women, however, judging from their letters, faced very difficult situations related to inheritance, dower, litigation and debt. This section will be particularly useful to the general reader who is unfamiliar with medieval social and gender history.

The letters are arranged according to recipient, although there is inevitably some overlap between chapters as letters were by no means limited to a single subject or person. Each chapter opens with a short introduction on the main issues. This entails some repetition with the Introduction but will be useful to the general reader. Each letter is prefaced by a brief discussion setting it in context, and explaining the principal people involved. The chapters take as their subjects letters written by women to parents; brothers (few letters to sisters survive); lovers and husbands; sons; kinfolk; and patrons, friends and servants. The last chapter, comprising seven letters, concerns women of religion, six of them nuns. The longest chapter concerns women and patrons, and this is subdivided into letters by patrons to clients; letters to equals; and letters from clients to lords and patrons. Because of varying rates of survival, some chapters are necessarily longer or have a more even chronological spread than others. Thus the chapter on women and religion has more material from the thirteenth century than later, whereas the chapter on women and their lovers and husbands has nothing before 1440. In the chapter on women and patrons, most of the letters date from the fifteenth century, but the previous 200 years are well represented.

The letters are primarily concerned with immediate issues of business, whether concerning marriage, estates, inheritance, litigation or local networks. These matters were all essential to the daily lives and future fortunes of medieval men and women. The letters also throw some light on personal relationships, whether of love or hate. The Valentine sent by Margery Brews to John Paston III, her future husband, is well known; even here Margery felt bound to touch on the financial details of the marriage settlement. Much less well known is Joan Armburgh's letter to John Horell of c. 1429-30 in which she describes him as a 'cuckoobird devouring the hedgessparrow when she hath

bred him up'; Joan ends her letter, 'I pray God send you what you have deserved, that is to say, a rope and a ladder'. Readers of the *Ricardian* will be especially interested in two letters from Cecily Duchess of York. One to Queen Margaret of Anjou in 1453 was a petition on behalf of her husband, Richard Duke of York, but also touched on the two women's pregnancies; they had previously met at the shrine of the Virgin Mary at Walsingham. The other was addressed to Richard Duke of Gloucester, probably in 1474, and referred to his good lordship to one of Cecily's servants.

All the letters in the volume are given in English, and it is noted that the 'old English' of many of the letters has been updated to make it more accessible to the modern reader. There are still passages which some readers will find difficult, and it would have been helpful to have had a short glossary of fifteenth-century words used in the text and also of words whose meaning has changed over the centuries. Dating presents a problem to any editor of medieval letters; this has been carefully tackled, and the near-certain and approximate dates have been clearly differentiated. The book is attractively presented, and eleven black and white illustrations are included. Some misprints have not been picked up in proofreading, and there are a few factual errors. No endnotes are provided, but there is a list of the sources used and a short bibliography.

The book will be read with enjoyment by those interested in the life and people of the Middle Ages. It will create greater awareness of the usefulness of letters as a medieval source; letters are often thought to be of use mainly for the Tudor and later periods. Anne Crawford's belief that medieval women were independent and competent, and strongly attached to their natal and marital families, is borne out in her *Letters of Medieval Women*.

JENNIFER C. WARD

THE CHURCH AND LEARNING IN LATER MEDIEVAL SOCIETY: ESSAYS IN HONOUR OF R.B. DOBSON. Edited by Caroline M. Barron and Jenny Stratford. Harlaxton Medieval Studies, XI. 2002. Shaun Tyas, Donington, Lincolnshire. £49.50. ISBN 1-900289-52-0

This is one of three volumes presented to Barrie Dobson on his retirement in 1999 from the chair of Medieval History at Cambridge University. (The others were *Pragmatic Utopias: Ideals and Communities, 1200-1630*, edited by Rosemary Horrox and Sarah Rees Jones, Cambridge University Press 2001, and *The Church in Medieval York: Records edited in Honour of Professor Barrie Dobson*, edited by David M. Smith. Borthwick Texts and Calendars 24. York 1999.) Altogether, more than fifty scholars were thus able to pay tribute to him. 'And yet', as this volume's editors state, 'there remain still more friends, colleagues,

well-wishers and students who could not be found a place ... such is the breadth of Barrie's friendship and the depth of his generosity'. This volume contains twenty-three articles based on papers given at Harlaxton in July 1999 on, Professor Dobson's chosen theme of the 'Church and Learning in Later Medieval Society'.

The editors' attempt to tackle this wealth of material by introducing four sub-headings is not always entirely successful. Several papers could sit in one or more group, and one or two almost defy such classification. It is unfortunate that the first section was entitled 'Monasteries' and not 'Religious Orders', which would have better encompassed the opening essay, Benjamin Thompson's characteristically wide-ranging examination of the life of Archbishop Pecham, a Franciscan academic whose most lasting contribution to English ecclesiastical life was his programme of reform of the parish clergy, culminating in his short guide to Christian doctrine, *Ignorantia Sacerdotum*. This is not to criticise the essay itself, which eloquently illustrates through Pecham's life how it was possible to combine academic and administrative work and thus live out the contrasting vocations of Martha and Mary. Sadly, in so doing, Pecham was neither popular nor happy. His being accustomed to robust academic debate evidently prevented him from displaying the necessary emollience to be liked in the secular world.

In the first paper on a truly monastic subject, James Clark uses library catalogues and surviving books to tease out the rather neglected subject of in-house education of novices and monks. For the other end of the monastic life, the riches of its archive enable Alan Piper to study office holding among the older monks of Durham Cathedral Priory. Nearly a third of the 625 men professed between 1260 and 1500 lived out their vocation for more than forty years and a high proportion of those continued to serve in the major obedienciary offices. Annotated books also indicate that some, at least, pursued their intellectual interests well into old age. Martin Heale continues this theme of using surviving book evidence in his article on learning in dependent monasteries, by which he hopes to test the conventional picture of cells as almost inevitably corrupt. He concludes with an appendix of book lists that might well be used to carry this study further.

Many monastic libraries would have owned copies of the *Polychronicon* of Ranulph Higden, a monk of Chester Abbey. Lynda Dennison and Nicholas Rogers discuss surviving decorated copies, arguing convincingly that there were connections between these manuscripts, their scribes and certain monastic houses, without, as yet, being able to determine who the artists were and whether monks were acting as scribes or simply as patrons. They conclude with a call for a full investigation of the 132 surviving manuscripts and an appendix giving evidence for a further twenty-five lost manuscripts. By contrast, David Crook examines a unique manuscript survival in the form of a map of

the Lincolnshire fenland, probably drawn at Spalding Priory in the first half of the fifteenth century. This map, recently discovered among the records of the Duchy of Lancaster, contains what seem to be accurate drawings of twenty-eight churches and chapels, several no longer surviving. Another fortunate survival among the Public Records assists Andrew Wines' examination of the life of the London Charterhouse. He uses surviving accounts to argue that Philip Underwode, procurator 1493-1500 and son of the maker of Richard III's spurs, brought something of both the skills and the corruption of the city into what has hitherto been imagined as a wholly saintly world. Pamela Tudor Craig's article returns us to the world of the sublime. Taking the frontispiece to the *Bible Historiale* (BL Add MS 188856) as her starting point, she ranges widely over the history of the architecture and art of the chapter house, concentrating on the use of circular architecture as a setting for Wisdom, which is linked iconographically with both the Virgin and the Holy Spirit. Her conclusion, that 'this miniature stands on the bridge between the inheritance and the rediscovery of ancient wisdom', ends with an elegant compliment to Professor Dobson, 'fine scholar and wise man'.

The architectural theme is continued in the first essay under the 'Cathedrals' heading, Nicholas Vincent's reassessment of the career of Master Elias of Dereham. In this thorough re-examination of the documentary sources, he reveals that, in a peripatetic ecclesiastical career, Dereham served nine bishops of widely differing political views in several dioceses but leaves it to others to pursue the architectural clues to his work. If Dereham, a canon of several cathedrals, was an active architect rather than merely an interested patron, his activity was supremely creative if not, perhaps, strictly scholarly. In contrast, in his brief survey of scholarship in the English cathedrals 1300-1500, A. Compton Reeves can find little evidence of any original scholarship going on. However, he argues, as James Clark does for the monks, that scholarship was not, and should not have been, an end in itself for these men. Rather, they were highly trained not so that they could pursue learning for its own sake but so that they could celebrate divine service for God's glory and administer His church, and it is on these grounds that they should be judged. The use of some scholarship is discussed in Joan Greatrex's examination of astronomical and medical manuscripts once owned by Norwich Cathedral library. She emphasises that these were valued not for their intellectual worth but to enable the community to care better for its sick. David Levine also uses surviving manuscripts and their annotations in his study of learning among the fifteenth-century canons of Hereford cathedral. Unlike Compton Reeves, he concludes that there were canons whose scholarly activity was significant and that Ullerston's vision of a 'core of resident and pastorally active canons' who 'studied, lectured, preached and administered, transmitting learning and combating heresy' was not merely an idealist's dream but potentially, and sometimes actually,

a reality. The cathedrals section ends with Pamela King's fascinating study of cadaver tombs and her convincing argument that the York Minster tomb long thought to be that of Thomas Haxey, treasurer of the cathedral 1418-25, was more probably that of John Newton, treasurer 1393-1414.

The short 'Universities' section opens with Patrick Zutshi's examination of relations between the mendicant orders and Cambridge, which traces the course of conflict as illustrated by university statutes, the friars' complaints and papal instruments supporting them, several of the most important of which are transcribed as an appendix to the paper. For Oxford, John Barron discusses the connections between the Augustinian canons and the university, touching on the foundation of the order's own college of St Mary in 1435, but concentrating more on the interesting story of the little-known college of St George, for most of its existence owned by Osney Abbey and functioning as a hall for poor scholars. To try and elucidate whether all this university education was of any use to the wider church, Virginia Davis takes three case studies, examining the activities of Peterhouse fellows of 1433, Oxford graduates of 1454 and graduates appointed to selected rural and urban parishes in the London diocese. Her rather depressing conclusion is that these men used their education to advance up the ecclesiastical career ladder rather than to benefit the pastoral life of any of the parishes they may have gained. However, her view reflects, as much as anything, the lack of documentary evidence to judge whether, and how well, they took care of their parishes. Indeed, there is evidence that at least one of her Peterhouse fellows was more significant for pastoral life than she is aware of: between 1438 and 1441 Thomas Duffield is known to have preached, in both Latin and English, on at least nineteen occasions during Bishop Alnwick's visitations of the religious houses of the Lincoln diocese. If the records of Alnwick's parochial visitations (which he is known to have undertaken) had also survived, there might have been evidence of Duffield's preaching to the laity as well.

In the first 'Parish' article, Jeffrey Denton stresses surviving evidence is, by its very nature, corrective and thus bound to emphasise failings. He suggests further avenues for exploring the true nature of the thirteenth century parish clergy, not least his own monumental *Taxatio* project, and concludes that until such research is done the prevailing view that most local clergy were incompetent and ignorant is, at the very least, not proven. At the other end of the book's period, Clive Burgess's penetrating examination of surviving evidence for Bristol and London is characteristically optimistic in its conclusion that the church was educating its flock both practically and spiritually and that the laity were responding positively to its ministrations. Fiona Kisby's paper concentrates on one particular aspect of urban parish life. Using surviving inventories, she examines the books kept in London parish churches up to 1603. Her evidence indicates that most churches of the pre-reformation period were sup-

plied with the prescribed liturgical books, supplementing them with some interesting additions, a fact which argues for quite a high level of education of both the clergy and laity who had access to them. She describes how the churches followed the reformation (and Marian) changes but, beyond the statutory books, their post-reformation purchases seem, to me at least, to be slightly less interesting than those for the earlier period.

The theme of book ownership continues in the next two papers, both of which use the evidence of wills from the York archdiocese. Joel Rosenthal, who opens his paper with a charming tribute to both Barrie and Narda Dobson and the editors of the volume, examines book bequests by clergy recorded in *Testamenta Eboracensia c. 1346-1509*. Much interesting material is revealed, although he finds it difficult to draw concrete conclusions. Like Rosenthal, Claire Cross, in her examination of the wills and inventories of 76 York clerks 1520-50, cautions that these can only give a partial and imperfect estimate of the minimum number of books in York clerical circles. Nevertheless, she feels able to conclude that York clergy, even outside the elite of the Minster chapter, like the London parish churches, 'had access to a reasonable range of medieval theological, spiritual, legal and historical treatises, in addition to the service books required for the performance of the liturgy, while a few had gained at least a passing acquaintance with the world of Christian humanism'. York provides the setting for Alexandra Johnston's fascinating study of the city's Mystery Play Cycle and libraries. She writes from the conviction that the plays did not just evolve but grew out of a particular didactic milieu. She considers it likely that a permanent community within York provided the inspiration, writers and revisers of the plays and convincingly postulates the Augustinian friary as a likely candidate. The book concludes with a tour de force by Carole Rawcliffe who, building on her detailed knowledge of the history of English medieval hospitals, examines the history of educational establishments being associated with hospitals and the theory that underpinned this association. The growth of such connections is seen to coincide with the beginning of the emphasis on charitable provision for the worthy poor with indigent travellers being replaced by poor scholars who could sing and pray effectively on behalf of their benefactors' souls. As with so many articles in this book, Rawcliffe's acts as stimulation for further thought and research.

This is an immensely rich collection, full of good scholarship and provocative ideas. All the essays have something interesting to say and many of them are important. But one is left with the feeling that they could have made a better book. By all accounts, the conference at which the papers were given was convivial but, with very few exceptions, one does not get the impression that the writers had listened with great care to their colleagues' work. For example, Joan Greatrex rightly states 'that one possible way of looking into the state of learning and its application in a monastic community is through a closer study

of its manuscripts than has yet been undertaken', without acknowledging that at least four of her fellow contributors have done precisely that. I noticed only Clive Burgess drawing parallels between his own work and that of his fellow contributors and his, already very good, article is all the better for this. An introduction would have enabled the editors to point out the many important and interesting ways in which the papers relate to and illuminate one another and the book's themes. Failing this, there should certainly have been an index. The papers overlap one another in a number of ways and an index, at least of people, places, institutions and texts, would have been an invaluable tool to bring the book together. As it is, it is left to the reader to plough through the whole text to find and compare the many references to, for example, Dean Thomas Chaundler of Hereford, *Ignorantia Sacerdotum*, John Newton, treasurer of York, the fourth Lateran Council, etc. Looking at previous Harlaxton volumes, it appears that the omission of introduction and index is a publisher's rather than an editorial decision. One can only hope that this might be reconsidered for future volumes in the series. As it is, publisher, editors and writers have produced a beautifully illustrated collection of excellent essays on an important theme. It is to be highly recommended to anyone interested in the history of education, learning and the church in general, and manuscript studies in particular. It gives a good indication of where such studies are and, better still, provokes an enthusiasm for further research in the subject.

ROSEMARY HAYES

ENGLISH POLITICAL CULTURE IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

Michael Hicks. 2002. Routledge, London and New York. £50 (hbk), £15.99 (pbk).

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0-415-21764-4 (pbk)

This survey of late-medieval political assumptions is offered as 'the first synthesis of a new type of history of fifteenth-century England'. That 'new type of history', prevalent for the last twenty years or so, is more concerned with contemporary attitudes and ideology than with the narrative of political events. But its exposition has tended to be hidden within monographs, rather than given prominence in its own right. Professor Hicks' survey of those semi-stated realities ranges very widely, and that is both its strength and its weakness. A strength, in that it devotes attention to issues that tend to lurk between the lines of more conventional narrative treatments of the period. A weakness, in that much of the discussion is overly allusive. This is not a book one would want to put into the hands of students unfamiliar with the period. Too many terms (like appropriation) go undefined. There are too many throw-away references – like Scrope's demands on page 207, which have been mentioned ear-

lier, but not in the detail that would make sense of this reference. This rather oblique treatment is not helped by some sloppy proof-reading, which reduces some sentences to gibberish. And there is the odd factual slip: John of Gaunt is buried at St Paul's, London, not Leicester (p. 46).

But, for anyone who is already clued-up about the events of this period, this is a stimulating and rewarding treatment. That is not to say that anyone is likely to agree with all of it. Indeed, it is avowedly 'interim and provisional to an unusual degree'. It shares with Colin Richmond's work, with which, on the whole, Professor Hicks does not find himself in agreement, the ability to goad the reader into formulating their own response through dissent. As a result, each reader is likely to respond more warmly to some chapters than others. This reviewer felt that the book got into its stride in its later chapters, which have a rather narrower focus and explore issues in a more nuanced and detailed way. Interestingly, there is a stylistic shift here too. The sentences get longer, in sharp contrast to the rather staccato wording of earlier chapters, which can leave the reader unclear about where the author himself stands. The chapters on alternative perceptions (9) and bastard feudalism (10) are particularly rewarding. In earlier chapters one longs to beg the author to slow down and explain the complexities more fully. In chapter 2, for instance, where the nature of monarchy is under discussion, there is no mention of the fact that 'sovereignty' is a word also used of lesser authorities. On pages 81-82 this is tacitly admitted, but not in a context that allows any discussion of its implications.

The author himself defines this book as a 'synthesis' and much of what it has to say can indeed be found scattered through other works. But it is also a contribution to debate, usually but not always explicitly. There is a very explicit, and persuasive, plea to extend the current orthodoxy that consensus is more important than conflict from the centre to the localities (p. 168) and to build the church into analyses of county communities. By contrast, the largely negative view of the parish church in chapter 5 is a tacit rejection of the Duffy line – and *The Stripping of the Altars* is nowhere mentioned. Again, it is readers who are already *au fait* with current issues who are most likely to realise what is going on here.

Perhaps the most intriguing (and unstressed) contributions to debate come right at the end. Although the whole thrust of the book is the importance of continuity across the fifteenth century, and earlier, its author does think that there are significant shifts of attitude under the Tudors, although these are 'yet to be convincingly traced' (p. 218). These are the tantalising closing words of the book. Is it the Tudor period that produces changes – changes, that is, that go deeper than the shifts of emphasis consequent upon rule by children or women?

Rather more developed, but, paradoxically, less explicit, is the question of how one should interpret civil war. Professor Hicks devotes a final, brief chapter to this. The prevalent model of medieval politics emphasises the extent to which the king was acknowledged as the man who held the whole political show on the road. Civil war is a real stumbling block for exponents of this theory. Why should anyone pursue a cure which, on this interpretation, must be worse than the disease? In 2000 David Crouch's study of the reign of King Stephen neatly side-stepped the problem by arguing that the 'civil war' of the twelfth century was nothing of the sort, but a series of outbreaks of local conflict, unmediated by the king. Professor Hicks does not go quite that far – he is still prepared to use the phrase 'civil war' and talk about dynastic conflict – but the prelude to this chapter is an extended discussion of rebellion. If, as he hopes, there will be future updates and revisions, perhaps the extent to which this was truly a civil war can be more explicitly explored.

ROSEMARY HORROX

PERKIN: A STORY OF DECEPTION. Ann Wroe. 2003. Jonathan Cape, London. £20. ISBN 0-224-06970-5

The story of Perkin Warbeck, the Flemish pretender who for much of the 1490s threatened King Henry VII's rule in the guise of Richard, Duke of York, Edward IV's younger son, is one that has fascinated authors since the early sixteenth century. Ann Wroe follows in the footsteps of writers such as Sir Thomas More and Francis Bacon when she sets out 'to tell again a marvellous tale that seems on the brink of being forgotten'. Whether Perkin's story is about to be forgotten is a moot point, but a case can be made for a thorough re-examination of the extensive available evidence, which the author has painstakingly assembled from archives and libraries in eight countries. The result is at 550 pages a fairly weighty tome, rendered readable mainly by Wroe's exemplary command of the English language and easy style. It is nevertheless hard not to feel that the book would have benefited greatly from the liberal application of an editor's pruning knife. A particular irritant are frequent digressions into the general discussion of various facets of fifteenth century life and thought, evidently intended to render Perkin's world accessible to a non-specialist readership. This is a laudable intention, but quite apart from diverting the narrative away from the main story of Perkin's life, it is questionable how helpful such diversions are in an account of specific events and individuals. Surely, there is no guarantee that even thoughts and beliefs that were widely disseminated in popular tracts were also shared by the specific individuals concerned in Wroe's narrative?

Perhaps even more problematic is the author's second declared objective: 'to dissect, and call in question, the official cover story'. It is this declared intention which necessitates the book's awkward central conceit – the author's refusal to commit herself as to Perkin's (or Richard's) identity. To be fair to Wroe, in doing so she is merely following the lead of Warbeck's seventeenth century biographer Thomas Gainsford, but the result is – if anything – to make the man whom W.C. Sellars and R.J. Yeatman once aptly described as 'the Older and more confusing Pretender' of Henry VII's reign, even more obscure and confusing. It is thus not surprising that even Wroe herself is forced to wonder whether in the end her subject was entirely sure of his own identity. This conclusion is perhaps somewhat disappointing, but it is one for which the author may be readily forgiven, since she has produced a book on a complex subject that is – despite the stated reservations – readable, in parts thrilling, and that will undoubtedly appeal to many.

Had the author restricted herself to writing a popular narrative account of Perkin Warbeck, her efforts would indeed be deserving of praise. Unfortunately, in setting out her stall to debunk 'the official cover story', Ann Wroe tries to give her book the trappings of a scholarly biography, and it is here that real problems arise. To her credit, the author has provided an extensive apparatus of references, which allows the more critical reader to retrace her steps, and bears ample witness to the vast amount of material consulted. Yet, it is the way in which this material is used that raises serious questions. Often, Wroe's use of her sources is uncritical, with information from a variety of materials produced at varying distances from the events concerned lumped together as fact. Can Edward Hall's mid-sixteenth century chronicle really be used in the same way as Polydore Vergil's more contemporary account? Why, if certain stories about the later life of Lady Katharine Gordon at Henry VII's court originated in Leslie's *History of Scotland* of 1561, and if 'there is no contemporary source' (p. 530), are these stories related as fact in the text (p. 452)? Elsewhere, the author allows herself to be carried away by the excitement of her own conspiracy theories. Spies lurk everywhere, and the most mundane of documents develop a sinister aspect. We are told that on a schedule subsidiary to the accounts of John Heron, keeper of Henry VII's privy purse, the total sum of payments to eight Bretons was 'exceptionally ... enclosed in a rectangle of neatly stitched white silk thread' (p. 178). This is indeed so, but far from holding any special significance, as suggested by the author, the thread simply holds in place a small piece of vellum added by a later conservator to strengthen the document's filing hole. An exchequer warrant of Edward IV does not, we are told, contain 'the usual spying talk, suggesting a different sort of business' (p. 531). No mere suggestion of a different sort of business, surely, since an original schedule mentioned in (and attached to) the warrant shows it

to relate to entirely routine payments for ambassadors' expenses and miscellaneous purchases.

Yet, the book's biggest shortcoming of all is Wroe's lack of the scholar's self-imposed restraint. Anyone who has ever undertaken research in mediaeval history has experienced the frustration of coming up against the limits of what we can hope to discover, and the scholar has to learn to accept that there are things we will never know. To seek to invade the thoughts and minds of fifteenth century individuals is speculation, it is not history: we have no way of knowing what thoughts passed through the mind of the anonymous artist who drew the only known portrait of Perkin, and it is questionable whether we should seek to speculate about them. Certainly, we have no business to follow Perkin – as Wroe does – beyond the scaffold into purgatory! These are places where the serious historian quite simply cannot and must not go: the biography of a fifteenth century pretender cannot be written in the same way as that of a twenty-first century B-list celebrity.

It is hard not to conclude that the author might have done better to write the novel which (as we are told in the afterword) was her early project. As it stands, this book (like its subject) seems to exist in a murky no-man's land, oscillating between a scholarly biography and a fictional narrative, without being able to decide its proper place on one side of the divide. Nevertheless, at £20 the volume is comparatively inexpensive, and may serve to spark renewed interest in the story of Perkin Warbeck. Readers with a serious interest in a strictly factual and unembellished account of Warbeck's career, however, will be better served by Ian Arthurson's magisterial work on the subject.

HANNES KLEINEKE

AUTHORITY AND CONSENT IN TUDOR ENGLAND: ESSAYS PRESENTED TO C.S.L. DAVIES. Edited by G.W. Bernard and S.J. Gunn. Ashgate Publishing, Aldershot. £47.50. ISBN 0-7546-0665-1

Cliff Davies will be a name familiar to most, if not all, readers of *The Ricardian*. His *Peace, Print and Protestantism* remains the most lucid and interesting treatment of the period of English history from the Wars of the Roses to the Protestant Reformation, while his essays on Cardinal Morton and Anglo-Breton relations are models of scholarship on the Ricardian period. This book of essays, written by Cliff's colleagues and former students, marks his retirement from teaching at Wadham College, Oxford. His influence on and the inspiration given to more than one generation of historians in Oxford and beyond is expressed amply by introductory essays on Cliff as both a scholar and teacher. Four essays address issues that will be of special interest to Ricardians. David Rundle, in an elegant and erudite essay, questions the existence of

a 'Renaissance' style of politics in fifteenth century England, concluding that such a thing did not really exist but then nor did a peculiarly 'English' style either. John Watts's essay on Bishop Russell's sermons to Richard III's parliaments follows his arguments elsewhere and lays stress on the language of fifteenth century political discourse. It argues that the sermons mixed the familiar with the innovative and stressed, above all, obedience to the prince and legitimate authority, ironic perhaps given the circumstances of Richard's accession. Jenny Wormald presents a challenging view of Anglo-Scottish relations, arguing that in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century it was the smaller, northern kingdom that was the more dynamic culturally and more deeply engaged in European politics. Tim Thornton's essay, ostensibly on the Channel Islands under the Tudors, is a little misleading, and deals more with the experience of the Islands during the Wars of the Roses. His conclusion that their Norman-French culture had more impact upon England than Anglicising policies did on the Islands might be straining the evidence. Four further essays deal with the reign of Henry VIII, always the central concern of Cliff's scholarship. George Bernard argues that Henry VIII was a tyrant, while Steven Gunn, through a detailed survey of local responses to major dynastic events, shows how aspects of this tyranny were presented to the king's subjects. The same theme, Tudor royal propaganda, and how it dealt with perhaps the most tyrannical event of Henry's reign, the break from Rome, is explored in essays by John Cooper, on the books of Common Prayer and Homilies, and Roger Bowers, on the 1544 vernacular litany. Related to these Henrician themes is Neil Cuddy's reassessment of the 1610 Great Contract, placing it in the context of earlier Tudor reforms of government. Colin Richmond's essay, although light-hearted and perhaps over-cynical, is, in many ways, the highlight of the collection, arguing that the Henrician Reformation laid the foundation for the individualism that has characterised English society since the sixteenth century. Cliff's scholarly interests were wide-ranging and this is represented by the remainder of essays in this book. He was always aware of the importance of social institutions and was one of the first historians to combine social, political and religious history (for instance, in his treatment of Tudor rebellions). Essays by Martin Ingram, on the regulation of sex in pre-Reformation London, Peter Clark, on urban improvement in pre-modern towns, and James Sharpe, on the witch's familiar in England, reflect this. Overall, this is a stimulating and wide-ranging collection and provides a fitting tribute to one of the most influential post-war historians of late medieval and early modern England.

DAVID GRUMMITT

MAKING A LIVING IN THE MIDDLE AGES: THE PEOPLE OF BRITAIN 850-1520. Christopher Dyer. 2002. Yale University Press, New Haven and London. £25. ISBN 0-300-09060-9

Christopher Dyer's masterly survey and examination of the economic history of the medieval period is an enjoyable read of what may appear to some as being a rather daunting subject and with an even more unlikely start point – 850 A.D. This particular year was chosen, however, because 'it marks the beginnings of a great formative period' and demonstrates that the Normans did not create feudal services, the manor, nucleated villages or towns. All were in place by 1066 with urbanization beginning over a hundred years earlier. King William of course dispossessed most of the existing 'lords' with his own supporters who appeared to make few innovations although they tended to exploit their new lands by 'seeking short-term profit at the expense of long term interests of their tenants'. Using the Domesday survey of 1086 as a basis for calculating some early statistics it is suggested that there were between 2.5 and 2.7 million people in England with about ten percent living in towns and the country potentially yielded around £72,000.

Between 1100 and 1350 there was considerable expansion during a period of change when more land was brought under cultivation, the population grew and the power of the state was increased. The inflation in the late twelfth century led to greater exploitation of the demesne by the lords as fixed rents lost their value and they were active in establishing towns where they could obtain rents tens times higher than if the land was used for agriculture. By 1300 the population had grown to almost six million with twenty percent earning a living from non-agrarian work as some 400 towns had been established since the Conquest. These and other factors led to a growth in the economy. Wool exports and wine imports peaked in 1305 and 1308 respectively but the growth was not sustainable. There was stress and strain on the social and political structure due to the high demands on peasants by the lords and increased military activity which necessitated taxes and brought destruction to the countryside. The creation of new towns virtually ceased after 1300 and rents generally began to fall. In 1314 famine struck and continued intermittently until 1322. Around twenty percent of the population died and shortages led to disease and epidemics in sheep and cattle. In 1348 the Black Death arrived in England and reduced an already decimated population by fifty percent. The population figures remained low and by the reign of King Henry VIII they had only reached the same level as in the eleventh century.

The consequences of the fall in population can be understood as serfdom had now ended and there were opportunities to earn wages instead of giving service. Indeed as employment became more widely available higher wages were demanded, and resisted by the government, but when the war was

renewed with France the poll tax was introduced in 1377. As the government and lords sought to collect revenue, the lower orders revolted in 1381. 'The rebels were middle-aged, responsible people, who were moved to rebellion not by poverty or desperation, but by hope'. Their demands were remarkable, the removal of the privileges of the lords, both lay and clerical, and a state where they governed themselves and were answerable to the king. Although the Peasant's Revolt failed, the memory of it affected the future relations between peasants and lords.

The concluding part of the book examines the slow but profound recovery from the fourteenth century crisis, and the changes which it precipitated. The ratio of population between town and country remained as before but there were shifts of inhabitants within the towns and the countryside as people sought to find the best opportunities. Some sixty towns disappeared as well as many markets which had received charters. There were positive changes though, with higher standards of living, high consumer demand and innovations such as the introduction of hops in brewing which acted as a preservative. In the country the lords were facing challenges. Despite the crisis their revenue had not fallen as dramatically as might be expected but they were faced with a reduced labour force who were prepared to be peripatetic if their demands, such as reduced rents, were not met. Gradually the lords began to lease their demesnes which created a new class of peasant, the farmers who brought in new methods of production and management. By 1520 the old order had changed forever.

The overwhelming message that Professor Dyer conveys is that there is no single 'narrative' to explain the establishment, growth, decline and recovery of England's early economy. He constantly demonstrates that trends and models cannot be applied across the board as each region had its own climate, soil, and local personalities and consequently each local economy would respond differently to situations and events. In taking this stance he inevitably questions earlier interpretations of economic history such as Postan's thesis that the change in population was the main dynamic force in the economy and he sweeps away many preconceptions, for example, he shows there was order in the immediate aftermath of the Black Death, when seasonal tasks were concluded, rent and heriots collected and burials carried out in a dignified manner. He employs numerous case studies to illustrate the development and change in the economy and these contribute to a sometimes vivid recreation of everyday medieval life throughout the 'three orders' – those who fought, those who prayed and those who worked. By examining how the lords, clergy and peasants functioned Professor Dyer shows that they all contributed, to a greater and lesser degree, to making decisions that were based on choices and which precipitated change. Many changes, however, occurred because of impersonal events such as climate and plague but the approach is to understand the perspective of

those who lived through these times and thus understand why they behaved as they did in response to growth, decline, crisis and recovery. Professor Dyer has an enthusiasm for medieval people which is neither sentimental or patronizing and he draws upon all types of available evidence, written, archaeological and from the landscape and supplements the inevitable gaps in knowledge of the peasantry with reasoned imagination.

The book is practically jargon free although inevitably specialized or legal terminology is employed but the terms are explained when first used. There is no separate word list which does mean that this is a not book that you 'dip' into but one that needs to be read from cover to cover. By the time the reader has finished it, however, he or she should be proficient in the language and take terms such as 'assarting' and 'demesne' in their stride. There are no footnotes but twenty-one pages of further reading are adequate compensation. *Making A Living In The Middle Ages* has not been written by an academic for academics. It is aimed at a general readership and is ideal for both members who already have a good background knowledge of the medieval world but who would like to be *au fait* with the latest thesis on economic history and for those less experienced members who would like to understand what sort of kingdom Richard of Gloucester inherited in 1483.

WENDY MOORHEN

THE PREMONSTRATION ORDER IN LATE MEDIEVAL ENGLAND. Joseph A. Gribbin. 2001. Studies in the History of Medieval Religion XVI, The Boydell Press, Woodbridge. £45. ISBN 0-85115-799-8

The Premonstratensians were never in the front rank of the monastic orders in Britain. Their famous names are few; their authors scarce and their saints scanty. Even their founder St Norbert seems to have had little popularity in England, despite Capgrave's vernacular life of him. Nevertheless between 1143 and c. 1267, thirty houses were established, including one in Wales (administered by the English province) and five in Scotland (not subject to English provincial control). The English houses were divided into three regional circaries, and the province was under the supervision of a commissary-general and visitor. For much of the medieval period, the English and Welsh houses enjoyed a semi-detached relationship with the general chapter at Premontr  and were allowed to be largely self-determining, though often reluctantly on the part of the mother house. An unusually complete record of visitations made by the commissary-general in the fifteenth century (150 reports compared, for example, to a single survivor for the Carthusians) allows Dr Gribbin to construct a richly detailed and subtle portrait of central aspects of the order's life between 1458 and about 1500. Gribbin approaches this task having

already written helpfully on the liturgical practices of the English Carthusians in the fifteenth century (*Analecta Cartusiana* 99:33 (1995)), and with a sensitive and sympathetic knowledge of the available documentation. Since the appearance of this monograph, Gribbin has also published a short study of the provincial and general chapters (in *'Stand Up to Godwards': Essays in Mystical and Monastic Theology in Honour of Revd. John Clark on his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. James Hogg, *Analecta Cartusiana* 204 (2002), pp. 251-99). The two key witnesses he calls are the *Registrum* of Welbeck Abbey (now Belvoir Castle Add. MS 2), and Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Ashmole 1519, the personal *registrum* of Richard Redman, the notably energetic commissary-general and visitor of the English circaries from 1458 until his death in 1505. Very regrettably the Belvoir manuscript is not available for scholarly consultation, but Gribbin has been able to use partial and sometimes inaccurate transcriptions made in the eighteenth century by Francis Peck and an earlier account by Howard Colvin. It is clear from Gribbin's study that a full edition of the Welbeck *Registrum* is highly desirable, and it is to be hoped that publication of this study will encourage (or shame) the present custodians to open it for scholarly research.

Using Redman's visitation records (which include detailed itineraries of his travels, edited and tabulated here in helpful appendices), Gribbin suggests that the order, though lacking the social leverage and contemplative *elan* of some other orders, was well-regulated by Redman and generally sound in the conduct of its corporate life and its pastoral and parochial ministry. It was not without its problems, though: examining F.D. Logan's head count of apostatising monks in his *Runaway Religions in Medieval England* (Cambridge 1996), Gribbin reports that the Premonstatensians accounted for fifty-four of the 101 runaways in the period 1470-1500, and twelve out of fifteen in the 1480s, though he suggests that this may be because Redman was using a notably generous (or mean, depending on your point of view) definition of apostasy. The Redman records allow us to see him attempting to control drifts in monastic liturgy, clerical dress and clothing (especially a tendency to assimilate the habit to that of the Austin Canons), and a particularly juicy appendix permits exploration of the approximately fifty charges for fornication brought against unruly members of the order between 1478 and 1500. Like most Canons, the Premonstratensians lived a mixed life of monastic observance and pastoral work in parishes. Temptation must have been much easier to come by, and the enclosure more permeable, than in more strictly secluded orders. Not surprisingly the most common liturgical fault was failure to rise for matins in the night office.

Gribbin argues that surviving Premonstratensian books suggest a conservative theology and a spirituality relatively untouched by the *devotio moderna* or the more contemplative or visionary strands of late-medieval English spirituality. There may have been a cult of the Holy Name in some houses

(notably Beeleigh), and Gribbin gives interesting evidence for the order's localized and patchy adoption of the late-medieval *Nova Festa*. The order had no *studium* at Oxford or Cambridge, and there seems to have been only a modest record of members attending the universities (only twenty-seven recorded cases between 1384 and 1532), though the total number of canons was never very large. Using David Bell's volume in the *Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues* mainly in connection with the surviving volumes securely identified with the order, Gribbin could perhaps have extended his consideration to include some fuller account of the book culture suggested by the scattered library lists edited there, including non-surviving volumes. Of particular interest among surviving books is the miscellany assembled by John of Gisburn, a canon of Coverham (now London, British Library MS Sloane 1584), containing a number of interesting and mostly unique confessional formularies and guides (though Gribbin fails to spot one of them as E.2/N.1 in Jolliffe's checklist, a text that also survives in London, British Library MS Cotton Vespasian A. XXV). Although gathering the material intelligently, Gribbin is not at his most secure among these books: *Pictor in carmine*, surviving from Welbeck in a Lincoln Cathedral manuscript (p. 136), is not a concordance, but rather a Cistercian guide to typology and the figurative decoration of churches. And the 'Legenda Sanctorum que dicitur Aurea in anglicis' (p. 160), suggested by Bell as a South English Legendary, is perhaps more likely to be a *Gilte Legende*. The most famous English Premonstratensian author of the late-medieval period was Thomas of Wiggenhall, canon of West Dereham, and it is very good indeed to hear that Dr Gribbin plans to undertake an edition of his works. It is worth adding that two copies of his *Speculum iuratorum* were noted in the fifteenth-century collection of the Syon Brethren (at K.52 and K.54), as these copies are not noted by Gribbin nor by Richard Sharpe in his entry on Wiggenhall in his *Handlist of Latin Writers*.

The star of the late-medieval Premonstratensian show is undoubtedly Richard Redman, born in Westmoreland, who became the long-serving (c. 1458-1505) abbot of his neighbourhood abbey of Shap (of which his family had been benefactors), and the equally long-serving commissary-general and visitor of the English circaries. Not content with those duties (exercised with vigour, political muscle, some tactical skill and apparent pastoral commitment), he also served as bishop of St Asaph from 1472 to 1495 (the lowest and poorest see in England and Wales, perhaps a reward for his family's Yorkist sympathies), Exeter from 1495 until 1501 and finally Ely from 1501 until his death in 1505. While at St Asaph, he also undertook political duties and after the accession of Richard III (whose patronage of Redman was extensive and generous) joined the king's council and was involved in various diplomatic and enforcement activities. After Richard's fall, his fortunes changed for a while, and he may have been implicated in the 'Lambert Simnel' rising of 1487, though

Henry VII seems to have been prepared to overlook his political errors and to continue to advance his ecclesiastical career. Gribbin brings some aspects of Redman's style vividly to life. Having spent his career as visitor upholding the prerogatives of the order against the exercise of episcopal visitation, Redman, as bishop of Exeter, found himself visiting one of his own abbeys in his own diocese, and having to make it clear to the house (and later in writing) which of his assortment of clerical hats he was wearing on that particular day.

In the eighteenth century, the Premonstratensians offered the following powerful characterization of their life and work: '*Laudes Dei in choro; cultus eucharisticus; cultus marialis; spiritus jugis paenitentiae; zelus animarum*' (cited here p. 101). Gribbin's unexpectedly fascinating study shows that even if they did not consistently maintain the highest standards, the late-medieval English province, and its larger than life visitor Richard Redman consistently aspired to them.

VINCENT GILLESPIE

RICHARD III, A ROYAL ENIGMA. Sean Cunningham. 2003. The National Archives, Kew. £14.99. ISBN 1-903365-45-7

This book is a curious mixture. It is well presented, with fine illustrations, and presents a wealth of interesting source material in a readily accessible form. Yet the family tree at the back omits the key Yorkist descent from Lionel, Duke of Clarence, and (by the misleading sleight of hand of concentrating on Henry VII's descent from Catherine of Valois) appears, at first glance, to give Henry pride of place as though *he* were the senior descendant of Edward III. Regrettably, the book contains the usual inconsistencies in respect of female nomenclature. (Elizabeth Woodville rather than Elizabeth Grey, but Katherine Swynford not Katherine de Roët, and Eleanor Butler not Eleanor Talbot.)

The author acknowledges that the source material covering some periods of Richard's career (such as his childhood) is limited. When dealing with the relatively uncontroversial aspects of Richard's life he provides a clear, concise and coherent account of events which at times appears to cut through the layers of later history to bring us closer to the real Richard. Dr Cunningham acknowledges the difficulty of discovering what Richard was really like, but his stated aspiration is to set him in his contemporary, fifteenth century context, eschewing the rival stereotypes of later writers: Shakespeare's villain, and the virtuous victim of Tudor propaganda. This is a laudable aim, but difficult to achieve, and despite the wealth of contemporary source material which his book presents, in the final analysis Dr Cunningham is not always able to avoid the influence of later stereotyping.

Richard's upbringing in the household of the earl of Warwick is seen as 'deeply significant', as is his relationship with his mother, the widowed Cecily Neville. In the matter of land holdings, and in his dealings with other noblemen and with his social inferiors, Richard is seen as typical of his social class and period. In this context his conduct was at times 'aggressive', and Richard is presented as having been able to combine a reputation for justice with the sometimes ruthless pursuit of his personal interest. Dr Cunningham emphasises Richard's apparently genuine piety, though not everyone would accept his characterisation of Richard's sexual *mores* as 'almost prurient'. Dr Cunningham also emphasises the fundamental legitimism which underlies both Richard's and his parents' belief in the Yorkist right to the throne. Strangely, however, he then seems unable to see that Richard's strict adherence to the legitimist principle is entirely consistent with his conduct in 1483 once one accepts that there may have been genuine grounds for doubting the validity of Edward IV's Woodville marriage.

In fact, on the controversial issues of Richard's accession large assumptions are made. The Edward / Eleanor precontract is consistently presented as a fabrication of 1483, and the *Titulus regius* of 1484 is described as 'blatant propaganda'. The possibility that the precontract story was true is never seriously considered, although Dr Cunningham does remark at one point that Cecily Neville, whom he sees as supporting Richard's actions in 1483, 'may have known the truth of Richard's arguments over the illegitimacy of the Princes'. Relevant contemporary and near contemporary information bearing on the precontract issue (the pattern of secret alliances in the fifteenth century royal family; the character of Edward IV; the fact of the secret Woodville marriage; the conduct of the Talbot and Butler families *vis-à-vis* Richard III; Henry VII's hasty and unprecedented suppression of the *Titulus regius* of 1484; the fact that the precontract remained a live issue for foreign courts well into the Tudor period) is not reviewed. In accounting for Richard's change of policy during the summer of 1483, the intervention of Bishop Stillington, reported by Philippe de Commines, is never mentioned.

Likewise, Dr Cunningham assumes that Edward IV's sons were killed in 1483, under Richard's aegis, and that the bones in the Westminster Abbey urn would, if DNA tested, prove to be their remains. In support of the former contention he presents what he acknowledges as the confused and rumour-filled writings of some contemporaries, and the fact of Lord Howard's elevation to Richard of Shrewsbury's dukedom of Norfolk soon after Richard III's accession. The claim of 'Perkin Warbeck' to be Edward IV's younger son is not seriously considered, despite the fact that it enjoyed widespread contemporary credence. Yet even if the 'Warbeck' claim was false, the fact that it was widely believed conflicts with Dr Cunningham's view that most contemporaries thought that the boys had been killed. On the issue of DNA

analysis of the Westminster Abbey bones, any opinion as to the outcome is, of course, pure assumption.

There are other assumptions and errors in the book. Clarence's death is described as 'murder', despite the fact that he had been condemned to death by due legal processes. Richard III is said to have 'physically resembled his father', which he may have done, but how can we be sure? Henry Tudor is presented as the Lancastrian heir, which he certainly wasn't. 'Many sources' we are told, 'emphasise Richard's troubled dreams' on the night before the battle of Bosworth. This sounds dangerously like reliance on the kind of later stereotyping which the book ostensibly set out to avoid. It is also astonishing, and deeply regrettable, to find Dr Cunningham retelling once again as though it were proven fact, the wholly unverified and extremely dubious seventeenth century tale of Richard's body having been exhumed from his tomb at the Franciscan Friary in Leicester at the time of the Dissolution, and thrown into the River Soar.

There is no bibliography as such, merely a list of suggestions for further reading. This list is perhaps the author's personal choice, but it is a pity, in my view, that it omits Sutton and Visser-Fuchs, *The Hours of Richard III*, while including the sometimes rather fanciful *Religious Life of Richard III* by Hughes.

JOHN ASHDOWN-HILL

THE SECRET MIDDLE AGES: DISCOVERING THE REAL MEDIEVAL WORLD. Malcolm Jones. 2002. Sutton Publishing Ltd., Stroud £25. ISBN 0-7509-2685-6

Medieval secular art, in all its forms, has not previously received the attention that it merits, according to Malcolm Jones. 'Secret' is that 'side of the Middle Ages [which] ... has not been made public, not been published, and thus remained, as it were, always in the shadow – even suspect.' (p. xix) Jones' aim is to cast light on these much neglected aspects of medieval culture. Although the examples thus illuminated are secular, he hesitates to use such terms as 'folk art' or 'popular art' as these conjure up certain preconceptions: it is simply art that is not *overtly* religious. The overarching, or underlying, presence of religion in medieval reality must never be ignored. Indeed, it is argued, the medieval mind would not divorce the secular from the religious; a point emphasised by the presence of many 'profane' decorations in churches, especially on misericords, to which many nineteenth-century commentators laboured to ascribe religious significance (p. 61). Having castigated medieval art historians for concentrating on *religious* art and thus ignoring the 'other half' of life, Jones deals frankly and openly with the earthiness of *secular* art because 'folly and filth

were as much a part of the human condition in the Middle Ages as were gravity and spirituality ...' (p. 299).

In terms of type, time and provenance, the material gathered together is wide-ranging. Examples are drawn from all over Europe and date from the ninth to the seventeenth century. A conscious effort has been made not to privilege manuscripts over artefacts, but the author makes an exception for inventories of collections of goods that are now lost. Frequently the earliest surviving written evidence for particular sayings or phrases is pre-dated by other forms of representation. Some of Jones' main sources are tiny lead badges, the pitiful survival rate of which becomes immediately obvious. This is partly a function of their lowly nature. Neither costly, nor precious, they were rarely treasured; however, many of them have literally been unearthed during archaeological excavations.

The introductory chapter, 'Love, Death and Biscuits', discusses the contents of an inventory of biscuit moulds owned by the mayor of Strasbourg. Jones shows that these day-to-day objects, collected over a period of time, can be seen as 'an anthology of late medieval iconography'. This treasure trove of miniature art sets the tone for the book: there is often more to each object, or picture, or description, than meets the eye. Yet the author is careful not to read something into everything, cautioning, for example, that while a dog may indeed represent fidelity (hence 'Fido'), it may also just be a dog (p. 34)! He displays a healthy cynicism towards those modern historians who see 'coded' messages in every instance of pictorial marginalia (p. 62).

As becomes a book on art, it is lavishly illustrated, although in some places even more pictures would have been welcome because unfamiliar objects are sometimes hard to visualise from their written descriptions. The chapters, arranged thematically, cover such topics as 'the Art and Artefacts of Popular Religion', 'the Iconography of Humiliation and Insult' and 'Gender Relations'. Many of the items discussed relate to the themes of several chapters, hence there is a certain amount of cross-referencing. Chapter Seven, 'Shoeing the Goose: Proverbs and Proverbial Follies' is particularly interesting for it traces the derivation of many familiar sayings, some of which were depicted long before they were written. Jones draws upon Brueghel the Elder's *Flemish Proverbs* (c. 1559) to illustrate the content of a poorly preserved fifteenth-century Flemish tapestry of 'pictorialised proverbs'. Since few such tapestries have survived the ravages of time, Brueghel's fascinating and very detailed picture could have been studied in more depth here, perhaps with an annotated key – this reviewer spent a long time trying to identify various proverbs!

Because, as Jones freely admits, there is no overlying thesis, the book often resembles a catalogue of medieval secular art. It is not so much a book to read, as a reference work to consult for the origins of a particular proverb or the significance of a specific object. Indeed, it could have been constructed as a

Companion to the Secret Middle Ages, with a brief introduction followed by entries arranged alphabetically rather than by theme. This is not to belittle the painstaking collection of such a vast array of examples. The detailed footnotes testify to the author's wide reading, the numerous papers that he has already written and the range of scholarly contacts that he has throughout Europe (as well as the sheer number of scholars working on related topics). His extensive knowledge of the subject is enhanced by references to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, itself a repository of his themes.

The contribution made by these objects to *everyday* life, however, remains unclear. Although the artefacts here revealed are just the tip of the iceberg of medieval secular art, quite how big that iceberg was and what proportion of the population came into contact with it is not discussed. The ordinary man-in-the-field may have had no *more* access to these items than he did to the religious art discussed by other cultural historians. Nevertheless, in this book the secrets of medieval art have now been laid bare, sometimes literally, to modern readers.

HEATHER FALVEY

ISABEL OF BURGUNDY. The Duchess Who Played Politics in the Age of Joan of Arc, 1397-1471. Aline S. Taylor. 2001. Madison Books, Lanham, Maryland, and 12 Hid's Copse, Cumnor Hill, Oxford OX2 9JJ. £19.99/\$27.95. ISBN 1-56833-227-0

Isabel of Portugal was the daughter of John I of Portugal and Philippa of Lancaster, John of Gaunt's daughter. In 1429, when she was thirty-two, she married as his third wife Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, and became the mother of Charles the Bold. She had an impressive career as her husband's political and diplomatic representative and throughout his reign made great efforts to preserve good relations with England. There is no doubt that the amount of scholarly studies written about her is in inverse proportion to her importance in her lifetime and there is no book focused on her in the English language. Over the last twenty-five years, however, Professor Monique Sommé of the University of Artois has been publishing detailed research on many aspects of Isabel's life, culminating in her book *Isabelle de Portugal, duchesse de Bourgogne. Une femme au pouvoir au XVe siècle*, Lille 1998, reviewed in *The Ricardian*, volume 12, number 150, September 2000, pp. 135-37. It is therefore incorrect for the blurb of the present book to claim that it is the 'first-ever biography' of Isabel; indeed, the author has made use of Sommé's 1995 PhD thesis on which her later book is based. It is also unfortunate that Professor Taylor has not greatly benefited from her predecessor's work, her own unfamiliarity with her subject jumps from almost every page. The book is an obvious patchwork,

very uneven, good where the sources are good, weak where they are bad and valueless where the author's imagination takes over. To quote a passage which gives the flavour of the book and which I can also check against my own research (p. 208):

Finally, a few days after Christmas, the eagerly awaited summons to meet with his brother-in-law arrived at The Hague and Edward wasted no time responding to the call. Racing both his companions and his caravan of supplies, Edward's horse cleared the marshy lowlands quickly, as the king made his way south toward the small and blustery winter post of Oostkamp, near Bruges. Isabel also hurried back across the wintry fields well before the new year, as Charles had asked his mother to prepare her residence for this important meeting. Because Isabel's retreat at La-Motte-au-Bois was not an official residence of Burgundy, her estate was an ideal location in which to draw up a strategy to reclaim the Yorkist crown.

Truth, fortunately, is as interesting as fiction in this case: the invitation from Charles the Bold to his brother-in-law Edward IV, in exile in Holland, to come and see him reached the king shortly before Christmas and he and his companions travelled in state and partly by ship in the company of Louis de Bruges, Lord of Gruuthuse, Governor of Holland, via the latter's newly improved castle at Haamstede in Zeeland, stopping at Aardenburg to venerate the statue of the Virgin Mary, to Gruuthuse's sumptuous country estate of Oostkamp, near Bruges, where they rested for several days. From there Edward went to Aire, where he met Charles, whose aged mother, Isabel of Portugal, was also present.

As part of its attempt to bring history to life the present book is well-provided with such descriptions of the inclement weather of the Low Countries – 'gusts of wind slipped icy fingers down his back', 'Isabel's cart lurched over the flat, windswept plains' – and other attempts to create 'atmosphere'. Though the reader may be willing to believe that it was a cold, northern world that Philip's Portuguese bride had come to live in, he or she is less likely to accept the numerous minor and major errors of fact – such as the one about Gruuthuse's mansion at Oostkamp. These more than suggest that the author is unfamiliar with the period and the lands she has chosen to write about.

To take but a few (some cannot be explained here for lack of space): 'Duke Baudoin de Lannoy' (p. 24; *recte* Baudouin de Lannoy, Lord of Molembeix); 'Franche Compte' (p. 34; *recte* Franche-Comté); people 'drink ... rose water' (usually they wash their hands in it, p. 34); 'dukes of Flanders' (p. 49; *recte* counts); 'the English threatened not to buy Flemish wool' (it is English wool that Anglo-Flemish trade is all about, p. 55); 'The "Staple" was the standard price, amount, and assessed duty imposed on all English wool and cloth im-

ported through the port of Calais; it was fixed and controlled by the powerful merchants of that city under the leadership of their mayor' (the staple is the location, the market place, on which all these rules are centred, p. 90); 'Henry Holland, captain of the *Nicholas* [on which the duke of Suffolk was beheaded in 1450] was ... York's son-in-law' (p. 118); 'earl of Suffolk' for 'duke of Suffolk' (*passim*); 'Edward's brother-in-law Richard of Gloucester' (p. 188; elsewhere, fortunately, he is Edward's own brother); 'Charles and his mother walked solemnly behind [Philip the Good's] catafalque (p. 190; women were not mourners at a man's funeral).

Arbitrary misspelling of names of people and places occurs throughout the book: Gruuthuse is 'Groothouse' in one place and 'Gruuthuyse' in another, his full name is never given, his position or status never explained. Nor is, for example, ever made any mention of Queen Elizabeth Woodville's family connection with the Luxembourg family, which was crucial to Burgundian attitudes to her. It is also surprising that a book about a forceful lady, which spends many pages on Joan of Arc, does not even mention the equally formidable Jacqueline of Bavaria, Countess of Holland and Zeeland, one of the adversaries and finally victim of Philip the Good and his territorial greed. Given the author's penchant for dramatising, it would be interesting to know what she would make of Isabel's views of another woman's attempts to preserve the independence of herself and her people.

The crowning 'glory' of the book's imaginative writing is the description of the visit of Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, to Duchess Isabel at her castle of Motte-au-Bois in April 1469. Warwick, according to the author, was heading an embassy to present the garter to Charles the Bold, who had been recently elected to the order:

As the earl had a personality much like her son's – ambitious, direct, impatient, and proud – Warwick's company pleased the great lady, now seventy-two. Warwick spent several days with Isabel, mining her political acumen, enjoying walks in her gardens, and relishing the sumptuous dining and entertainments she had arranged ... She, too, studied the earl ...

In fact, it was not Warwick who took the garter to Charles, but Dr John Russell, Gaillard de Durfort, Lord Duras, Thomas Vaughan and Garter King of Arms, who offered it to the duke at Ghent on 4 February 1470. Warwick had visited the Burgundian court in the previous year, in April and May 1469, meeting Isabel briefly on 30 April. The visit was a disaster, though it remains a mystery why, and Charles and Warwick took an instant dislike to each other. It is improbable that the duke would have saddled his aged mother with the earl for any length of time, and more importantly, there is not the least evidence

that he did. The passage quoted above belongs in a historical novel, not in a study that means to be a scholarly one.

For lack of another biography of Isabel some readers may be tempted to buy this book, and, of course, the main facts of her interesting life are all there. But how is one to know what to take seriously and what to reject? Not all errors can and should be mentioned, but the worst aspect of them is that they are not consistent and they seem to vary with the source used. And there is another problem: the sources are given in the endnotes to each chapter, but these notes are very few and run out towards the end of the book, the last chapter having none at all. There is no bibliography and half of all French titles mentioned in the notes have a spelling mistake or other oddity. The index had best be called select.

It is a comfort to know that Richard Vaughan's biographies of Philip the Good and Charles the Bold have been re-published, providing a solid background to Isabel of Portugal's life and much information about herself. For those who read French there is Professor Sommé's impeccable study.

LIVIA VISSER-FUCHS

GOTHIC EUROPE 1200-1450. Derek Pearsall. 2001. Longman/Pearson Education Ltd., Harlow, Essex. £29.99. ISBN 0-58222-27638-1

Umberto Eco famously wrote that there are many Middle Ages. That being the case, Derek Pearsall's version, where people play ball in cathedral naves, the world is suffused by the light of stained-glass windows, and men go to war in order to avoid upsetting women, must be one to visit. The 270-odd pages of *Gothic Europe 1200-1450* are packed with crisply conveyed facts, whimsical anecdotes, and pellucid explanations, as well as some trenchant opinions. Pearsall admits that he embarked on the project with scepticism about reading cultural history by period, but his insightful conclusions convince the reader, as they presumably did him, of the distinctiveness of the Gothic. A teacherly anxiety for the book's potentially wide public audience ensures that urban myths that construct, for example, a wholly pious and zealous Middle Ages, are dispelled: this is a serious book with something for expert and non-expert alike.

The opening chapter presents a rather racy account of the history of the Crusades, the fall of Constantinople, and the papal schism. The reader becomes accustomed to the author's technique of compressing factual information then providing the relief through parenthetical ephemera and irreverent analogies, as when, for example, the church's alternate use of stories of miracles and tales of hellfire is described as a 'good cop, bad cop' technique. Self-indulgent though they are, without such diversions such a tour would be

as unreadable as it is in many more Gradgrindian textbooks. Pearsall's gift is not only that he can make any topic engaging, but that he can also explain daunting concepts so that the reader is left wondering why they ever appeared difficult in the first place. Such is the beautifully cogent explanation of the progression from Thomism to Ockhamist nominalism in the course of the exploration of church power in Chapter 2. The reader cannot come away from the same section without also being aware of Pearsall's personal distaste for ecstatic mysticism, but here as elsewhere, the distinction between information and opinion is clearly signaled, and the reader is trusted to be grown-up enough to deal with each appropriately.

The central and third chapter is the heart of the book, setting out to define the 'Gothic Achievement' through its three cornerstones, the cathedral, the illuminated manuscript and the chivalric romance. On cathedrals, we are taken from the basics – pointed arch, rib vault, flying buttress – to apprehend how these 'space-frame exteriors' enabled 'the insubstantial soaring space of the interior'. Throughout this section there is a succinct balance of information, alternating the general with the particular and eccentric – the scissors crossing at Wells – laced with a very personal delight in the achievement and a *Boy's Own* scrupulosity about numbers, that ensures that we know which choir was biggest (Palma de Mallorca) and which took longest to build (Cologne). But then unfinishedness is a characteristic of the Gothic, not 'closed' like the Classical building, but conveying 'mobility, excitement and restlessness'. In keeping with an impatience with the classical, in his tour of the European achievement in building, the author is dismissive of the Italians, whose masons were 'confused' by the Gothic. Later he suggests that in classical figure sculpture strength intensifies the solidity of the figures, whereas the Gothic counterpart expresses the 'spiritualisation of the human'. The reader also learns how masons worked on cathedrals, and what different funding-methodologies were employed locally. We are reminded what a glorious and miraculous thing is the survival of medieval stained glass, but that the choice as between glass and fresco to present the church's programme of images, is entirely a matter of climate.

If glass is fragile how much more so is the manuscript, unsullied by the mending and restoration of intervening generations. Pearsall is above all a manuscripts man, and he believes that the book trade's response to the demands of wealthy patrons provided the real masterpieces of the Gothic. From fashionable thirteenth-century apocalypses through the very English taste in illuminated Psalters, devotional manuscripts bear witness to the influence of Franciscan emotionalism. It is here too that he concludes his discussion of the obscene and grotesque images which pervade Gothic art, apparently in incongruous juxtaposition with the pious. 'The two forms are part of the same world of seeing, the obverse and the reverse of the same processing

of experience. The grossness of one does not deny but rather defines the other.' Equally he sees characteristic balance in the opposition between naturalism and artificiality sustained in many of the finest manuscript illuminators' work.

Emotive Franciscan piety validated the representation of ordinary human love in literature, from the 'slick' Provençal lyricists to the full development of chivalric romance. Conventionally the romance decorum is defined in contrast to heroic epic: in epic, 'men fight for them because otherwise the women will be killed, raped, or forced into subjection, not because they will be upset.' The section goes on to deal with the problem of clerical appropriation – the grail quest – uses the English poem, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, to illustrate the 'contradiction at the heart of the chivalric code', and claims that Chaucer found romance writing ultimately rather tedious. Again the main thrust of the exposition is leavened by accounts of ladies in skin-tight clothing and noblemen who blew their noses on the tablecloth.

In the concluding two chapters, 'Fragmentations' and 'New Identities', it is argued that the Gothic depended on an 'equilibrium of contrary stresses', both in physical design and in the blending of the human and the spiritual. The end of that equilibrium is attributed in part to social change – urban poverty, 'bastard' feudalism, heresy and its backlash – but the real culprit is realism in art. The fascination with the quiddity of real things and people is here presented not as an advance or even a renaissance, but as something which fatally de-established an aesthetic in which multiple meanings could be sustained in balance. The book ends on a positive note, celebrating new awarenesses of individual and of national identity, and of the concomitant growth in, for example, portrait painting. There is also a succinct tribute to the achievement of the known women writers of the period.

The book has its unevennesses. Pearsall believes that peasants led unbearable lives and aristocrats enjoyed themselves, but otherwise he seems not greatly interested in the social life of the period. In his discussion of books, and only there, he departs from the expository style of the rest to take issue with individual critics, whereas in, for example, his examination of non-structural church furnishings, he is in much more of a hurry. Nor do we learn anything of collegiate buildings, particularly the universities, in the section on buildings and stained glass.

It is not particularly fashionable for leading academics to write books whose function is to explain; *Gothic Europe, 1200-1450* will doubtless annoy some people who are troubled by positivism. Those who cannot get over their intellectual scruples with the concept of such a project will miss reading a real tour de force, for this is an immensely readable advertisement for the allure of an epoch, written by one of its most knowledgeable and benign aficionados.

PAMELA KING

MARGARET OF ANJOU: Queenship and Power in Late Medieval England. Helen E. Maurer. 2003. The Boydell Press, Woodbridge. £25.

ISBN 0-85115-927-3

A new study of the queenship of Margaret of Anjou is to be welcomed. The last serious life of this misunderstood and much maligned queen was published in 1948 by J.J. Bagley based on earlier studies and using a wide range of English and French chronicle accounts and histories as well as a collection of her letters edited by Cecil Monro, published by the Camden Society in 1863. What was surprising about Bagley's biography was his judgement of Margaret's character: she was courageous but impetuous, intelligent but inexperienced, susceptible to flattery and incapable of being passive. He used her letters as evidence of 'her officious and interfering personality' without due consideration of contemporary expectations of queenship and without comparison with the actions of other medieval queens. Bagley's portrait of Margaret of Anjou as a strong, arrogant, power-seeking queen who abused her position of authority to promote her own interests and ultimately to bring about civil war, can be traced back to Shakespeare's powerful image presented in his *History Plays*. It is the product of hostile politically-prejudiced sources written by Margaret's enemies, the Yorkists. Margaret's reputation has suffered because she failed to hold onto power and became the victim of one of the most effective propaganda campaigns in English history, which placed her at the centre of events and presented her as a totally malign force in politics.

A re-assessment of the role of Margaret of Anjou as queen is long overdue. Maurer examines Margaret's queenship in the context of contemporary attitudes towards women in positions of authority. She recognises that queens were placed in exceptional positions compared with other women, but were expected to assert their power only in very clearly defined and limited ways, as intercessors, mediators and peacemakers. This aspect of medieval queenship has been fully explored by a number of historians in recent years, notably by J.C. Parsons and Paul Strohm. Maurer rightly judges Margaret's queenship to be unique because of the particular circumstances of her birth, childhood and marriage to a king who lost his senses in 1453, rendering him incapable of government. Far from regarding Margaret as a power-seeker and an instigator of conflict, Maurer argues that she was restrained and sought to keep the peace for as long as possible in the hope that the king would recover. Margaret recognised the vulnerability of her position and was loath to act in any way that would jeopardise it. She was not hell-bent on destroying her political rival Richard, Duke of York and tried to mediate with her enemies until as late as 1460. The queen's attitude towards the 'Loveday' of 1458 is reconsidered by Maurer who argues that Margaret had more to gain from a peaceful settlement with the Yorkists than from antagonism. She casts Margaret in the traditional

role of intercessor on this occasion, although she does admit that the queen remains invisible and unrecorded because she had no accepted political role to play. Contrary to the traditional view of Margaret of Anjou, Maurer believes that she adhered to contemporary notions of queenship for as long as possible, ultimately being forced by circumstance to involve herself in politics.

The main problem confronting any historian seeking to find the real person hidden behind layers of Yorkist and Tudor propaganda, is the paucity of personal material for the woman herself. Maurer has used what little material there is to good effect. The most promising source of information for Margaret's personality are her eighty-two surviving letters written between 1445 and 1455, seventy-four of which were published in 1863. Maurer regards the collection as representative of her interests and actions as queen especially in her role as an intermediary and in the exercise of her 'good ladyship'. The letters are a useful source of information on female networking as Margaret attempted to obtain favours for members of her household and other petitioners but they also reveal that the queen was limited in what she might achieve in her own name and could only act through her husband.

Part IV of the book entitled 'Queen's Rule?' explores the ways in which Margaret attempted to extend her influence in the period 1456 to 1461 both formally, through the institutions of governance, and informally, by mediation and intercession. This is a crucial period of Henry VI's reign when the king fell increasingly under the influence of his wife who attempted to retain control of government until their son Prince Edward reached adulthood, resisting attempts to establish an alternative form of government by a council of noblemen led by York. In his study of Henry VI, *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* (Cambridge, 1996), John Watts pointed out how difficult it is to know where the source of authority lay at this time because of the collapse of central government record-keeping after the removal of the centre of political power from Westminster to Coventry in 1456. Watts places the queen at the centre of events as she sought to establish a regional power-base in the name of her son, promoting those noblemen closest to her to positions of authority, including William Booth, Archbishop of York, his half-brother Laurence Booth, Bishop of Durham, John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury and James Butler, Earl of Wiltshire. Maurer does not examine Margaret's relations with this important group of Lancastrian noblemen in any depth although she does consider the ways in which the queen used her authority to arrange marriages as a means of consolidating her power. She also investigates Margaret's manipulation of her image on public and ceremonial occasions such as at the reception given to her by the city of Coventry in September 1456. She sees this occasion as 'highly gendered', the queen being presented conventionally as a virtuous wife and mother in need of protection. This is in contrast to the next occasion when she was escorted from the city in March 1457 'in the same manner as the king at

his departures.' This can be used as evidence to show that the queen had assumed royal power in place of her ineffective husband.

Maurer's book provides us with a much more sympathetic assessment of Margaret of Anjou's queenship compared with previous studies, setting her actions into context in order to explain why her efforts to hold onto royal power met with such hostility. She does not fall into the trap of assigning to Margaret feelings and emotions based on assumption and imagination. It is a pity that the book ends so abruptly in 1461 and does not continue Margaret's story to 1471 which marked the end of Lancastrian kingship with the deaths of both her husband and her son. Many questions about this intriguing woman remain unanswered leaving scope for further investigation and re-evaluation.

DIANA DUNN

MANDEVILLE'S MEDIEVAL AUDIENCES: A Study on the Reception of the Book of Sir John Mandeville (1371-1550). Rosemary Tzanaki. 2003. Ashgate, Aldershot. £47.50. ISBN 0-7546-0846-8

The *Book of John Mandeville*, recording the exotic Eastern travels of the eponymous mysterious knight, has fascinated readers since its appearance in the mid fourteenth century. Available in twelve languages by the end of the fifteenth century, this popular work survives in *circa* 300 manuscripts, an indication that many more must have been produced. But who read this text, and what did they make of its fantastic contents? Whilst most modern commentators have concentrated on editorial matters or attempted to identify the enigmatic Mandeville, Rosemary Tzanaki addresses the issue of audience. She limits her discussion of its reception to France and England before 1550, but generously defines 'audience' to include not just owners of the book but those involved in its making: scribes, illuminators, redactors and translators, as well as other authors who borrowed its ideas. More ambitiously she hopes to identify not only readers of the book but 'precisely what they read it for' (p. 1), proposing to do this by a close study of manuscript annotation.

Overall Tzanaki adopts a five-fold thematic approach, using the key concepts of pilgrimage, geography, romance, history, and theology to inform the structure of the book. In the Introduction she offers a much needed overview of the work's pre-modern dissemination, but the *Book's* complex tradition defies succinct summary and the two-page survey of its textual relations is too brief to be properly illuminating even with the addition of various diagrams. The annotated list of manuscripts is useful, but it is easy for the reader to feel overwhelmed by the sheer plethora of manuscripts, versions and translations. Tzanaki chooses the Continental French Version as a basic text for quotation, preferring it because of its proximity to the work's lost archetype. Her choice

seems a little perverse, however, since she relegates the French to the footnotes and places her own English translation in the text.

In the first thematic chapter, 'The Pilgrimage Route', Tzanaki discusses pilgrimage literature and the crusades before demonstrating how closely the *Book* conformed to traditions of writing on these subjects. She finds that it offers a wealth of information about shrines, relics and miracles, and that it reiterates biblical stories in abundance. In terms of practical information for the traveller it is less forthcoming, saying little about transport, exchange rates, and exact itineraries; in short, the *Book* was clearly not the rough guide of its day. Overall she contends that medieval readers gullibly accepted this as a true account of actual pilgrimage, relishing details of Jerusalem, the Holy Land, and relics of Christ's passion; eventually religious piety gives way to curiosity and aspects of the marvellous are preferred to the miraculous. This movement is mapped most coherently in the chronological discussion of the *Book's* manuscript and woodcut illustrations.

In the second chapter, Tzanaki claims that the author intended to depict a unified religious geography of the world and human culture which incorporated classical and biblical sources and aspired to an encyclopaedic discussion of *de rerum naturum*. Disappointingly, despite this grand design, the *Book* came to be regarded as a source of purely practical information about topography, distance, climate, and foreign nations; above all it popularised the idea of circumnavigation. The scientific aspects of the *Book* do not seem to have provoked much response, but judging from the illustrations of monstrous people there was widespread interest in human geography. In the third and fourth chapters, respectively entitled 'Romantic Interludes' and 'Historical Interest', Tzanaki continues to insist on the wide gulf between authorial intention and audience reception. In terms of romance she claims that whilst the author of the *Book* inserted episodes based on traditions of romance, the conclusions drawn from these were strongly moralistic. Readers, on the other hand, preferred the sugar coating, reading the *Book* as 'pure romance', and later writers borrowed the romance elements whilst excising its didacticism. In terms of history, Tzanaki considers the *Book* in the context of vernacular prose historiography, claiming that the author uses history as a means of reinforcing the centrality of his work in time and space, and also as a background to biblical events. Audiences, however, seem to have used the *Book* only as a source of historical information, reducing it to the status of a historical chronicle.

The final substantial chapter charts the author's philosophical approach to human culture and his development of a syncretic religious viewpoint characterised by tolerance and a faith in natural goodness and belief. This seems uneasily like the imposition of the modern upon the medieval. Tzanaki states that the author goes far beyond his sources 'transmuting ... intolerant attitudes into a far more thoughtful comparison of the often corrupt culture of Latin Chris-

tendom with a variety of other religious systems' (p. 21). Was he really likely to have been this tolerant? Certainly, as she concedes, his audiences tended either to miss or reject this liberalism, preferring to emphasize the weirdness of the Other or to remain traditionally hard-lined when confronted with the infidel. The touchy-feely Mandeville presented in this last chapter is not convincing, nor is such a profile necessary to make him interesting to a modern audience.

The problem underlying Tzanaki's discussion, and one which niggles increasingly as the book progresses, is the much-mentioned question of authorial intention. The identity of the author is unknown, and the matter of authorial intention far too slippery to define. Tzanaki tries to combat this by concentrating on the author's use of sources and his development of the Mandeville *persona*, but even so she doesn't wholly escape the intentionalist fallacy. Similarly her discussions of reader response sometimes lack clear direction; the *Book's* own diversity is matched by a variety of response which Tzanaki finds hard to summarise precisely because she defines its audience so broadly. Although this is a well-executed reception study, much of the book comprises detailed description of manuscript annotation or illustration which is not always matched by a compensating balance of analysis. Tzanaki does not fully succeed in shaking off the shackles of her thesis, and the result is a rather pedestrian voyage through *Mandeville's Travels*, though one enlivened with some excellent illustrations.

MARGARET CONNOLLY

WILLS OF THE ARCHDEACONRY OF SUDBURY, 1439-1476. WILLS FROM THE REGISTER 'BALDWYNE'. PART 1: 1439-1461. Edited by Peter Northeast. Suffolk Record Society, volume 44, 2001. Available to members of the Suffolk Records Society for £12.50 annual subscription, and to others from Boydell and Brewer, Woodbridge, Suffolk, £25. ISBN 0-85115-8110

Registered copies of East Anglian wills have survived in prodigiously large numbers. For the archdeaconry of Sudbury, which covered approximately the same area as the pre-1974 county of West Suffolk (although with the addition of some Cambridgeshire parishes), there are over a hundred volumes of will-registers, from 1439 to 1858. The earliest register, called 'Baldwyne', contains well over 2000 wills or records of probate, of the years 1439-74. Peter Northeast has undertaken to publish it in its entirety, and the present publication is of the first half (309 folios, out of a total of nearly 600).

Northeast's is a formidable undertaking. It will only be rendered fully usable when Part II (1461-74) is published, since that will contain the index. Meantime, however, the Suffolk Record Society's publication of Part I should be saluted, for it is an extremely impressive achievement. Each will has been abstracted in full,

'that is, including all items of substance and all personal and place names, and omitting only words considered dispensable' (p. xxxvii; editorial methods are clearly explained on pp. x-xi): with the right editor, as here, this is probably the ideal for a modern county record society to aim for. There is an excellent glossary, and a useful introduction in which the testament and last will are explained: the appointment of feoffees seems to have been particularly widespread in late medieval East Anglia, commoner perhaps than the understanding either of their place in the eyes of the law or of the need for a last will to give directions to them. Northeast is careful to indicate whether the registered document is a testament or will (or both), but there was evidently confusion in the minds of a fair number of the testators as to which instrument served what function, and it was fortunate for them that the archdeaconry court was untroubled by this. Matters with which the court did concern itself included the production of inventories and accounts: it would be interesting to have a clear statement of the survival of any of these, as also of any original testaments and/or wills (mentioned *en passant* on p. lii).

The testaments and wills of East Anglia's clergy, gentry and nobility were proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury or in the bishop's consistory court: in effect, the archdeacon's court was for the craftsmen, lesser merchants, farmers and their wives or widows. Their bequests are revealing because of their great number and through the consistent portrait that they thus enable a reader to draw. Exotic possessions are rare (though note a cloth painted with the story of King Robert of Sicily, no. 588), but possessions that were in daily use are set out in countless variant combinations. Many testators leave multi-gallon brass pans, or bushels of barley or malt, or pairs of beads; bequests to the local church and its clergy, and other charitable bequests, are usually of cash, but bequests to relatives and friends are more often of material goods. This perhaps results in a misleading sense of the testators' wealth: their lands may only have featured in their last will and its directions to their feoffees, and the will was not necessarily copied into the probate register. Bequests for priests to pray for a year for the testator show how much cash could be mustered where it was felt necessary: the usual rate for one year was eight marks (£5 6s. 8d: e.g., nos. 820, 865, 969, 1084; and see 1298, specifying £10 13s. 4d for two years) although nine marks is found occasionally (768, 790).

Bequests to the local friaries are very common; legacies to monasteries are rare (321, 479, 497, 1168, 1240, 1463), especially if one excludes bequests to nunneries (539, 749, 777, 1115, 1279), and in any case a large proportion of the monastic beneficiaries are specific monks, canons or nuns – perhaps children of the testators – rather than their houses. Where pilgrimages are asked for, it tends to be as a multiple request, for visits to several places within East Anglia (346, 489, 1090, 1207), although St James of Compostella is found (17, 346, 1432) and so is Rome (20, 144, 180, 393, 677, 908, etc.). Overall, however, what mattered most for testators (apart from their own family) was the parish church – its fabric,

its images, its ornaments and its decoration. Peter Northeast has himself recently looked at this aspect of the testators' concerns, in 'Suffolk churches in the later middle ages. The evidence of wills', in *East Anglia's History. Studies in Honour of Norman Scarfe*, edited by C. Harper-Bill and others (Woodbridge 2002), pages 93-106. The testators in the present volume show negligible interest in schooling or higher education (929 is the only exception to this that I noticed), and the only books that are mentioned are those for use in the local church (e.g. 941, 1050, 1495), apart from a psalter containing a rental (982).

The testators often are practical and occasionally, we might say, secular in their outlook – as in bequests for road maintenance (e.g., 807, 901, 1231, 1280, 1315, 1375) – but they could also be imaginative, as in the gift of a sheep and a lamb to each girl of the village who is married in the next twelve months (633). Overall, however, one is left with a sense of satisfaction in the ownership of all manner of artefacts – not so much silver spoons (though see 1139, 1469) as the strictly utilitarian (even extending to a necessary-chair, *cathedram necessariam*). A tapestry of daily life is presented here that is intrinsically rich enough to need no gold thread: Peter Northeast's second volume will be eagerly awaited.

NIGEL RAMSAY

CHESHIRE AND THE TUDOR STATE, 1480-1560. Tim Thornton. 2000. The Royal Historical Society, Studies in History. The Boydell Press, Woodbridge. £40. ISBN 1-086193-248X

Tim Thornton is one of the new generation of post-McFarlane scholars with an interest in political ideas and their impact on the ruling elite of late medieval/early modern England. In this detailed and original study, Thornton examines the relationship between central government and the localities, in particular the county palatine of Cheshire, and argues that, contrary to popular perception, the palatinate succeeded in holding on to its semi-autonomous status despite attempts made by the first two Tudor monarchs to assert control over the regions. By the mid-sixteenth century the palatinate possessed a strong clearly-articulated cultural identity expressed in poetry, myth and history, which can be traced back to the grant of the earldom of Chester to Hugh Lupus by William I in c. 1071. Stories of the heroic deeds of the earls of Chester were publicised by means of the county's minstrels, controlled by one of Cheshire's leading families, the Duttons, stewards of the constables of Chester, and exempt from national legislation to control unruly activity. With the development of British history writing in the sixteenth century Cheshire's unique identity, linked to the county's early foundation, was even more effectively expressed. The key question addressed in this book is: Does a strong sense of community identity inevitably lead to separatism and hence

opposition to central authority?' Historians, with their emphasis on centralisation, have traditionally argued that the Tudor monarchy was not prepared to tolerate regionalism and that the new regime instigated by Henry VII, and tightened up under the strong leadership of Henry VIII and Cromwell, brought about the end of provincial privilege. Thornton contests this by questioning the assumption that local privilege necessarily works against central control. By examining the main changes that the palatinate underwent between 1480 and 1560 he argues for the gradual adaptation of its distinctive tax system, the mise, and its institutions, the council, exchequer and courts, to enable it to survive.

This study of regional government focuses on those members of the Cheshire political community, the local aristocracy and gentry, who played key roles in palatinate administration. None were more important in this period as 'brokers between the Crown and Cheshire' than the Stanleys of Lathom and Knowsley. Thornton questions the prevalence of Stanley power in Cheshire and concludes that the family did not in fact dominate the county because their power-base lay essentially in Lancashire rather than Cheshire. As palatinate office-holders, they played an important role as arbitrators in disputes involving Cheshire men such as the conflict between William Tatton and the city of Chester under Richard III, but the influence of the Stanleys in Cheshire during this period has often been over-exaggerated.

The career of Sir William Stanley (d. 1495), who held the post of chamberlain of Chester, a vital palatinate office controlling the county's finances and exchequer equity jurisdiction from 1461 to 1495, is of particular interest to readers of *The Ricardian*. Thornton examines the role of the Stanleys in the downfall of Richard III and their subsequent relations with Henry VII. Despite generous rewards made to the Stanleys by Richard III from June 1483 onwards, when their Cheshire landed base was significantly increased, relations between the king and the family were tense, Thomas, Lord Stanley, being regarded with particular suspicion because of his close personal link to Henry Tudor through his wife Lady Margaret Beaufort. At the final test on the battlefield at Bosworth, Stanley loyalties were found wanting. The inadequacies of the contemporary sources for an understanding of the details of the battle of Bosworth have forced historians to resort to orally transmitted evidence in the form of ballads and narrative accounts. The three extant ballads all present the Stanleys as heroes of Bosworth, emphasising their importance as leaders of the Cheshire and Welsh supporters of Henry Tudor. In particular the author of the 'Song of Lady Bessy', thought to have been a member of the Brereton family, presents Sir William Stanley as a kingmaker at Bosworth, but it is likely that this account of events was written after Stanley's execution for treason in 1495, and therefore the claims it makes for the power of the Stanleys must be treated with caution. Thornton believes that, despite the support for Henry Tudor

provided by the Stanleys at Bosworth, there was a lack of trust subsequently. He reflects that it is 'striking' that 'Sir William does not appear to have played any role in arbitration of disputes in Cheshire between 1480 and 1495, which suggests a lack of trust on the part of the county gentry and, perhaps surprisingly, a lack of power on the part of Sir William when it came to the settlement of their affairs'.

Henry Tudor's mistrust of Sir William Stanley proved to be well-founded. Thornton stresses the instability of Henry's post-Bosworth settlement: 'it had within it the seeds of its own destruction, seen most dramatically in the fall of Sir William Stanley on a charge of treason early in 1495'. What has puzzled historians is the reason for Stanley's treachery when it appears that he had been generously rewarded by the new king. Thornton counters the accepted view of Henry as a firm ruler considering him to have been far more vulnerable in the first ten years of his rule than his promoters would have us believe. He took the plot to put Perkin Warbeck on the throne seriously and rightly recognised that Stanley was deeply implicated. Perhaps Stanley, a greedy and grasping man, was not satisfied with his rewards and felt a particular grievance against the king for not giving him the earldom of Chester which would have ensured that he held total hegemony over the region. As evidence of how seriously Henry took the military threat posed by Stanley's supporters in the north-west, we find the king progressing through the region during the summer 1495, visiting Stanley's castle at Holt and the family's residences at Knowsley and Lathom in Lancashire. Thornton interprets this royal progress as the king's response to the very real threat of a north-western conspiracy. Some of Cheshire's leading families such as the Savages and the Bulkeleys of Cheadle and Beaumaris were implicated. Examined within the broader context of the main theme of the book, Stanley's actions in 1495 prove the point that the potential power and status of the earldom of Chester remained strong in the sixteenth century. Thornton concludes that there was no systematic attempt made by the Tudor monarchy to undermine the palatinate's privileged position which survived the religious, political, social and economic turmoil of the first half of the sixteenth century 'altered but still formidable'.

This book is a pleasure to read: it is well-written and clearly laid out with extensive scholarly footnotes and bibliography. There is a tendency to repetition by summarising the content of each section and chapter but this has the advantage of emphasising the main arguments. The ideas presented here, especially in the book's conclusion, are timely as Cheshire once again faces a challenge to its authority and identity by an assertive and politically self-conscious government caught up in the enduring debate over centralisation versus regionalism.

DIANA DUNN

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF MEDIEVAL LONDON. Christopher Thomas. 2002. Sutton Publishing Ltd, Stroud. £19.99. ISBN 0-7509-2718-6

London naturally always attracted its share of antiquarian interest yet the great contribution that scientific archaeological excavation made to knowledge of the city really began as recently as the mid-1970s. As the starkness of the book's title implies this is the first attempt at a synthesis using the fruits of these discoveries. The subject is potentially vast, so it is helpful that Christopher Thomas defines the London of his study as: 'The historical core of the city with its hinterland, the main suburb across London Bridge in Southwark and the royal and ecclesiastic centre at Westminster'. The type of archaeology involved is very much the sub-discipline known as urban archaeology and since most of it was performed under the pressure of unremitting building development it is also chiefly 'rescue archaeology'.

Although ostensibly the city of London has been occupied continuously for over 2,000 years, there is archaeological evidence for an hiatus after the departure of the Romans. Thus, next year St Paul's Cathedral will celebrate 1,400 years since its foundation, based on the available documents; yet the evidence from intensive archaeological excavation instead suggests merely a very thinly-populated settlement during the seventh century. In preference the Anglo-Saxon immigrants chose to settle in an area corresponding now to Covent Garden and Aldwych, which they called *Lundenwic*. Only in the year 886, under Alfred, did they re-occupy the walled Roman city of Londinium as a bulwark against the Danes and thus it is since this time that the city clearly can be regarded as having experienced continuous occupation. The author makes the point that the London area lacks building stone. The Norman Conquest led to the use of imported stone in such buildings as the Tower of London, Baynard's Castle and Montfichet's Tower as well as the growing number of parish churches and houses of the various monastic orders. It is a testimony to the increasing wealth of the City that the number of structures built of stone increased throughout the middle ages. Gravel, though, was always plentiful in the area and metalled roads came to be the rule. Archaeology has demonstrated that the basic street pattern was laid out in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, reinforced by the need to connect the centre of the City to the burgeoning dockside area. The ancient London Bridge, a timber structure, was replaced in 1209 by one built of stone. The latter was to be kept in repair as well as being developed with chapels and shops, remaining the sole dry crossing of the River Thames at London for many centuries.

The growth of London as a metropolitan centre and as a city that dominated its hinterland is explored at length, under consistent themes such as development, housing, palaces, religion, defences, markets and daily life, as informed by the detail and minutiae of controlled archaeological excavation.

Mansions and palaces came to be built not only for royalty but for both archbishops and the bishops of London, Durham, Winchester, Ely, Lincoln, Norwich and Salisbury. The remains of these structures have been examined archaeologically as have the substantial houses of the merchant class. Although later building works have destroyed the superstructures of the great majority of these medieval buildings conjectural reconstruction has been made possible through the study of foundations, surviving cellars and cesspits.

The central section of the book closes with an assessment of the impact of the Black Death on the City. Here the author presents new archaeological evidence that it was not as great a catastrophe for the City as has been claimed hitherto. Two major areas of ground outside the city walls were made available for the excess burials from the disease epidemic. These cemeteries have been excavated with some perhaps surprising results. The dead were laid out carefully in mass grave trenches, without sign of the haste and panic that characterised the later epidemic of the seventeenth century. Christopher Thomas calculates that the number of Black Death victims buried in these *ad hoc* cemeteries was about 10,000. This figure is at odds with the 50,000 quoted hitherto and the author suggests that this is because either the population of London at this date was much lower than the 80-100,000 previously estimated for the period or that the death-rate from the disease was much lower than elsewhere in England.

Whatever the exact scale of the epidemic, London recovered more rapidly than the remainder of the kingdom. It is evident that the houses and shops vacated by the dead were re-occupied swiftly by immigrants from the surrounding regions. There was a period of reconstruction and another major building boom, with the erection also of forty livery company halls. The Guildhall continued to dominate the City's life, trade and politics and was rebuilt and enlarged between 1411 and 1430. Its chapel was rebuilt in the mid-fifteenth century and foundation stones excavated in 1992 were found inscribed with the names of Henry Frowyck and Thomas Knollys, two prominent men who each served as mayor of London. The City wall was again repaired but this time with brick, thought to be the first large-scale use of locally made bricks in the capital.

Excavations reveal much about the daily life of the citizens. It has been shown that garderobes were regularly furnished with topsoil, interleaved with a layers of quicklime to act as a disinfectant. Several medieval ships were excavated from the ancient river bed near Blackfriars Bridge; two of them sank in the late fifteenth century, partly demonstrated by the tree-ring dating of their planks.

Christopher Thomas set out with the aim of demonstrating, principally through the use of archaeology, how London developed throughout the middle ages, becoming a dominating factor in the life, economy and religion of

England. This wish is quite comfortably realised in this work, which also has the advantage of drawing upon much unpublished material. Given the current deceleration of property development in the City of London, upon which archaeology is perversely dependent, this book will remain the standard work for many years.

WILLIAM J. WHITE

ORIGINS OF THE ENGLISH GENTLEMAN, HERALDRY, CHIVALRY AND GENTILITY IN MEDIEVAL ENGLAND c. 1300 – c. 1500. Maurice Keen. 2002. Tempus, Stroud. £16.99. ISBN 0-7542-2558-7

This is a work on two levels that interplay with each other. On the one hand, it is an exposition of the changing use of heraldry – why and how it was used and its symbolism of status that made it ever increasingly desirable from its beginnings down to the sixteenth century. On a deeper level, which is in fact the principal theme, the book explores the evolution and elaboration of those social classes that were dominant, or *gentee*, below the level of baron or peer, and then attempts something of a definition for each. Thus we start with an examination of knighthood, progressing to a review of the recognition of a class collectively called esquires, finally moving on to focus similarly on gentlemen. Maurice Keen moves seamlessly between these two levels, showing how the acquisition, first by assumption, but increasingly through grant, of arms, can be taken as a benchmark for an individual's entry to these classes. He makes it very clear that coats of arms were both an aspiration and an asset of the socially ambitious.

There is much more to this book, however, than merely an analysis of late medieval upper class society *via* its heraldic trappings. Keen sets the changing nature of knighthood, the origins and changing nature too of the esquires, and the proliferation of those called 'gentlemen', in the context of the broader canvas of military activity, landowning, good ancestry or 'blood', service in a variety of ways and at a variety of levels, the acquisition of wealth through successful trading and more. It is a complex scene to draw from and describe in attempting the subject of the origins of a class – or in this case – classes of society, which never had the convenience of any tight legal definition as was available in France. It is thus a demanding subject requiring both a mastery of the social history of the late middle ages and an ability to analyse it at a high level. One suspects that there are not many scholars who could do this satisfactorily, allowing for so much work that has, of late, been carried out on 'the gentry' to use an anachronistic term, especially at the county level.

Of course, one such scholar is Maurice Keen, whose many years of learning, and indeed writing, on the later medieval period, have furnished him with a wealth of evidence which he adduces in detail to support his presentation of the themes that he pursues. Consequently this book is hugely successful in the overview it gives of what was an extremely important subject to the upper classes of later medieval England. The book has the merit too of being of value both to the academic specialist, and in its attention to 'gentlemen', of interest to the general reader by explaining the origins and development of such an every day term. Among the 160 or so pages of text, there are many illustrations, supplemented by sixteen pages of plates (including the 1482 grant of arms to Thomas Barowe, clerk, who rose to be chancellor to Richard as Duke of Gloucester, and later, master of the rolls when Richard became king.) At £16.99, it is well (one might say keenly!) priced, and so is accessible to all who would appreciate this penetrating summary of the evolution of the non peerage upper classes in the later medieval period.

JAMES PETRE

LONDON BRIDGE — 2000 YEARS OF A RIVER CROSSING. Bruce Watson, Trevor Brigham and Tony Dyson. 2002. Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS) Monograph 8, £22 (pbk). ISBN 1-901992-18-7

Any modern-day traveller who has ever been forced into a detour through London rush-hour traffic on account of the closure of one bridge or another will have no trouble in appreciating the vital importance of London Bridge in the seventeen centuries when the nearest river crossing to the west was as far away as Kingston-on-Thames. This formidable volume traces the history of the capital's great bridge from its Roman origins to the construction of the present bridge in the late 1960s and the discovery (and demolition) of the last remains of the medieval bridge in the mid 1980s. Aiming at a broad readership, the volume's authors take care not to overwhelm their audience with specialist detail, yet never abandon scholarly rigour. Thus, the text is kept clear and informative, and generously interspersed with archaeological drawings, reconstructions, maps and a wealth of other illustrations. To achieve comprehensive coverage of the subject, MoLAS's archaeologists are joined among the book's contributors by political, social, religious and art historians, linguists and musicologists. The result is a highly informative journey through some 2000 years of river crossing.

Extensive archaeological evidence for successive stages of bridge building in the Roman and Saxon periods illustrates the early wooden London bridge, but it was in the later middle ages that the bridge saw its heyday. The first stone bridge was constructed in the final quarter of the twelfth century, and its

significance as a river crossing soon became coupled with an importance as an area of commerce and of worship. Even by the 1220s there were houses on the bridge, and by 1358 it was lined by some 130 shops. The bridge chapel of St Thomas the Martyr, rebuilt in Richard II's reign, became an important focal point for pilgrims on the route to the saint's shrine at Canterbury. At the same time, the bridge retained its significance as – boats apart – the only southern access route into the city. English kings and queens routinely made ceremonial entries into London across the bridge, and there witnessed pageants staged for them by the Londoners. The king's opponents, too, realised the symbolic as well as the strategic importance of the bridge. In 1450 Jack Cade's followers took control of it and across it forced their way into London. By contrast, two decades later in 1471 Thomas Fauconberg's rebels were successfully driven back by the Londoners at the bridge. Appropriately enough, defeated traitors regularly returned to the bridge: at few times in the medieval period did the stone gate and drawbridge gate not display the heads of one or more executed enemies of the Crown.

Assaults on London did naturally not pass without damage to the bridge's structure. Cade's rebellion saw the southern stone gate damaged by fire, and its replacement saw only short service before it in turn was burnt to the ground in Fauconberg's attack of 1471. Such arbitrary destruction combined with the natural deterioration of the edifice (which in 1437 saw the collapse of two arches of the bridge along with parts of the gatehouse, and in 1481 found a public privy, the 'common siege', tumbling into the Thames) to necessitate frequent repairs. The surviving archive of Bridge House, the site specially set up to store building materials, and associated with the property assigned to generate the necessary funds for the bridge's maintenance, illustrates the difficult process of keeping the building in good repair.

The volume is well indexed and provides a useful glossary of some of the specialist terminology employed within. In tribute to the international appeal of the material within, brief summaries in both French and German are included. The book stands in reassuring contrast to current 'popularised' archaeological television programmes such as 'Time Team' and 'Two men in a Trench', demonstrating how serious archaeological research can be made accessible to a wide readership without compromising its scholarly integrity. Compared with the pricing of many other books the volume is a veritable bargain, and one that should appeal to an audience far beyond those interested in the history of London.

HANNES KLEINEKE

ELIZABETH WOODVILLE: Mother of the Princes in the Tower. David Baldwin. 2002. Sutton Publishing, Stroud. £20. ISBN 0-7509-2774-7

Late medieval queens have not been well-served by the academic world in terms of biographies. While exhaustive studies of Eleanor of Provence and Eleanor of Castile have appeared in the last decade and attention has recently focused on Margret of Anjou, David Baldwin's book is the first major study of Edward IV's queen since David MacGibbon's biography of 1938. There has been much scholarly work in the area since then, but he has chosen to write a biography for the general reader rather than scholars, a decision signalled in the sub-title of the book. It is slightly odd therefore that he quotes entire documents without modernising the English and then refers to one of them in a curiously old-fashioned way as a 'quaintly written missive'.

Ricardians will be familiar with the main events of Elizabeth's life and their previous interpretations. Baldwin handles the questions over Edward IV's rash secret marriage to a Lancastrian widow four years older than himself and with two young sons sensibly. He rightly points out that all noble families in the Middle Ages were ambitious in the matches they made for their children and that having married Elizabeth, the king could not afford to have his own status diminished by their inferior position of his wife's relatives. But he fails to emphasise sufficiently the scale of the problem. The Lancastrian Woodville family was both prolific and young. Elizabeth was the eldest of thirteen children, eleven of whom were unmarried. With all her siblings to be provided for, the aristocratic marriage market was severely distorted for a number of years. Baldwin judges that Elizabeth acquitted herself well as queen. In areas where she has been criticised, such as her role in the fate of the earl of Desmond and the issue of queen's gold and the Thomas Cook affair, he argues that either the criticism was unfounded or that her position was one dictated by custom, but he does not spare either her family or that of the king from charges of greed and misappropriation. Elizabeth ran her household efficiently and more economically than her predecessor and took a competent interest in the running of her estates, continued Margaret of Anjou's patronage of Queens' College Cambridge and probably saved Eton from extinction. She was intelligent, provided a cultured environment at court, gave the king a healthy family of children and apparently never interfered politically. It is difficult to argue with this judgement, whatever reservations there may be about the role of her family, but his attempts to judge what her feelings were on various occasions is surely a mistake.

The death of Edward IV changed everything and the ruthless actions of his brother Gloucester caught everyone by surprise. Baldwin views Gloucester, whatever his fears for a Woodville-dominated minority, as more threatening than threatened in the early summer of 1483. The queen's brothers, Rivers, and

Lord Hastings, experienced politicians as they were, both walked blindly into his traps and paid for their misjudgements with their lives. Only the queen seems to have perceived the danger and as a woman there was little she could do except flee to sanctuary. While presumably lacking proof of her sons' fate, but fearing the worst, it is hardly surprising that the queen accepted the idea of the proposal put to her at the time of Buckingham's rebellion by Lady Margaret Beaufort that Princess Elizabeth should marry her exiled son, Henry of Richmond. The failure of the rebellion meant that the queen really had no alternative but to leave sanctuary and accept Richard's terms, which provided her with a not ungenerous income but stripped her of her royal position on the grounds that her marriage to the king was invalid because of his pre-contracted marriage to Eleanor Butler. The summer of 1485 brought yet another change in her fortunes: her daughter married to the new king, her position as queen-dowager restored, and soon the grandmother of the heir to the throne. In spite of this, Baldwin views her as the power behind the Lambert Simnel rebellion because she resented that her influence and that of the queen was eclipsed by that of Margaret Beaufort. There is no record that she had any connection with the plot, and to support the removal of her daughter's husband and son, for the possible future benefits of a match between Elizabeth and her younger cousin, Edward of Warwick, seems completely out of character for the intelligent queen. She had never played any political role during her husband's lifetime or given the appearance of wishing to, why should she do so in 1486? Even if all was not as she might have wished, her sons were dead and she had done much better than she could have hoped for. The argument is based on her retirement to Bermondsey Abbey and the fact that, recorded only by Polydore Vergil, 'she was deprived by decree of the council of all her possessions'. The answers can never be provided with any certainty. Such retirement was a common enough practice among ageing widows, even dowager queens, and the implication that Elizabeth's health was failing is supported by her death two years later. It is possible to argue that the formal surrender of her lands, which were immediately granted to her daughter, would be a matter for the council to handle anyway. The arguments for and against will be for readers to weigh and decide, but Baldwin finds himself in difficulty in trying to reconcile his view of Elizabeth before 1483 as a well-nigh perfect queen and after as an intriguing plotter determined on political influence. His attempt at the rehabilitation of her reputation is largely successful as far as the first part of her life is concerned, but at its end he fails to make her behaviour credible.

The book concludes with a series of appendices of varying relevance and quality, one of which is the question of Elizabeth's 'diary'. This purports to be a journal kept by her before her marriage, first reported on in the mid-nineteenth century and no longer to be found. Baldwin thinks some of it may be authentic. His is surely wrong. As far as is known, there are no journals written

by English women prior to the seventeenth century. Fifteenth century gentlewomen, who were all taught to write, rarely did so, utilising clerks and secretaries, and even dictating love letters. For an unmarried girl to record the trivial doings of her daily life in writing in the 1450s is inconceivable.

ANNE CRAWFORD

THE LONDON CHARTERHOUSE. Bruno Barber and Christopher Thomas and Others. 2002. Museum of London Archaeology Service, MoLAS Monograph 10. £14.95. ISBN 1-901 992-23-3

This work is a composite report of a number of small excavations and evaluations carried out on the London Charterhouse site between 1988 and 2000. The principal excavations reported here are of small outbuildings situated to the west of the main precinct adjacent to St John Street. However, the report also includes integrated discussions of earlier archaeological investigations, and observations made during various twentieth century phases of construction on the site. Additionally, the documentary evidence relating to the foundation and to the development of the monastic precinct is appraised. The results of the excavations are examined to show the relationship between the London Charterhouse and other Carthusian houses, although, surprisingly, with limited reference to other London monastic houses.

The excavations on the western side of the precinct have revealed evidence for several phases of construction including several outbuildings, a yard area, and the continuation of the drainage system well documented within the inner precinct. The site appears to have been turned over to light industrial use immediately post-Dissolution, and returned to a storage and stabling facility following the foundation of Sutton's Hospital in the early seventeenth century. This is an important addition to the available information concerning the site as previous investigations and assessments had concentrated upon the cloister, cells and more substantial buildings.

The scope of the excavations is clearly outlined in the introductory chapter, together with a brief overview of the history of the London Charterhouse from manuscript, antiquarian and other documentary sources. Creditably, the discussion and use of documentary evidence is not limited to this first chapter, but supports conclusions drawn from the archaeological evidence throughout the volume. The following chapter examines the pre-Carthusian use of the site, including an important discussion of the West Smithfield Black Death cemetery site; concluding that this cemetery was much less extensive than had previously been assumed. In the fifth chapter there is a discussion of the post-Dissolution use of the site including the development of Sutton's Hospital.

Two chapters providing an integrated review of the historical and archaeological development of the Charterhouse form the core of the volume.

These chapters, and indeed the report as a whole, are rich with maps of the precinct and photographs of the excavations and finds. Most instructive are the plans of the development of the individual cells surrounding the cloister which may be compared to three dimensional outline reconstructions. These, together with the well known fifteenth century plan of the water supply, provide an excellent visual interpretation of the development of the site. The accompanying text eschews archaeological jargon while remaining scholarly. In particular historians will be drawn to the discussions of each of the individual cells. These include the date of donation and name of the donor, as well as descriptions of the cells. Each had private corridors and its own garden and it is possible to begin to see in these descriptions and diagrams how the monastic virtues of solitude, hard work and contemplation were catered for in this suburban setting. Throughout the report the authors are at pains to draw from the archaeological evidence the physical differences and boundaries between the lives of the secluded monks and the lay brothers who interacted with the world.

Beyond their accommodation, further information concerning the lives of the monks is advanced in the evidence of their environment, diet and economy. The excavations have not uncovered certain key food preparation and consumption areas, the authors concede that the importance of the London Charterhouse finds may only become apparent once they are tested against the food assemblages from this and other Charterhouses. The evidence for the environment and the economy is equally thin, again reflecting the small section of the precinct that has been available for excavation. However, it is now in the public domain and will be of real value to compare with the evidence from future London and Carthusian excavations.

Tables of technical data and discussion of methodology have been separated into the discrete seventh and final chapter. This allows the flow of discussion and evidence put forward elsewhere to be more accessible to the non-specialist reader. The strength of this volume is not in reporting the most recent archaeological investigations at the London Charterhouse, which alone would not justify a monograph, but in bringing together the evidence of previous investigations and surveys, with the documentary evidence, to produce an overall evaluation of the site. This is the second of the series of MoLAS monographs on London's religious houses. It is a most welcome addition to the historical and archaeological study of the religious houses of medieval London. It is the first scholarly monograph devoted to the London Charterhouse since the excellent, but now dated, Knowles and Grimes, *Charterhouse: the Medieval Foundation in the Light of Recent Discoveries* published in 1954 and it highlights the need for further research and publication.

MARK FORREST

Today's asylum seekers were the political exiles of previous centuries. Dante (1265-1321), one of these latter, perhaps the greatest Italian poet, is so very famous that one tends to view his exile as unique, which probably is as he desired. In fact, such exiles were a normal feature of the Italian peninsula for centuries until Garibaldi and unification. What Guido Antonio Buoninsegni wrote in a letter of 1484 of Sienese exiles in Rome was typical (even applicable today):

They flock together like starlings, and they are discontented, and they have spread many rumours, as those who are turned out do.

Dr Catherine Keen's *Dante and the City* admirably testifies to Dante's discontent with his native Florence from the testimony of his writings. However, untypically he was a loner, though there were other compatriots with whom he could have congregated. Dr Keen with her focus tends to leave hanging the fact that Dante was unexceptional in his exile from Florence, and that Florence merely conformed to common practice in imposing exile as punishment. She does not explain, either, in Dante's case whether the punishment was just.

Exile was so effective a punishment because on the Italian peninsula love of one's native city remained paramount (it still is), having been inborn over many generations. In the middle ages as a male and a citizen one could participate in the city's government in the belief that government would be good. In Dante's day direct over-rule by the Holy Roman emperor was a legal right, if largely a legal fiction, so the citizens' rule was essentially unrestricted. The claims of the pope, as a rival of imperial rights, could be more of a threat, since the pope was nearer at hand, if necessary with an army. Dante was typical in his extreme love of his city; there is an example in his *Divina Commedia* where Sordello, a Mantuan ghost, shakes for delight at the very commencement of the word 'Mantua' being articulated by a compatriot, Vergil. Within a city's walls was the blood-tie. Dr Keen illustrates this with Cacciaguida's Latin welcome to Dante: *sanguis meus* (pp. 203-4).

Chapter One of Dr Keen's book illustrates the nature and depth of a Florentine's civic pride, fostered by the myth of his city's founding by Julius Caesar, (so Rome's favourite daughter). Dante typically believed that Florence's ruin was factionalism within the city's walls. Dr Keen tells how rivalry within one particular family was the origin, supposedly, of the two dominant factions of Dante's time, and how each played the dangerous game of looking for external support in their contention for supreme authority within the city. The Ghibellines, otherwise the black party, sought the backing of the emperor, the

Guelfs, or white party, turned to the pope. As a Ghibelline, Dante between 1295 and 1300, attained practical experience governing Florence; when the rival faction came to power he was sent into exile for prior malpractices. For the last twenty years of his life his signature on personal and political letters alike was followed by the words: 'A Florentine and undeservedly in exile' (p. 21). Dante became an obsessive, craving apparently unattainable Beatrice and, if no less unrealistically, restoration to his rights and property in Florence. This latter desire permeated all his writings, commencing with his *Convivio*, begun about 1303, shortly after his expulsion (p. 51).

Against this backdrop, Dr Keen's approach to Dante's view of his exile is original and interesting in its attempt to disentangle his supposed philosophy of the city and its function in the human order of things, that was God ordained, a point of which more might have been made. Inevitably part of the problem of this is that one remains unsure what Dante really thought, given the intermingling of poetry and truth in his work, particularly the *Divina Commedia*. In five chapters Dr Keen extrapolated from his principal works his philosophy of the city under themes. Grouped together are *Convivio* and *De Monarchia* to furnish information on 'Government, Citizenship and Happiness'; *De vulgari eloquentia* and *Tre donne* provide his views on 'Rhetoric, Politics and Exile'; *Inferno* is drawn upon for 'Municipal Limitations', *Purgatorio* for 'The Creation of the Community', and *Paradiso* for 'The Ideals of City Life'. The selection is Dr Keen's and the themes likewise hers, though in keeping with concepts of Dante's time.

Dante wrote over two decades to have his unjust (as he saw it) punishment quashed. He took every opportunity offered over time; so on the one hand, he appealed to the emperor to exert his supreme authority as head of Western Christendom, on the other he obliquely stripped away the secular authority as claimed by the pope (brilliantly demonstrated by Gian Roberto Sarolli's 'Dante "Scriba Dei"', in *Convivium*, n.s. vol. 6, 1963, pp. 385-422, 513-671). He brought in support of his cause Florentine myth and legend, just as he ridiculed opponents, particularly those in Florence. It was to this end that he had the vision of a city, wherein he would be treated justly. Inevitably the reader has a question unanswered by Dr Keen's book, as indeed by Dante's own writings. Did he delude himself in claiming that he was unjustly punished by exile? I keep the secret, merely direct that reader to Randolph Starn's *Contrary Commonwealth* (Berkeley, California, 1982), pages 60-85, for a splendid exposition.

CECIL H. CLOUGH

WOMEN AND RELIGION IN MEDIEVAL ENGLAND. Edited by Diana Wood. 2003. Oxbow Books, Park End Place, Oxford. £20. ISBN 1-84217-098-8

The value of this collection lies in its extremely current account of work on a list of interesting topics involving women, among them heresy, reading, child-birth, and the forms of religious life. The volume's papers were presented at an Oxford University Department of Continuing Education Conference held in February 2001, whose purpose was to 'bring the results of current research to a public audience'. Thus they are designed as overviews of scholarship on a particular question; a few go farther and include new authorial research as well.

Several essays are particularly successful in their blend of accessibility and nuance. Sarah Foot's 'Unveiling Anglo-Saxon Nuns' essentially presents the conclusions of her important two-volume study *Veiled Women* (2000), but it does not simply repeat her arguments there. Instead it traces the pattern of her research through a series of posed questions which successively turn out to be the wrong ones. She concludes that nuns did not disappear after the Conquest but that instead female religious life took a less visible form as small groups of women (vowesses) lived together for a generation or two while retaining lay economic power. This important work will certainly have consequences for the larger topic of women and religion in the medieval period.

Similarly graceful in its presentation is Henrietta Leyser's crisp survey of women's book owning and reading, which in its ambitious ten pages proceeds from Hilda of Whitby to Margery Kempe. The bibliography is notably up to date: seven items from 2000, the year before the conference, yet the essay's reflections would have been deepened by the inclusion, for instance, of Roger Wieck's work on books of hours, Anne Clark Bartlett's on women's reading, or Elizabeth Robertson's on anchoress intellectual life. The topic of St Anne teaching the Virgin to read is rich in visual examples; sadly it is here illustrated by the familiar miniature from Bodley MS Douce 231, by now in danger of becoming a visual cliché due to its multiple reproductions, starting with its appearance in 1982 in Susan Groag Bell's classic essay (nowhere mentioned in this volume), 'Medieval Women Book Owners: Arbiters of Lay Piety and Ambassadors of Culture'.

The third essay that most successfully delivers a sense of the current state of scholarship is Margaret Aston's contribution on women Lollards. It delicately positions her own major scholarship on this topic in relation to Shannon McSheffrey's 1993 *Gender and Heresy*, much of which challenges Aston's work. This essay's footnotes introduce McSheffrey's work graciously and subsequently offer instances of both agreement and disagreement with it. Its conclusion sets out one explicit point of difference: did heterodox beliefs separate one socially from the larger community? McSheffrey would say yes, while Aston concludes that Lollards 'remained integrated in the web of parish life'.

The essay offers a useful and interesting overview of the now-familiar research on Lollard women; we are in the judicious hands of an expert.

James Bond's essay 'English Medieval Nunneries: Buildings, Precincts and Estates' was commissioned to answer the question whether anything in nunnery settings, architecture, plan or economic organization distinguishes them from monasteries. His several charts and multiple photographs expand the parameters of the essay: the photo of Romsey Abbey, the only surviving nunnery church building to compare with the great churches of the monks, is particularly beautiful. And it is splendid to have the summarized information on topics like 'regular and non-standard claustral plans' or 'nunnery precincts'. There are surprising omissions, however, in the documentation: no mention of Martha Cadin's work on the London Minoresses, nor of Catherine Paxton's 1992 Oxford D.Phil. thesis on the nunneries of London, nor of Ann Warren's book on anchorites. For instance Bond's six examples of links between established nunneries and anchoresses could have been increased by three more from Warren: Arden, Stamfield, Hampole.

The decision to include a final section on nunnery estates was probably unwise. Treated as the last ten pages of a forty-page essay, this large topic could only be gestured toward, while increasing the essay's length disproportionately. A long shadow is cast here by Roberta Gilchrist's research and Bond's conclusions to a large extent support, re-formulate, and acknowledge hers, but this archaeologist's own valuable work should have the scope provided by book form.

Of course what one wants in a discussion of medieval childbirth is some recovery of womens' experience and of course that is particularly difficult to unearth. Carole Rawcliffe manages this in her essay on women, childbirth and religion when she notes that 'on the very day her son Henry was safely delivered' his mother Gunnora, the twelfth-century wife of Robert of Essex, gave four East Anglian churches to the monks of Thetford. She comments, 'Neither the palpable sense of relief nor the scale of the endowment is surprising'. In a notably hard-working essay, Rawcliffe discusses maternal health, religious ceremonies like churching, religious imagery and sacred items, including charms. Still, in searching for the record of female experience, hagiography and its legends might have provided an additional, fertile, source. In Jane Tibbetts Schulenburg's account of saintly births, for instance, the labour pains of St Nonna, the mother of St David, were so intense that the stone she leaned on kept the marks of her hands (*Forgetful of Their Sex: Female Sanctity and Society c. 500-1100*, pp. 228-33).

Rawcliffe's triumph in freshly presenting the female emotions surrounding childbirth, however, lies in her discovery of a miniature from a French *Bible moralisée* (no date given), which serves as the book's cover. As a midwife displays her newborn child, a woman who has just given birth gazes instead at a

shrouded, coffined figure lying next to her – the possibility of her own death. The attending friar who holds up the Eucharistic host is unlikely to be a figure of consolation: Rawcliffe notes that at royal births in the twelfth century ‘a priest remained on hand to administer the *viaticum* should death seem likely’.

Two of the volume’s essays contribute substantial new work on their own, in addition to providing the required survey of others’ research. In a vigorously revisionist essay on late-medieval noblewomen and religion, Rowena Archer distinguishes between gentry women, where much evidence for piety and reading lies, and aristocratic women where, she suggests, evidence is scarcer – a suggestive insight, though it is unfortunate that it is partly based on the 1920 work of Margaret Deanesly. Relying on a massive study of medieval wills, Deanesly notoriously found ‘extreme booklessness’ everywhere, but her conclusions have been repeatedly called into question by the bibliographic work of the last two decades.

Archer is equally right to focus on Walter Hilton’s *Epistle on the Mixed Life* as a key text in the development of a lay spirituality but again, much recent work has invalidated the view (based on the text’s 1929 edition) that ‘although Hilton manuscripts survive, little is known of their owners’. S.J. Ogilvie-Thompson’s 1986 edition of *Mixed Life* provides information here, as does Michael Sargent’s 1992 critical edition of Nicholas Love’s *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*, neither cited by Archer in her discussion of these works.

Archer is sharp in her denomination of the ‘famous five’, the noblewomen invariably cited to illustrate late-medieval piety, though her own choice of texts to discuss partakes of the same over-familiarity: Knight of La Tour Landry, Christine de Pizan, Goodman of Paris. Her revisionist reading of the career of Cecily Neville, Duchess of York, however, is worth the entire price of the book. Since C.A.J. Armstrong’s 1983 publication of the Cecily’s household routine, she has been universally understood as an exemplar of late-medieval piety. Archer’s Cecily is, instead a slave to fashion and a devoted servant to ruthless family politics.

As Archer calls for work on aristocratic women, R.N. Swanson stresses the need for more historical background on Margery Kempe, though it leads him to underestimate the degree to which Margery’s own narrative already provides this. To point the direction for further research he summarizes his own 1998 work on the accounts of Lynn priory, which controlled Lynn’s parish church, and on other records. Though the historical research that its editors Meech and Allen provided for Margery’s *Book* in 1940 was wide-ranging, it is surprising that further efforts have not been made to locate Margery, not only in England, as Swanson does, but in Italy and elsewhere on the continent. Swanson’s essay is perhaps more successful in this historical initiative than in its summary portions. Understandably, given the quantity of the current scholarship on Margery, this survey sometimes produces a rather scattered effect, as the re-

viewer first offers a perspective on Margery, then alters it.

The collection succeeds admirably in its aim of translating this scholarship for a wide readership (Sally Crawford's essay on Anglo-Saxon female burials might be judged an exception, in its inability to convey the complexities of archaeologists' debates in lay terms.) If the volume as a whole has a failing, however, it might be the sporadic neglect of American scholarship on the topic of women and religion, to which a large transatlantic contribution has been made (see the additional bibliography provided above, in which all but two items represent American research). Nonetheless the editor has perceptively identified both the areas where the most interesting current work is proceeding and the authors of that work. As a result the book will be exactly right for someone who wonders 'where are we now'.

MARY ERLER

AN ANTIDOTE TO THE ENGLISH: The Auld Alliance, 1295-1560.
Norman Macdougall. 2001. Tuckwell Press, East Linton, East Lothian. £9.99 (pbk). ISBN 1-86232-145-0

Charles de Gaulle declared in Edinburgh in June 1942 that the 'auld alliance' was the oldest in the world. Certainly the sense of a special relationship between the Scots and the French defined by a common antipathy to the English still flourishes. Scots in France make sure that their hosts know that they are certainly not English; and Scotland is the favourite destination of French visitors to Britain. Norman Macdougall's interest is in the diplomatic and military history of the alliance between Scotland and France which was sealed by the Treaty of Paris on 23 October 1295 and continued until the death of Francis II on 5 Decemeber 1560. At that point events in both Scotland and France ended it for good.

The work is a straight forward narrative plotting the twists and turns of diplomacy and military fortune. The military alliance was more active on the fields of Scotland than France. It has to be admitted that the French on the whole gained more from it than the Scots. As Macdougall puts it, the marches between England and Scotland were France's second front. Most of the story can be followed in the pages of the excellent studies of the kings of Scotland of which Macdougall himself was the general editor and to which he contributed two volumes. Here it is usefully pulled together for the general reader. The most original chapter is that on the Scots serving in France during the Hundred Years War and especially 'La Grande Armée Ecossaise' between 1419 and 1429. An army of at least 6,000 men was conveyed by a Castillian fleet to La Rochelle in 1419. Deployed at first in garrisons, they were on the field of Baugé and largely responsible for the victory. But they were defeated at

Cravant and then, reinforced by a second army in 1424 under the command of the earl of Douglas, marched to defeat and virtual annihilation at the battle of Verneuil. Thus was the Anglo-Scottish war fought out on a second front to the ultimate victory of the English. But the survivors stayed on to serve Charles VII, some as his royal bodyguard, the Garde Ecossaise, most in other royal service, many prospering in their new country.

In this story Richard III is but a passing actor. The alliance lapsed in 1448. As Macdougall remarks 'In the early 1480s, the Franco-Scottish alliance must have seemed only a distant memory to the rulers of both kingdoms'. But in 1484 the minority government of Charles VIII took the initiative in an attempt to revive it. Bérault Stewart, Lord of Aubigny, the highest ranking of the expatriates led an embassy to James III which quickly secured its renewal and ratification in July. Macdougall argues that Richard III's willingness finally to come to terms with James III at the Treaty of Nottingham the following September was in part a response to the threat this posed. But Aubigny had taken advantage of his embassy to Scotland to recruit reinforcements for the French army, and these, Macdougall suggests, some thousand men, sailed under their commander to Wales with Henry Tudor and onwards to victory on the field of Bosworth. If he is right, and the size and contribution of the Scots on the field remains controversial, the auld alliance, if only unofficially, played its part in Richard III's downfall.

In its chosen narrow focus and intent to fill a gap, the book provides a useful guide to the ups and downs of the late-medieval Franco-Scottish alliance. It is not quite comprehensive: one lapse is the lack of reference to the important work of Elizabeth Bonner on the Scots in France, the French in Scotland and the relationships between the two kingdoms in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. And while the social and cultural links are touched upon, it is a pity that Macdougall did not take the opportunity to explore in greater depth the influences of the two kingdoms on each other that flowed from it in the later middle ages and early Renaissance. While it may not be narrowly accurate, the 'auld alliance', which lasted in his definition for over 250 years, became more than the alignment of two kingdoms against a common enemy.

A.J. POLLARD

PRAGMATIC UTOPIAS, IDEALS AND COMMUNITIES, 1200-1630.

Edited by Rosemary Horrox and Sarah Rees Jones. 2001. Cambridge University Press. £40.

ISBN 0-5216500607

In this excellent collection of essays, the subjects discussed are diverse, celebrating the diverse interests of Professor Barrie Dobson, to whom the book is dedicated. Yet they share one or two common themes: the search for perfection, or the necessity of compromise in an imperfect world, during and

beyond the 'medieval' period. Sarah Rees Jones's piece is closest to the theme of 'Utopia', and takes an old theme in new directions. The influence of Thomas More's urban background on his writings can be located in the similarity of Utopia to a London of the past: the descriptions of the former echo the language in the administrative writings and regulations of the latter. The 'perfections' of Utopia, especially a lack of concern with private property, represent More's idealisation of civic virtues. The imagined perfection of a lost rural England is the theme of Tony Pollard's recasting of the historical background to the ballads of Robin Hood. He shows how they reflect the concerns of an audience in the late fifteenth century, when the intensification of prosecution under forest law lent poaching (and the forester turned poacher) a more glamorous aspect. A brighter picture of royal justice, at least in the fourteenth century, however, is given in Anthony Musson's insightful discussion of the process of litigation in royal courts, access to which may not have been as exclusive as it seems.

More of the essays in this book deal with the ideals of religious communities. Derek Pearsall's subtle exploration of the various strains of thinking about the monastic ideal in secular English literature suggests a lack of hostility towards the life of the cloistered; yet also suggests that monks had become so familiar with the secular life, that their final departure from monasteries at the Dissolution may not have been an unwelcome step for them. Not all will agree with this assessment of late medieval monasticism, and perhaps nuns were less inclined than monks to leave the cloistered life. Janet Burton adds considerably to the debate about the nature of the female religious life by showing how claustration of the Gilbertine nuns at Swine priory allowed them initiative and freedom of movement of a kind perhaps unavailable to women outside the cloister. The difficulties faced by the fourteenth-century anchoress in establishing a solitary life within the world may have been greater. Miri Rubin's investigation of the theme adds another dimension by interweaving within it a sensitive discussion on the value of the film *The Anchoress* to medieval study. Peter Biller's Waldensians faced other difficulties: despite their evangelical ideals, it was the compromises they had to make with the world (which Biller skilfully pieces together) that explain their survival until the sixteenth century.

Three essays examine religious ideals and houses of a different sort. Roger Lovatt's is an intricate study of the monk-bishop of Ely who founded a college of secular clergy in the late thirteenth century, as is Malcolm Underwood's, which examines the refoundation of two Cambridge colleges as part of a need, still ongoing in the early sixteenth century, to have houses capable of sustaining intercessory prayers for benefactors. Robert Swanson's essay is a broader survey of the statutes of university and college foundations, and reveals how such foundations had to grapple with real issues in putting in place religious and educational ideals in the later middle ages.

The expansion of a university education is the theme of Claire Cross's paper: how the secular clergy in the diocese of York by 1630 were much more likely to have been educated at a university than their predecessors in 1500. Like several of the other papers in the collection – a feature which also makes the book such a valuable one – Cross's piece is one that breaks the historiographical divided between 'medieval' and 'early modern' or Reformation period. While improving standards of clerical education were partly the achievement of the Protestant clergy, Cross hints that it was also the result of lay people, the type who before the Reformation had founded chantries but who were increasingly prepared to found civic lectureships. Margaret Aston's paper takes a more abstract look at clerical attitudes towards devotion and images before and after the Reformation: in a fascinating study she finds a certain kind of monastic ideal of contemplation which found visual images distracting, extended after the Reformation to a much wider audience. At one time, these ideas had been restricted to the cloistered; during the sixteenth century they were, in theory, to be applied to all Protestant believers.

Not all contributions find improvement in the post-Reformation world. The concern for self-perpetuation among chantry founders in England takes on a more sinister form in Colin Richmond's typically sparkling and idiosyncratic examination of the almshouse foundation, by Alice Chaucer, Duchess of Suffolk, at Ewelme in the late fifteenth century. Alice's foundation is not the piously benign one to be found in J.A. Goodall's recent book on the same subject. Instead, the old but respectable almsmen, bound in a punishing schedule of prayer for the duchess, seem to foreshadow the inmates of a Victorian poor house rather than imitate the regime of medieval monks. Patrick Collinson's subtle exploration of the views of Puritans about the poor seems to echo this darker future: Thomas Carew, a late sixteenth century preacher in Suffolk, was unusual in attacking a Puritan view of poverty which paid little regard to the issues of unemployment and low wages. Jeremy Goldberg (in an original contribution to the study of Lollardy also finds a hardening attitude to the poor in late fifteenth-century Coventry. A programme of reform was put forward by the city council in 1492, one which was unusually harsh in tightening restrictions on women, servants and outsiders, as well as the poor – thereby, Goldberg argues, anticipating the godly magistracy of Protestant Augsburg. Whether this programme was a 'Lollard' one may depend on whether one can regard either 'Lollards' as a coherent sect by the late fifteenth century, or city councils as needing 'Lollardy' to strengthen civic resolve against social disorder.

The range of themes on important subjects, and the quality of the contributions, make this book especially welcome. It also serves as a fitting tribute to Professor Dobson's distinguished career.

ANDREW BROWN

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

Nigel Baker, editor, *Shrewsbury Abbey. Studies in the Archaeology and History of an Urban Abbey*. 2002. 237 pages. Illustrated. Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society, Monograph series No. 2. Obtainable c/o Mrs Roberts, Lower Wallop Farm, Westbury, Shrewsbury, SY5 9RT. £26.50 plus £4.25 p&cp.

ISBN 0-9501227-7-7

Contributions on all aspects of the abbey's history and buildings, with an emphasis on the archaeology, excavations 1985-2001 and discovered artefacts. The visits of kings, reception of guests, the cult of St Winifred and the surviving fourteenth-century tower are among the subjects touched on or covered in detail.

Margaret Statham, editor, *Accounts of the Feoffees of the Town Lands of Bury St Edmunds, 1569-1622*, Suffolk Records Society, volume 46, 2003. 414 pages. Illustrated. Published by The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, for the Society. Available to members of the Suffolk Records Society for their £12.50 annual subscription, and to others from Boydell and Brewer, Woodbridge, Suffolk, £35.

ISBN 0-85115-921-4

Although the actual accounts do not overlap with years of interest to members of the Richard III Society, the introduction details the foundation of these charities by John Smith commonly known as Jankin, in the 1470s before his death in 1481; his will of 1477 is included. It is possible he was an administrator of the local lands of Richard Duke of York. He intended to benefit the inhabitants of Bury St Edmunds who ruled themselves through the Candlemas Guild under the oppressive interference of the great abbey. Other fifteenth-century benefactors such as Margaret Odiham, are also covered (will 1478) as well as the early foundation of the College of Jesus (from 1450s). The story of the Candlemas Guild's fight against abbey and then Henry VIII, and its 'survival' of the Reformation is an important example of this type of early town government.

Meg Twycross and Sarah Carpenter, *Masks and Masking in Medieval and Early Tudor England*. 2002. 432 pages. Illustrated. Ashgate, Aldershot, £47.50.

ISBN 0-7546-0230-3

An under-estimated and highly popular form of culture is subjected to detailed analysis under headings including 'mumming', 'carnival', 'mysteries' and 'moralities'. Both performance and the social background are studied.

Richard Vaughan, *Philip the Bold. The Formation of the Burgundian State* (1962), *John the Fearless. The Growth of Burgundian Power* (1966), *Philip the Good. The Apogee of Burgundy* (1970), and *Charles the Bold. The Last Valois Duke of Burgundy* (1973). Reprinted by Boydell and Brewer, Woodbridge, £18.99 each (pbk).

Philip the Bold (ISBN 0-85115-915-X) with new introduction by Malcolm Vale; *John the Fearless* (ISBN 0-85115-916-8) by Bertrand Schnerb; *Philip the Good* (ISBN 0-85115-917-6) by Graeme Small; and *Charles the Bold* (ISBN 0-85115-918-4) by Werner Paravicini.

ARTICLES

Sydney Anglo, 'Vegetius' "*De re militari*": the triumph of mediocrity', *The Antiquaries Journal*, volume 82, 2002, pages 247-67.

Brief survey of Vegetius and his work, its origins and medieval popularity, concentrating on its 'last triumph': the heavily and curiously illustrated 1615-17 edition by Johann von Wallhausen, director of a military school in Westphalia. Thirteen black and white illustrations.

Julian Blunt, 'Richard Beauchamp's funeral car', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, volume 155, 2002, pages 278-87.

Concludes that the famous latten frame, made in the 1450s, on the tomb and over the effigy of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick (died 1439), is identical to the superstructure of contemporary carts, including those used at funerals, though the frame is called a 'hearse' in the relevant accounts. (The author's suggestion that it represents the manner in which the body of the earl arrived at the church is only partly tenable, because Beauchamp would not have had an effigy, the privilege of royalty and bishops).

Emma Cavell, 'Henry VII, the north of England and the first provincial progress of 1486', *Northern History*, volume 39, number 2, September 2002, pages 187-207.

Examines in great detail the progress itself, and then reassesses its purpose, relating it to similar journeys by Edward IV and Richard III.

John Gillingham, 'From *civilitas* to civility: codes of manners in medieval and early modern England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, sixth series, volume 12, 2002, pages 267-89.

Argues that French and Latin texts must be considered for the history of English manners, civility and prudential morality, as the native language was a late developer, and against the attempt by early modernists to make politeness a post-1500 or post-1600 phenomenon. Compares, for example, the Latin 'Book of the Civilised Man' by David of Beccles of Henry II's time, with Erasmus' book of advice, which was better expressed but essentially the same, and notes the failure of humanists to mention their medieval sources.

John A. Goodall, 'Some aspects of heraldry and the role of heralds in relation to the ceremonies of the late medieval and early Tudor court', *The Antiquaries Journal*, volume 82, 2002, pages 69-91.

This article 'fills a gap' in the heraldic literature, discussing the role of 'British history' in royal propaganda and ceremony before Henry VII and the part heralds played in rationalising the arms and beasts used at the pageants; a number of 'hitherto unpublished texts' are printed at the end. (Unfortunately there is no reference to e.g. the Philadelphia Roll of Edward IV (now available on CD) or the material published in the present journal on the Yorkist kings, their use of history and prophecy, and the editions of the accounts of the funerals of the house of York).

Michael Heaney and John Forrest, 'An antedating for the "morris dance"', *Notes and Queries*, volume 47, number 2, June 2002, pages 190-93.

The earliest reference to 'morris dance' previously known was in the will of Alice Wetenhale (1458), who left her daughter three silver bowls decorated with a 'moreys daunce'. The *Paston Letters*, ed. James Gairdner (1904), refers to an undated inventory of goods left by Sir John Pastolf (d. 1459), which includes a tapestry of the 'morysch daunce'; dated by Gairdner to 1459. However, C.M. Woolgar's *The Great Household in Late Medieval England*, New Haven 1999, using the Pastolf papers at Magdalen College, Oxford, quotes a memorandum of 31 October 1448, which refers to 'j clothe of aras of the morysk Daunce'. It can be inferred that the dance was a well established amusement of the social elite: Henry VII paid morris dancers at Christmas entertainments.

David Key, "'Whythe bendys a-bove hyr harnys': an investigation into the "bend" as a part of fifteenth-century military clothing', *Costume*, number 37, 2003, pages 17-24.

A discussion of the use of baldricks or sashes, which contemporaries usually called 'bends', a cheap means of distinguishing one army or contingent of soldiers from another. The author has collected the rare English references, which become more common, unsurprisingly, during the wars of the Roses. Often additional to the regular livery issued by the lord or king to his household, a bend could be used to unify an army made up of different bodies of men. An interesting link with the work of Frédérique Lachaud on the reign of Edward I.

Christian Liddy, 'The rhetoric of the royal chamber in late medieval London, York and Coventry', *Urban History*, volume 29, number 3, 2002, pages 323-349.

Shows that the metaphor of 'the chamber', used incidentally but not formally by these three towns, referred to their intimacy and physical proximity to the crown and their willingness to do the crown financial service from the mid-thirteenth century into the early modern period.

Julian M. Luxford, '*Auro et argento pulcherrime fabricatum*: new visual evidence for the feretory of St Dunstan at Glastonbury and its relation to the controversy over the relics', *The Antiquaries Journal*, volume 82, 2002, pages 105-24.

Five illustrations of the feretory added to a copy of John of Glastonbury's Chronicle, probably made in house, may elucidate problems over the location and worship of Dunstan's relics. There was a separate reliquary for the head, and items like his books and the tongs, with which he attacked the devil, were separately displayed. The main feretory for the body was decorated with gold and silver and in the form of a miniature cathedral, embellished 1235-52(?) and 1323-34(?).

Julian M. Luxford, 'A forgotten medieval Benedictine manuscript: the Annals in British Library Cotton MS Vitellius D ix', *Scriptorium*, volume 55, number 2, 2001, pages 298-306.

Little survives of the Abbey of St Benet at Holm, Norfolk, founded by King Cnut. This obit is one detail which links these annals to Holm. They run from Christ's Birth to 1333, with a brief continuation. They were possibly a commercial product written 1425-60. Additions which link it to Holm are the obit of King Cnut and a reference to 'St' Margaret of Holm, a child strangled at Hoveton St John and buried beneath the high altar of Holm in 1180, a 'saint' only otherwise mentioned by William Worcester.

Elizabeth A. New, 'Christological personal seals and Christocentric devotion in later medieval England and Wales', *The Antiquaries Journal*, volume 82, 2002, pages 47-68.

A study of 300 Christocentric examples out of 1000 English and Welsh personal seals, of which the most common images are the Lamb of God and the Pelican in its Piety. The notion that the matrix, with its ability to recreate an image, had powerful properties, could have had great influence on the choice of an image or legend and especially so with the Holy Image or Name. Extends the author's work on the cult of the Holy Name. Illustrated.

Werner Paravicini, 'Die zwölf "Magnificenzen" Karls des Kühnen', in G. Althoff, ed., *Formen und Funktionen öffentlicher Kommunikation im Mittelalter*, Vorträge und Forschungen 21, Stuttgart 2001, pages 320-94.

The twelve *magnificenzen* of Charles the Bold were events in the duke's life regarded as of outstanding importance by the chronicler Georges Chastelain. They include: the duke's wedding to Margaret of York, the fleet the duke maintained on the North Sea to prevent

the earl of Warwick from returning to England in 1470, the reburial of his father and mother in the winter of 1473, and his receiving the insignia of the order of the Garter in February 1470. Very detailed, many useful references.

Nicholas Rogers,, 'Patrons and purchasers: evidence for the original owners of books of hours produced in the Low Countries for the English market', in *Corpus of Illuminated Manuscripts*, vol. 11-12, Low Countries Series 8, edited by Bert Cardon, Louvain 2002, pages 1165-81.

Surveys the evidence, such as heraldry, calendars, devotion to saints and English additions, which proves that manuscripts were made in the Low Countries for the English market; includes two case studies: Aberdeen, University Library, MS 25, and Philadelphia, Free Library, MS Widener 3. Four colour and two black and white illustrations.

Elaine S. Tan, 'An empty shell: rethinking the usury laws in medieval Europe', *Journal of Legal History*, volume 23, number 3, December 2002, pages 177-96.

A clear exposition of the evolution of the canon laws on usury and what really fell within their comparatively small catchment area, contrary to many historians' assumptions. The church's rules were practical, sophisticated and enforced. Lay people supported the prohibitions and they were incorporated in commercial law. The author argues that respect for the prohibitions failed from the later fifteenth century along with the decline in respect for papal authority; one result was the establishment of public loan funds for the poor.

Nicholas Vincent, 'Some pardoners' tales: the earliest English indulgences', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, sixth series, volume 12, 2002, pages 23-58.

The sorry tale of John Greve, pardoner, charged with raising subscriptions for the new harbour of Bridport by the sale of indulgences in the 1440s begins a detailed examination of the development of this practice by English bishops up to the Lateran Council of 1215, by which time most of its characteristics were in place and formed an integral part of church practice. Subjects include the commutation of penance for money and the role of contrition; the financial support provided for shrines, churches, and the acceptance of certain community projects as suitable recipients of indulgences such as bridge and road building; indulgences to the dead; the spread of confession; and the 'treasury of merits' of Christ and the saints.

Livia Visser-Fuchs, "Pour recreer les esperitz": de handschriften en lezerskring van *Recueil des croniques d'Engleterre* van Jean de Wavrin', *Handelingen van de Koninklijke Kring voor Oudheidkunde, Letteren en Kunst van Mechelen*, volume 150, 2001, pages 59-80.

Surveys the surviving manuscripts of Wavrin's 'Collection of Chronicles of England' and his readership, showing that most owners belonged to the author's own circle: the

members of the court of the dukes of Burgundy, to whom reading history was entertainment. Four black and white illustrations.

Livia Visser-Fuchs, 'Jean de Wavrin and the English newsletters: the *Chronicle of the Rebellion in Lincolnshire*', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, volume 47, 2003, pages 217-35.

Analyses the text of the *Chronicle* and the proclamations made at the time and concludes that the *Chronicle* was not 'propaganda' for the English market, but an informative newsletter to the Burgundian court.

Hanno Wijsman, 'William Lord Hastings, *Les Faits de Jacques de Lalaing* et le maître aux Inscriptions blanches à propos du manuscrit français 16830 de la Bibliothèque nationale de France', in *Corpus of Illuminated Manuscripts*, vol. 11-12, Low Countries Series 8, edited by Bert Cardon, Louvain 2002, pages 1642-64.

Discusses the discovery that a manuscript made in Flanders between 1475 and 1480, containing the famous chivalric life of the Burgundian hero Jacques de Lalaing bears the arms of William, Lord Hastings, on its first folio, painted over by the arms of a member of the Melun family. The manuscript is also of interest for its surviving instructions to the illuminator. Five colour illustrations and list of the works that can be attributed to the Master of the White Inscriptions.

Kim W. Woods, 'The pre-Reformation altarpiece of Long Melford Church', *The Antiquaries Journal*, volume 82, 2002, pages 93-104.

Carved wooden altarpiece of 1481 probably made in the Netherlands and bought with the profits of the Suffolk cloth industry; donated by John Moryell and his wives, his executor John Clopton, and John Smith. The author's comparison and analysis suggests panels may survive at Queens' College, Cambridge.

Correction

Lady Eleanor Talbot's *Inquisition Post Mortem*, *Ricardian* vol. 12, no. 159, December 2002, pp 563 and 566. John Ashdown-Hill writes:

Lesley Wynne Davies advises me that the penultimate sentence of the text of this inquisition should have read *In cuius rei testimonium huic inquisitioni indentate tam predictus escaetor quam juratores predicti sigilla sua alternatim apposuerunt*. (In witness whereof the said escheator and the said jurors have in turn affixed their seals to this indented inquisition.). I am most grateful to Lesley for pointing this out to me.

Notes on Contributors

Rowena E. Archer is currently preparing a new edition of Nichols' *Royal Wills* and is researching a biography of Alice Chaucer. She is a lecturer at Brasenose College, Oxford.

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Jennifer Ward. Formerly Senior Lecturer in History at Goldsmiths College, University of London. Author of *English Noblewomen in the Later Middle Ages*, Longman 1992, and *Women in Medieval Europe 1200-1500*, Pearson 2002.

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

William J. White is Curator of the Centre for Human Bioarchaeology at the Museum of London.

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R. Horrox and P.W. Hammond eds., *British Library Manuscript 433*, 4 vols., Upminster and London 1979-83, vol. 1, pp. 45-46.

Daniel Williams, 'The hastily drawn up will of William Catesby Esquire, 25 August 1485', *Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society Transactions*, vol. 51, (1975-6)0, p. 48.

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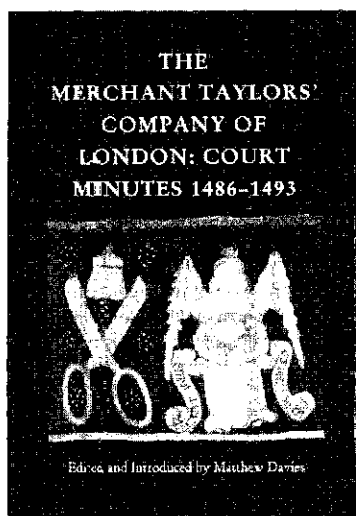
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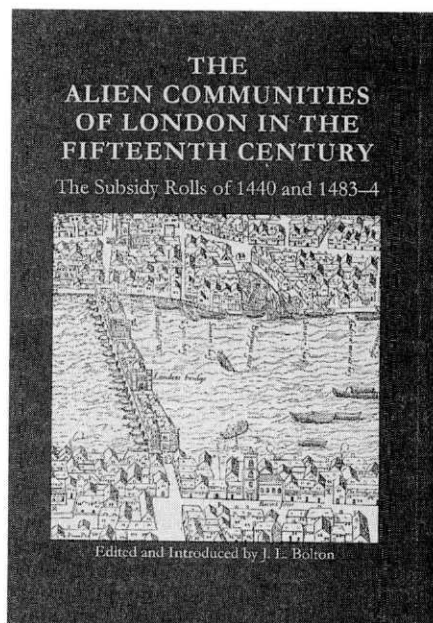
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