

Book Reviews

MALORY'S LIBRARY. *The Sources of the Morte Darthur.* Ralph Norris. 2008. Arthurian Studies LXXI. D. S. Brewer, Cambridge, an imprint of Boydell and Brewer Ltd, Woodbridge, £45.00. ISBN 978-1-84384-154-8

The question of Malory's sources has preoccupied scholars since the nineteenth century, engaging the attentions of such magisterial researchers as J.D. Bruce, R.H. Wilson, Edward Kennedy and, most notably in recent years, Malory's biographer, P.J.C. Field (see *Malory: Texts and Sources*, Arthurian Studies XL, Brewer, Cambridge 1998). Ralph Norris, a one-time student of Field's, acknowledges his debt to his mentor, but this book attempts in part an undertaking which has not been made before, namely the identification not simply of sources both major and minor and the ways in which they were manipulated by Malory to produce his 'hoole book', but also the nature of the writer's 'mental furnishings' (p. 10). This is an ambitious task, but there are revealing nuggets of information amidst the assessment of previous theories of sources and borrowings, and these together do go some way to imparting the way in which Malory's reading over a lifetime may have informed his style, expression and, ultimately, his interpretation of the Arthurian story.

This is a thorough study, which proceeds methodically through the eight tales identified by Eugène Vinaver. Controversial though Vinaver's division of the *Arthuriad* was, and is (albeit for very different reasons) considered to be, this is perhaps the only way of approaching the topic, given that Vinaver's edition, revised by Professor Field and published in 1990, remains the standard one, at least until the much-anticipated publication of Field's own version. Awareness of the not infrequent lack of congruity between Vinaver's divisions within the text and in the surviving manuscript of the *Morte*, London, British Library MS Additional 59678, sometimes supported by readings from Caxton, is, however, indicated in a passage discussing Mordred's treachery in 'The Morte Arthur': Norris observes that, in a passage where Vinaver simply has a new paragraph, the codex marks a more complex break, 'a blank line and two-line initial capital in the Winchester and a book division in the Caxton' (p. 142, n. 6). Norris is, therefore, fully cognizant of the drawbacks of Vinaver's work. Still, inevitably the reliance upon the modern printed edition does produce a certain dullness and predictability when reading the book all the way through, although if someone were interested in a particular part of the *Morte*, the structure is well-suited to act as a reference tool. The approach also results in chapters of unusually disparate length. The opening one, for example, is forty pages long, whilst the seventh, on 'The Tale of the Sankgreal' is only four and a half. In essence, of course, this is reflective of the relative complexity of Malory's adaptation of his sources – and, interestingly,

of the way in which he came to rely less on minor sources as his work continued.

Malory's Library is of interest due to the way in which it clearly sets out the author's deployment of different parts of his major French sources, often within the same 'tale' (for example, the Prose *Merlin* and the Post-Vulgate *Suite du Merlin* in 'The Tale of King Arthur'), but perhaps most significantly, in its examination of the kind of literature which Malory also drew upon which departed from the principal Arthurian tradition, such as the *Perlesvaus* and *L'Âtre Périlleux* (for the latter see especially Chapter 4, 'The Tale of Sir Launcelot'). The long-acknowledged influence of the romances of Chrétien de Troyes, his *Erec et Enide* and *Le Chevalier au Lion*, is re-examined, and his *Chevalier de la Charette* considered as a possible source for the story of Launcelot and Guinevere (see Chapter 8). Even more fascinating is the list of possible English sources, although the tale of Gareth, which may well have been based on an English source influenced by Welsh oral tradition, in the absence of that major source, remains mysterious. John Hardyng's influence from his *Chronicle*, for instance, is seen to be more pervasive throughout the text than hitherto thought while, more hypothetically, knowledge of at least some of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* is tentatively proposed (those of the Wife of Bath and the Franklin in 'The Tale of King Arthur' and, rather more contentiously, that of the Knight in 'Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere', where the female gender of the hunter who shot Launcelot in the buttock is suggested to have been taken from Emily's love of hunting in Chaucer's poem, p. 130). One of the most striking observations, though, comes in the discussion of the Love and Summer passage in 'Launcelot and Guinevere'. Norris here convincingly demonstrates how the lines describing winter's 'rasure' of summer's flourishing echo lines from John Lydgate's *Pageant of Knowledge* (pp. 133-34), and there is a useful Appendix in which the relevant extract is set out, together with quotations from other fifteenth-century poems by Lydgate and the anonymous author of the *The Floure and the Leafe* which together show either the prevalence of ideas of transience or, more excitingly, the possibility that Malory may at one time have read them. Given Lydgate's pre-eminence during this century, it is tempting to surmise that the latter could well have been the case, and it is a matter worth pursuing.

Norris's book, though complete in the terms which he defines for it, raises many questions. For example, if his suggestion that Malory may have used as many as eleven sources for his first 'tale' (Chapter 2 and p. 154) is correct, how many of these is Malory likely to have had before him as he wrote? In the relatively minor matter of names, perhaps he was recalling previous reading, similarly perhaps with the echo from Lydgate. But did he have Chrétien's romances with him as he composed, or, Hardyng's *Chronicle*? And what of the details of his methods of composition? Norris most interestingly proposes that he may have been working from a master list of Arthurian names (p. 120) which theory may offer one insight

into Malory's practices. Altogether this volume offers a solid and extremely useful examination of Malory's sources, the most comprehensive to date. Now it remains for scholars – perhaps including Norris himself – to build on the evidence and plausible suggestions made here in order to understand more fully how a knight prisoner set about creating arguably the greatest prose work of the late Middle Ages.

CAROL M. MEALE

MERCHANTS, PRINCES AND PAINTERS. Silk fabrics in Italian and Northern Paintings 1300-1550. Lisa Monnas. 2008. Yale University Press, New Haven and London, £40.00. ISBN 978-0-300-11117-0

This pioneering and lavishly illustrated study which examines the representation of Italian woven silks in painting is an essential contribution to the history of art. Lisa Monnas explains how the textiles were designed, constructed and marketed, who used them and some of the social and religious reasons for their depiction. Her chief achievement, however, is her examination of the pictorial record of such textiles in comparison with surviving examples and documentary evidence.

For about four centuries (1200-1600) the various Italian states supplied costly textiles for clothing, furnishing or vestments to princes and high ranking ecclesiastics throughout Europe, and thus as the author convincingly demonstrates, the sumptuous silks depicted in northern European painting between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were all imports from Italy. Following a discussion of the production and sale of silks, and the extraordinary sums of money spent on them, the author investigates the possibility of artists owning silks as 'studio props'. She concludes it is very unlikely since the prohibitive cost of such textiles made them the prerogative of the church and a small wealthy elite. Contemporary documentation in fact shows that artists and their families wore chiefly wool and linen until at least the mid-sixteenth century. Since rich fabrics of all types were seen in abundance in public civic and state ceremonial and at princely courts, a range of textiles to be used for iconographical purposes could be based on artists' own experience and observation and recorded in sketches and model books. As seen in the work of Carlo Crivelli, a skilful artist could use a single pattern many times, altering its scale, repeats, colour and texture so as to render it almost unrecognizable in different contexts.

A few artists are known to have designed for embroidery and tapestry, but there is less evidence that artists also designed textiles. Monnas discusses the role of artists and embroiderers in the creation of vestments commissioned by the Calimala guild for Florence cathedral baptistery in 1466, and by Pope Sixtus IV in 1472 for the basilica of St Anthony at Padua. Surviving documents show Antonio Pollaiuolo, and Pietro Calzetta who both designed orphreys, collaborated with the embroiderers, but had no professional contact with the weavers. It seems

unlikely that painters designed textiles. Extant artists' drawings such as those by Pisanello (*Codex Vallardi*, Louvre, Paris) demonstrate that they usually recorded textile designs related to studio practice and, although there is evidence for some specialized designers (who also set up the looms) working with weavers in Florence, Siena and Venice, it is probable that most skilled weavers were also designers. The author notes that eight pages of textile designs in Jacopo Bellini's sketchbook, formerly attributed to the artist himself, are now thought to be survivals from a weaver's pattern book which the artist reused. It was perhaps inherited from his wife, a descendant of Luccese weavers who had migrated to Venice.

A textile pattern and its motifs could be altered and repeated over long periods of time by various artists. Jacopo di Cione (Orcagna) depicted a textile with confronted parrots and flowers for St Catherine's mantle and for the apparels of St Lawrence's dalmatic in the *Strozzi Altarpiece* in 1357. This textile was depicted in an adapted form by at least ten Tuscan artists in the subsequent fifty years. Lively animal and floral motifs, often with symbolic meaning, were particularly appropriate for devotional imagery in fourteenth century art, whilst textiles with the motifs of the pomegranate, thistle, the dianthus (nail flower), caper leaves and branches were common in paintings of the fifteenth and sixteenth century.

The reproduction of weaves in paint was a challenge for artists, and their methods are examined in chapters discussing cloth of gold and velvet in fourteenth century Sienese and fifteenth century Florentine and Netherlandish art. The author suggests that Simone Martini may have been the first to depict a figured velvet c. 1317 in his *St Louis crowning Robert of Anjou* (Capodimonte Museum, Naples). Here the ceremonial garments depicted are made from contemporary 'Tartar' silks, probably imported from Tabriz in Ilkhanid Iran, of which some similar examples survive. St Louis' cope of crimson velvet was created by Simone with layers of crimson tempera over silver leaf, whilst its brocaded coin-like gold octagons were reproduced by raised and punched gilded gesso. By the fifteen and sixteenth century the medium of oil paint encouraged very realistic representations of silk especially velvet pile and brocade. As Monnas points out, the brown velvet cloth of gold gown in which Jan Van Eyck portrayed Chancellor Rollin in about 1436 (*The Virgin and Child with Chancellor Rollin*, Louvre, Paris) is one of the earliest representations of an *allucciolato* fabric in two heights of velvet pile. This weave, documented from the 1420s, displays the innovation of small raised loops of gold weft intended to glitter in the velvet pile like fireflies (*luciole*) against a velvety night sky.

In portraiture artists often, but not always, had access to the garments worn by the sitter. Giovanni Bellini probably painted Doge Leonardo Loredan's gold brocaded white satin damask mantle from life (National Gallery, London) since, as the author notes, its pomegranate motifs are upside down as they would have been viewed when this semi-circular cloak was worn. The exceptionally

fine fabric, and Bellini's skill in depicting it, is compared with a similar textile in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Inv. 8326-1863). Another equally well-known portrait is Agnolo Bronzino's *Eleonora of Toledo, and her son* (Uffizi, Florence). The artist depicts her in a gown created from a very striking *taletta arriciata*, or cut black velvet with a silver ground, where large arabesques in black pile enclose ogival plant forms brocaded in gold. Monnas shows that this extremely lavish textile was not Spanish, but distinctively Florentine and produced from around 1507 onwards. A similar example is in the Museo Civico, Turin (Inv. 1512/12). With reference to Bronzino and to Hans Holbein, both court painters, Monnas discusses the creation of royal portraits. If the sitter was unable to give an artist several sittings he had to rely on quick sketches and possibly, access to the royal wardrobe. Frequently such portraits show the sitter wearing fabrics and jewellery selected to emphasize their status especially if the image was destined to serve diplomatic purposes. The artists' depictions, however, were always based upon existing garments and textiles even if not strictly drawn from life.

In the penultimate chapter the author touches upon ceremonial furnishings and the inclusion of archaic or unusual textiles in devotional or mythological imagery to emphasize a distant or historical location. Stefan Lochner alludes to Christian tradition by depicting a late thirteenth or early fourteenth century cloth of honour with parrots and palmettes in the central panel of his *Altarpiece of the patron Saints of Cologne c.1442-5* (Cologne Cathedral), although his figures are dressed in contemporary weaves. Similarly two centuries later, Rubens and his pupil Van Dyke also used antique fabrics to convey a sense of history, a practice Van Dyke continued when in England since several of his paintings and portraits included drapery based on a large scale gold brocaded velvet with an undulating pomegranate design similar to that used for a chasuble c.1525 from Utrecht (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam).

Occasionally visual and documentary evidence may appear to conflict, as is the case with the large panel painting of Richard II (1367-c.1400) in Westminster Abbey, in which the crowned king, wearing ceremonial dress and holding a sceptre in his left hand and an orb surmounted with a tall cross in his right, is seated on a single cushion, his wooden throne otherwise completely unadorned. The author cites other images of a unfurnished throne in the Liber regalis (Westminster Abbey MS.38, f. 1v), and rightly points out that English (and European) court protocol required a throne draped in silks, and supplied with a canopy, cloth of honour and carpet. The Westminster panel and these examples may, however, represent a cathedra associated with a different stage in a coronation ceremonial, rather than a throne (Carra Ferguson O'Meara, *Monarchy and Consent, The Coronation Book of Charles V of France*, London and Turnhout 2001, pp.134, 136; 210). Both the omission and the inclusion of fabrics and clothing can thus be significant depending upon the iconographical context.

Church treasures, public and private collections testify to the survival of Italian silks from the fourteenth century onwards. The final chapter discusses evidence from the pictorial record for the longevity of silk weaves and their designs. The epilogue touches upon the influence of renaissance Italian textile design upon British nineteenth century architects and designers such as William Morris and Charles Vosey, some of whose designs for furnishing fabrics and wallpapers incorporating Italian motifs or pattern layouts are still in production.

This book is the fruit of many years research. It has helpful glossaries and appendices, and should become a standard text for anyone interested in textile and art history. It is highly recommended.

JANE BRIDGEMAN

TOWN AND COUNTRYSIDE IN WESTERN BERKSHIRE, 1327 - c. 1600. Social and Economic Change. Margaret Yates. 2007. The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, £55. ISBN978-1-84383-328-4

This is a welcome addition to the small but growing range of local studies that examine the period from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century. It is a study in which the locality is set within the wider picture of trends elsewhere, and through which the author examines the extent to which the period was marked by continuity or change, and the varied influences which affected these changes. The period was one when the decline of demesne agriculture meant that the manorial account rolls now provide much less information than before, and, as in this volume, historians need to use a wide variety of different and imperfect sources. West Berkshire is here defined, by the survival of two detailed tax lists, the poll tax for 1381 and the muster lists for 1522. While the study covers three centuries, the focus is on fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Although the area is small it contains valuable variety within it: of different agricultural regions, of town and countryside, and of different types of lords. Within the area a number of better documented manors and parishes are given special detailed treatment.

The differing agricultural regions include the contrasting chalk downlands and the claylands of the Vale of the White Horse which tended to be at the extremes for taxable wealth and population, the clay vale being both more populous and wealthier. The chalkland showed particularly large-scale agriculture and a wide range of wealth. Another region, the Kennet valley saw rapid economic expansion before 1522, reflecting the growth of the cloth industry.

The opportunity to examine the link between countryside and town, is focussed on the impact of the great textile producing town of Newbury, the largest town in the study area. After a period of relative decline in the later fourteenth

century, it had started to revive before the mid fifteenth century depression and continued to expand thereafter into the mid sixteenth century. It was one of the growing Thames valley cloth-producing centres, and its merchants included famous figures on the national scale like the Winchcombes and the Dolmans, men who exported cloth through Southampton and London, and were known by the merchants of Antwerp or by government ministers in London. Such men traded on a grand scale, Winchcombe contracted to produce 1000 cloths for Cromwell, even if he could produce 'only' 500 by Easter. Delony's poem painted a picture of his large-scale factory production but it is unclear how much was produced in this way and how much by the traditional organisation of household and workshop selling to the big local entrepreneur. The large numbers of fullers and cloth-finishers suggest that the town was both important for manufacture and as a finishing centre for the rural manufacturers. The town was dominated by cloth, but like other such towns supported a range of activities. There were the standard occupations of all towns catering for the needs of the townsmen and the neighbouring hinterland, but there were also specialists who catered for a wider clientele, such as with the floor tiles that went to Winchester, or the leather and parchment that went to Winchester and Southampton. Wealthy townsmen acquired land in the area around although their patterns of debt emphasised their links with Southampton and above all London rather than the immediate hinterland, or the local great town of Reading. Shaw was a well-documented manor on the outskirts of the town, but did it typify more the suburban manors or its own hinterland in the Kennet valley?

The book is less informative about agriculture since there is little surviving documentation, and although the probate inventories might have been squeezed more for agricultural use, this would have only been applicable for the latter years. Sheep farming was characteristic of the area whether the demesnes of the downland or among peasants of the vale. The study provides valuable information on regional, seigneurial and chronological variations in rents and entry fines, engrossment, enclosure and serfdom, as well as at the lords' handling of resources like woods and mills.

Like much recent work, this book emphasises the importance of short-term changes. Industrial and economic expansion left areas of England that were more vulnerable to recession. Individuals moved to more prosperous areas, and expanded their agricultural or industrial activities, but they could also move away or reduce their activities if circumstances changed. This is a very valuable book that will be of great importance as we try to make sense of the local and short-term complexities and attempt to weld them together into a rich national picture.

J.N. HARE

A YORKIST LORD: John Howard, Duke of Norfolk, c. 1425-1485.
Anne Crawford. 2009. Continuum, London, £70. ISBN 0978-1441-16551-0

RICHARD III'S 'BELOVED COUSIN': John Howard and the House of York.
John Ashdown-Hill. 2009. The History Press, Stroud, £18. 99.

ISBN 0978-0-7524-5131- 2

John Howard, first duke of Norfolk has had no modern biographer and now two come along at the same time. Anne Crawford and John Ashdown-Hill approach their subject in different ways. Crawford supplies a full, detailed narrative of Howard's life and times, placing his career firmly in its East Anglian and wider political context, with two chapters discussing in depth his household and shipping interests. Ashdown-Hill offers a more narrowly focussed discussion of the man as a Yorkist and, as he puts it, of 'his Yorkism'. Thus the service to the dukes of Norfolk, prominent in Crawford, is played down, his service to Cecily, Duchess of York, in contrast, emphasised. The role in East Anglian society is treated cursorily, but he explores more fully Howard's local interests especially in Colchester and Harwich. Inevitably however, despite the different emphases, they cover much of the same ground revealing a formidable and short-tempered man of remarkable ability.

Howard was born, Crawford convincingly argues, about 1425 the son of a Suffolk gentleman with minor prospects, though descended of a grander family, who rose through aristocratic and royal service to found the premier dukedom of England. His was a spectacular career, even though it ended with his death on the losing side at Bosworth. The key to his career was that his mother was Margaret Mowbray, sister of the second duke of Norfolk. Crawford reveals what surely was a love match between his father, a household servant, and a girl almost on the shelf; a marriage reluctantly accepted by the dowager duchess. Their son thus entered Mowbray service and rose to be John, the third duke's chamberlain. Service to Duke John during the 1450s brought Howard into contact with the house of York, whose cause the duke espoused, possibly seeing action at Northampton and the second St Albans, and certainly at Towton. He joined Edward IV's household at the beginning of his reign, being appointed a king's carver in July 1461. From there he never looked back, combining service to the infirm John Mowbray, fourth duke of Norfolk (1461-76) with sustained military, diplomatic and administrative service to the crown. That service is fully documented by Crawford as Howard was knighted in 1461, raised to the peerage in 1470 and to a dukedom in 1483.

It is the survival of his household accounts – the household book – for 1462-71 and 1481-83, which makes it possible to view Howard's life more fully than most of his contemporaries. Both authors make use of it, but Crawford offers the fuller and more perceptive discussion of his estates and finances, his

family relationships and lifestyle. He was a man of many parts, as both authors show, a player of chess and cards, reader of books and enjoyer of music, plays and poetry, as well as the more vigorous pursuits of hunting, hawking and archery. In short his household materials reveal the lifestyle of the greater gentry and lesser peerage (there is little on how it changed after 1483) in the late fifteenth century.

But in addition they reveal his business interests, most distinctive being his role as a shipowner and merchant. He built up a large fleet, traded directly, and deployed them in naval warfare. Ashdown-Hill characterises Howard as an innovator and promoter of new processes and products such as building in brick, pewter and clock making and in particular shipbuilding, claiming that he built the first carvel in England. Crawford once more gives the fuller picture, providing an invaluable discussion of the late-fifteenth century shipping industry. It emerges that as a gentleman of somewhat modest means if grander connections, Howard decided early in his career to make a fortune in trade to underpin his career in aristocratic service and as a soldier. It could be said that in his own life he acted out that transition from commerce to nobility that was characteristic of so many upwardly mobile families in the later middle ages.

Howard combined being in business with impeccable chivalric attributes. He acted as deputy earl marshal in the Smithfield tournament of 1467 for his invalid lord; by all accounts carried out the duties with distinction. It is not surprising that his role as a shipping magnate and his military experience came together in naval warfare. He was the ideal man to supplant the earl of Warwick in the late 1460s as Edward IV's naval commander in his role as vice admiral to the duke of Gloucester.

So Howard prospered under Edward IV. But all accounts of his career turn on the question of his support for Richard III in 1483. Here Crawford and Ashdown-Hill diverge. Both agree that Howard was treated shabbily by Edward IV, who by acts of parliament in 1478 and 1483 disinherited Howard and his brother in law, Lord Berkeley. Under the law of the land, the two men were the joint heirs of Anne Mowbray should she die without issue. In the act of 1478 this was overturned by the provision that should she die prematurely the Mowbray estates and titles would stay for life with her child husband, Richard of Shrewsbury, Duke of York, Edward IV's younger son. This was reaffirmed after her death. If made legal by parliament the disinheritance was unjust. Howard seems to have accepted this diminution of his prospects rather more willingly than Berkeley. But he did eventually back Richard III in his usurpation of the throne and was rewarded with both estates and as a bonus the titles. Both Crawford and Ashdown-Hill agree too that it is unlikely that because of this Howard had any hand in the death of the younger of the Princes in the Tower.

Using Polydore Vergil's late testimony (Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, could have been an informant) Crawford suggests that Howard,

who, according to this account, was present at the Tower on 13 June when Hastings was summarily executed, thereafter pragmatically accepted Richard III's coup in return for the righting of the wrong and additional rewards (not only the titles, but also both Scales and De Vere lands in East Anglia).

Ashdown-Hill has a different gloss on Howard's motives. Here we come to the more quirky aspect of his book. He perceives him as a father figure to the young Edward IV, as well as to John Mowbray the young duke of Norfolk. One of the roles as father figure was to act as Pandarus. Ashdown-Hill deduces from an entry in the household book that Howard financed a visit to a brothel in Southwark in 1465. This incident, of which he makes much, leads him into the 'Secrets of the King's Bedchamber' and, by innuendo, a role as procurer for Edward IV. Yet, Edward IV, he insists, was not the great womaniser of tradition; his mistresses were fewer than successive historians have supposed. The 'smokescreen of verbiage' on this was put up to obscure the fact that he was indeed married to Eleanor Butler, née Talbot. Howard knew her: she was the sister of the duchess of Norfolk. 'He may therefore have been particularly well-placed (in 1483) to comprehend the astonishing revelation of bigamy'. 'This is not necessarily to imply that Howard had prior knowledge of the marriage (though it is a possibility)'. What is the innuendo here? Is it that Howard fixed up an affair with the widowed Eleanor Talbot/Butler sometime before May 1464? Later, we learn, he was on 13 June among those peers who *had* (my italics) accepted the evidence of the Talbot marriage and who thus believed Edward V had to be set aside (and Hastings and others executed). Unfortunately Ashdown-Hill offers no discussion of the supposed marriage and when it had taken place. A footnote reveals that another book on Elizabeth Talbot, Lady Butler, was published in 2009. So presumably we need to go there for the rest of the argument. But here it is all 'nudge, nudge, wink, wink, know what I mean'.

One further observation may be made about this whole issue. Howard's heir, Thomas, soon to be earl of Surrey, was forty in 1483. John Howard, already at least fifty-eight, might have been more relaxed than his son about the disinheritance. One wonders whether Thomas did not push harder than his father to support Richard III. While in the event he lived another forty years, he could not then have been so certain, had Richard of Shrewsbury survived, that he would outlive the ten-year-old duke of York had Edward V continued on the throne. Moreover, it would always have been on the cards that a ruling Edward V would revoke the reversion set in the 1478 and 1483 acts. So John and Thomas Howard cast their lots with Richard III; they served him loyally and Norfolk died leading the vanguard at Bosworth. As Crawford comments he might not have wished to survive the battle, for he was too old and stubborn to come to terms with Henry VII. And perhaps he also had a conscience.

A.J. POLLARD

THE KINGMAKER'S SISTERS. Six Powerful Women in the Wars of the Roses. David Baldwin. 2009. The History Press, Stroud, £20.
ISBN 978-0-7509-5076-3

The main question that occurs of course is why write this book? As the author says, the sisters have not hitherto been the subject of scholarly investigation but that does not in itself justify such a monograph. As Baldwin says, there really is little that can be said about the sisters as individual members of the aristocracy and the principal interest in them must then be that they are just examples that can be used for a general social history of their class and period.

There would be nothing wrong with such a tactic if this objective were the case. In this respect, Baldwin's descriptions of the sisters in relation to their rôles within their households are especially interesting, particularly when occasional comparison is made with their counterparts from earlier times. The author is also to be commended for including in appendices the will of Katherine, Lady Hastings, and three letters (one by Katherine and two by Eleanor, Lady Stanley) that have not been previously printed. But these insights into the lives of late fifteenth-century noble ladies form just one ingredient in this book which otherwise appears as a fairly straightforward, summary narration of the events of the Wars of the Roses, of the complexities of family ties and of who inherited or acquired what from whom. Naturally the Nevilles are central to this and the bibliography reflects use made of biographies of the Kingmaker from Oman onwards. Baldwin mentions that he made a trawl through back numbers of our journal to find material on the sisters but came up with nothing and indeed his bibliography includes only one *Ricardian* article altogether. One suspects that our past issues contain more that could have been utilised. Quoting Oman on the feud between the senior Nevilles and Salisbury's junior branch of the family is fine but there is much more on this in a two part article from the *Ricardian* that would have been more valuable. That said, I have to admit to vested interest, since it was I who wrote the article!

A difficulty in writing a book such as this is quite how to marshal one's material. Baldwin takes a chronological approach, which inevitably means switching from politics to social history to genealogy and back again. This has the attraction of breaking up the material into bite size chunks but at the risk of fragmenting the reader's attention. It might have been better to have avoided this attempt to do everything and concentrate rather more on the sisters at 'home' and in support of their spouses, insofar as that could be discerned.

The Kingmaker's Sisters reflects the author's undoubted knowledge and enthusiasm and he is to be congratulated for it. I have to say, however, that I enjoyed his *Stoke Field* rather more and I think that that might have been because with that book, the author had set himself a more practical task. The present work inevitably

constitutes a greater challenge and perhaps not surprisingly a greater scope for the odd correction needed. The description of the famous feast of September 1465 held in a number of rooms omits to identify the building and its location – a simple oversight. Rather more serious is the assertion that the last summons of the feudal host was in 1327 when in fact, it was summoned as late as 1385. But these are mere details and in themselves do not detract from the real value of the book. In short, it can be recommended to readers who would be interested in having an oversight of the themes described above arranged as David Baldwin has done here.

JAMES PETRE.

ELIZABETH OF YORK. Arlene Naylor Okerlund. 2009. Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, Hampshire, £55. ISBN 978-0-230-61827-5

Having written *Elizabeth Wydeville The Slandered Queen* (Tempus, Stroud 2005), Professor Okerlund has now moved on to Elizabeth of York. The difficulty in writing such a biography is that there is very little information available. Nancy Lenz Harvey clearly demonstrated this problem in her work *Elizabeth of York Tudor Queen* (London 1972), by constructing chapter headings based upon her relationship with the men around her, for example 'King's Daughter', 'King's Niece', etc., barely allowing her to exist as an individual in her own right.

Unfortunately, lack of evidence is not untypical for women of this period, even queens. In this new biography Professor Okerlund takes a different approach by portraying Elizabeth through the major turning points in her life, for example 'The Lady Princess Deposed', 'Marriage to a King', 'Birth of a Prince'. There is also a whole chapter dedicated to Margaret Beaufort where we learn more about Margaret than Elizabeth. Margaret is presented as a domineering mother-in-law, so that by the end of the chapter we can only sympathise with Elizabeth. Her whole life is influenced by both husband and mother-in-law. This is exemplified at the birth of her first child Arthur. Henry determined where she was to give birth, Winchester, but it was Margaret who specified everything else. In a series of *Ordinances* she stated how the birthing chamber was to be furnished down to the sheets for the bed. The christening ceremony was also set down. Margaret even detailed the nursery, something a mother usually likes to plan for herself. Thereafter every child Elizabeth had would be a reminder of her mother-in-law's influence and control. There are charming details about the nursery and the design of the child's cradle, but it was Margaret's doing not Elizabeth's. The relationship between Margaret and Elizabeth is summed up in 1498 by the Spanish sub-prior of Santa Cruz in a letter to Ferdinand and Isabella, 'The Queen is ... much beloved. She is kept in subjection by the mother of the king. It would be a good thing to write often to her, and to show her a little love'.

Professor Okerlund uses a wide range of sources which demonstrate Elizabeth's lifestyle and routine, through descriptions of court events and ceremonies but this only provides the background to her life. It is this lack of any personal evidence for Elizabeth that leads to an overly long chapter about the elaborate coronation feasts. It provides an interesting description of early Tudor court life but tells us very little about Elizabeth herself, and we have to wait until the end of the book for something more revealing.

Elizabeth's Privy Purse expenses unfortunately only survive for the year commencing March 1502, the last year of her life. These show the details of items purchased and alms given, and how she paid for the food, clothing and education of a number of children. Her deep affection and care for her family along with concern for the poor is clearly shown. In December 1502 she gave 12d 'to a man of Pontefract', who claimed that he had lodged Antony Wydeville in his home in 1483. Was the money given in memory of her late uncle, or did she feel the man was in real need and so gave the money regardless of the truth of his story? Perhaps people thought she was a soft touch when it came to her family. With such colour it is particularly unfortunate that the expenses survive for this one year.

Ricardians may find this book difficult: Professor Okerlund is obviously anti-Richard and tends to view Henry only in a positive light, for example when he finally married Elizabeth after being pressed by parliament, she interprets this as Henry 'orchestrating' parliament to press him to marry so that he could demonstrate how he and parliament could work together to unite a divided country. Henry's attempt to date his reign from 21 August and parliament's reaction are not commented upon, the dating is accepted because it 'allowed Parliament to attain those who fought against him at Bosworth', so much for unity.

This biography does not add much to Harvey's earlier work; however it is arguably a better read, and benefits from the chapter on Elizabeth's last year. As has been noted in previous Ricardian book reviews, Palgrave books are 'unmentionably expensive'. The badly produced black and white illustrations do not do justice either to the book or the cost. I suggest you borrow this book from your library.

LYNDA PIDGEON

THE HERALDS' MEMOIR 1486-1490. Court Ceremony, Royal Progress and Rebellion. Edited by Emma Cavell. 2009. Published for the Richard III and Yorkist History Trust by Shaun Tyas, Donington. Price to non-members £30; price to members £20, plus £4.95 p&tp, to be ordered through the Sales Liaison Officer; cheques payable to the Richard III Society. ISBN 978-1-900289-86-3

The Memoir is a contemporary compilation written under the aegis of John Writhe, Garter King of Arms (1478-1504), part of it in his own hand. It is compiled from

notes of events taken at the time by heralds. It was evidently intended for in-house archival purposes, not for publication. It was acquired by Sir Robert Cotton, and is now British Library Cotton MS Julius B XII. It was printed by Thomas Hearne in his edition of John Leland's writings, *De Rebus Britannicis Collectanea* (6 vols., Oxford 1715; reprinted London 1774), though there seems no connection to Leland. Hearne made errors of transcription and omitted some parts of the manuscript. Although it has been a good deal used by historians, it is good to have a thorough modern edition generally accessible, complete with an extensive editorial introduction discussing the manuscript itself, its transmission and so on; and with footnotes exploring the context of events and listing recent literature about them.

A bonus is a valuable discussion of English heralds through the fifteenth century. Richard III's incorporation of the heralds as the College of Arms in 1484 and provision for them of Coldharbour House in the city of London, complete with office space and library, was threatened after Bosworth. They lost their building (not to be replaced until 1564-65). Dr Cavell suggests that their assiduity in the early years of Henry VII may have been prompted by fears for their corporate future. There are interesting insights into heraldic practice. They were not above commenting on lack of generosity by both king and queen in the distribution of 'largesse' to themselves (pp. 106-07, notes 239 and 247). They also explain that only secular peers of the rank of viscount or above, with the king's steward and chamberlain, were entitled to be 'cried' (their titles formally proclaimed) in return for largesse.

Essentially the Memoir is concerned with royal ceremonial and with military campaigns in England. It begins with Henry VII's tour of 1486 to York, Worcester, Gloucester, Hereford and Bristol, with elaborate accounts of civic receptions, complete with transcriptions of the welcoming verses recited by, for instance, 'Ebraucus' (founder of York) or 'King Henry VI' (at Worcester). These have been much studied by historians of English drama and of royal spectacle, notably in the works of McGee, Meagher, and Anglo. There are elaborate descriptions of court ceremonies; the christening of Prince Arthur and of Princess Margaret, the coronation of Queen Elizabeth (of York), her preparation for her confinement for childbirth, all with minute attention to clothes, hangings, banquets (and especially seating arrangements) and attendance (of peers and knights and their ladies). There are accounts of Henry's campaign against Lincoln's invasion in 1487 in the name of 'Edward VI' (whose name is given as plain 'John', not 'Lambert Simnel'), and against the Yorkshire rioters of 1489. The account of the king's movements before the battle with Lincoln at Stoke (excellently discussed in Michael Bennett, *Lambert Simnel* (1987) is fascinating. Installed at Nottingham, dependent on the reaction of the Stanleys, Henry must have been uncomfortably reminded of Richard III two years earlier. His army seemed ready to disintegrate when Henry falsely gave the impression

of riding away to safety before the battle. (He was going to greet the Stanleys). The Memoir is crammed with names in attendance lists. The editor's balking at providing biographical footnotes is understandable. To do so would have vastly increased the bulk and expense of the book. However, the decision to exclude from the index 'names which appear only in group format' is unfortunate. Researchers pursuing an individual will turn to the index, not notice the warning, and wrongly conclude their quarry is not mentioned.

An intriguing item is the disciplinary code issued to Henry's army in 1487. It seems unnecessarily verbose. I suspect that sonority, an appearance of comprehensiveness, may have been more important than utility. 'No religios woman, nor mannes wif, daughter, maydyn, ne no mannes ne no womans servant' should be ravished. This seems to suggest, for instance, that widows were fair game, though presumably that point would not have carried water at a summary trial. Why not just say 'ravish no woman'? In any case, how much of the proclamation could an illiterate soldier take in? Presumably form, not substance, was what mattered; rather like a conquistador proclaiming the sovereignty of the Spanish monarchs to bewildered Indians in the New World.

The editor talks, as so many of us do, about ceremonial as 'propaganda'. She observes, for instance, that the 'propaganda potential' of Arthur's christening was 'never realized' because the account was not published. The Memoir was intended to help future heralds get ceremonial form correct. Correct form for heralds was presumably an end in itself, much as it was for the clergy. To think of, say, a coronation primarily as an exercise in 'public relations' is to undervalue its sacramental nature, its significance in itself. On the other hand, one can also approach the subject in too reverent a mood. The temptation for the modern reader to recall the Victorian 'bard of Dundee', William McGonagall, when reading the verses produced for 'royal entries' is well nigh irresistible, if improper, but we need not assume that the verses necessarily struck their audience as the profound expression of poetic truth. The reality, presumably was that some unfortunate official with no poetic talent was called upon to compose a given number of lines at short notice, ('It kepith subjectes as they shulde bee / From all strives in quyete and unytie'), perhaps to a degree of suppressed derision. How quite to strike the balance between a 'reductionist' reading of contemporary work and an over-respectful one is a real dilemma for the historian. Not least of the virtues of this edition is the opportunity to read slowly, thoughtfully, through the account, rather than a hasty cherry-picking of evidence to support a 'research agenda'. My thanks to Emma Cavell, and to the Trust, for the opportunity.

CLIFFORD S. L. DAVIES

HUMANISM, READING AND ENGLISH LITERATURE, 1430-1530.

Daniel Wakelin. 2007. Oxford University Press, Oxford. £50. ISBN 978-0-19-921588-1

Whoever it was that first coined the word 'humanism' in its invidious literary/historical sense has much to answer for. If only *humanitas* could have kept the pleasant meaning it had when the Scots envoy Archibald Whitelaw in 1484 named it as one of the virtues of Richard III. Whitelaw spoke of the king's *praestans humanitas*, his 'great humanity', being a human being in its most positive sense. That is the meaning the word should have retained; it should not have become an endlessly controversial means of running down other people's learning (and celebrating one's own). Like 'renaissance', the word 'humanism' has led literary and other historians to make unnecessary value judgments, invent superfluous and sometimes arbitrary periodisation and set out on unnecessary quests. On the confusion caused by, and the vagueness and elasticity of, such words, I call to witness, for example, Johan Huizinga's study of the term 'renaissance' in his 'Het probleem der Renaissance', (1920), *Verzamelde Werken*, volume 4, pages 231-75.

This is not to say that the author of the present book – which in the very first line of its very first quotation uses *humanitas* in the meaning of 'kindness' – is not perfectly aware of the problem. The introduction (= chapter 1, 'Humanism as reading') works its way through most of the meanings and shades of meaning of the word and the controversies it engendered, and argues with itself and its predecessors about who may be called a humanist and what is a true product of humanistic learning. The present study sets out (my italics) 'to seek humanism ... in the activities of readers' by means of such readers' comments in the margins of translated texts and by surveying as far as possible the expectations of authors, translators and printers. Is this worth doing? Yes, it is. Not so much because people may be pleased to find (small and often ambiguous) signs of humanistic tendencies in fifteenth-century England even among readers of vernacular literature, but because so many helpful and insightful titbits are brought to light by the author in the course of his learned quest.

The chapter headings and sub-headings may give an impression of the tone and purpose of the book: they make it almost superfluous to read the text. Take chapter 2: 'Duke Humfrey and other imaginary readers', with the sub-headings 'Imagining Duke Humfrey', 'The princely reader in *The Fall of Princes*', 'The real reading of *The Fall of Princes*', 'Writing for the humanist in *On Husbandrie*', 'Imagining Duke Humfrey in *On Husbandrie*', and 'The rewriting of Duke Humfrey's books'. Humfrey of Gloucester's personal role as a humanist will never find general agreement and the argument continues in the present book: was he unique or not, did he read his books or not, were his books above all made to boost his reputation or not, etc. Other and later readers of the

texts he owned, not surprisingly, had their own agenda; Lydgate's *Fall of Princes* (Boccaccio's *De casibus*) found many more readers than the translation of Palladius' *De re rustica*. One wonders whether, the problem of survival apart, this is not simply due to the fact that the *Fall* is a collection of stories and *On Husbandrie* a specialised treatise? It is here concluded – I think – that the *Fall* was not really meant for the duke, but for humbler readers and did reach them, and that *On Husbandrie* was really intended for a humanist reader, that is Duke Humfrey.

Once we have left the inevitable Humfrey of Gloucester behind we are allowed – also inevitably – to focus on such attractive figures as Osbern Bokenham, Augustinian friar of Clare, Suffolk, and William Worcester, Sir John Fastolf's secretary and man of affairs. Bokenham was enjoying himself writing his saints' lives, which he larded with classical similes and metaphors, and imaginatively translating a classical text which might almost have been written for Richard, Duke of York – the translation was duly dedicated to him. Wakelin calls Bokenham's classical allusions 'intellectually pointless', but adds that in his translation 'he responds to antiquity more fully'. I am inclined to think that the translation of Claudian's *De consulatu Stilichonis* is also one long self-indulgent 'classical allusion' – a very clever and effective one – written up to comfort Richard of York when he was accused of mismanagement in France, and not too much profundity should be looked for.

Worcester seems the ideal man for the present study as he was student and reader and author as well, though he has also, in typical humanist fashion, been criticised for his bad handwriting, bad grammar and bad Latin. His work, like Bokenham's, is discussed extensively by Wakelin in his search for humanist ideas, especially 'civic commitment', but did anybody listen to Worcester and his advice, political or otherwise? Probably not, the author says, and adds that he appears to have 'imagined' a community of like-minded readers (don't we all?). Similarly, about the early printers of vernacular humanist texts, the question is asked whether – to put it very simply – they had an existing public to cater for, or had to create one. It is asked, of course, what printing did for humanist reading in England, with a focus on 'schoolbooks' and grammars and Caxton's edition of Worcester's translation of Cicero's *On Old Age*. From a sea of details it emerges that we must conclude that readers' marginal notes tend to go for the mundane, marking for example the dangers of 'fleshshely lustys', but that they do also, sometimes, note classical heroes and 'humanist concepts' (are they?) 'such as virtue, liberty and servitude' and thus live up to Caxton's expectations.

The last two chapters deal with debate literature, especially with the *Declamation of Noblesse*, and Medwall's 'response' to it, *Fulgens and Lucres*, concluding that the notions put forward in these texts were so universally accepted that there was not really any debate going on, and finally with the humanists in the Tudor period who were so very (self-)conscious that they were doing something new and kept saying so.

Ricardian readers will find that there is hardly a word about Edward IV as book-owner and none about Richard III and his books, even though we know so much about them. Scholars will no doubt continue to smile at any hint that these kings were more than just about *aware* of the existence of humanist learning, but are their relationship to the universities, their ownership of classical and humanist texts and the positive attitude of Richard and his parliament to the import of books so completely devoid of interest in the context of early signs of humanism in England that they deserve no mention at all?

As I said many years ago: there was a time when it was silently assumed that the king's secretary knew Latin, only in Henry VII's time was it thought necessary to have a special 'Latin secretary'. It is worth following the development symbolised by this simple fact and looking in detail at all its fascinating literary and human evidence – and that is what Wakelin does best – but does it need to be such a desperate struggle, such a confused battle consisting of many separate skirmishes, which left this onlooker at least longing for a clearer command structure and a more convincing victory?

LIVIA VISSER-FUCHS

THE REGISTER OF THE GUILD OF THE HOLY CROSS, STRATFORD-UPON-AVON. Edited by Mairi Macdonald. 2007. The Dugdale Society, in association with The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, Publications of The Dugdale Society, Volume XLII, £35, available from The Dugdale Society, Shakespeare Centre, Henley St., Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 8EG; cheques payable to the Dugdale Society. £5 postage in UK; charges for other destinations can be obtained from dugdale-society@hotmail.co.uk

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Religious guilds in which lay people and clergy met together to worship, pray and say masses for departed members, as well as to enjoy many other aspects of mutual friendship, conviviality and support, began to proliferate in England in the late Anglo-Saxon period. Early examples include the Kalendar Brethren to be found by the early twelfth century in Bristol, Exeter and Winchester, taking their name from their practice of meeting on the *Kalends* of each month. But as the number of guilds increased so their form, purpose and activities diversified as the returns made in Richard II's reign to government inquiries on their functioning and evidence collected at the time of their dissolution in Edward VI's time most obviously demonstrate. Most, of course, were small and exercised only a limited influence in their own immediate neighbourhoods, with modest numbers of members, most of whom were socially undistinguished craftsmen, traders or agriculturalists, though a

fair proportion of religious guilds or fraternities also admitted the wives and widows of male members. Gradually, a few guilds began to attract patrons from a much wider geographical region, especially when the local leadership fell into the hands of leading townsmen who had commercial and other links with other important centres of trade. From an early date some powerful figures - the local bishop, an occasional nobleman, even members of the royal family - were enrolled. As a result the popularity and influence of the guild might grow exponentially until it had a national standing. Locally it acquired lands, rents and properties, not infrequently building its own guild hall or chapel, founding almshouses, promoting education and other charitable work. Such is the case with the Guild of the Holy Cross of Stratford-upon-Avon, whose register has been meticulously calendared by Mairi Macdonald.

Originating in the late thirteenth century, the Guild was refounded in 1403, partly perhaps to eliminate ambiguities in organisation thrown up by the inquiries of 1388-89. It became in the fifteenth century the most influential body in the town, its wealth and standing allowing it to assume a major role in municipal government, with virtually all the leading townsmen and their wives becoming members, as well as attracting many from far beyond Stratford's immediate hinterland. The surviving register, beginning with a copy of the Guild's statutes made in 1443 and a resolution concerning the appointment of priests and a schoolmaster in 1500 (for what later became King Edward VI's Grammar School, a nursery of modern medieval historians, including the Chairman of The Dugdale Society!), essentially provides a comprehensive list of members from its refounding to 1535, shortly before its dissolution. More than 8000 names are recorded, revealing not only local social networks in Stratford itself and the surrounding countryside, but a myriad of connections, not simply with the major trading partners one might expect for a small, central Midland town - Coventry, Bristol, London - but stretching as far north as Cumbria (several men from Kendal were members) and even down to Cornwall in the south west, though there is a marked absence of names from the eastern half of England. In a clear and instructive introduction, Mairi Macdonald traces the fortunes of the Guild, which reached its apogee in terms of numbers and social quality in the Yorkist period (its most notable recruit being George, Duke of Clarence, and the accounts for 1478-79 show Edward, Prince of Wales, his tutor, John Alcock, Bishop of Worcester, and Sir Anthony Rivers also paying fines). She provides some welcome statistical analysis of membership by period, type and geographical origin. An influx of Londoners is noted, for instance, beginning in the 1430s but reaching a peak in 1469 and 1470. Decline then set in and by the early sixteenth century, most new recruits were locals once again, and increasingly it was the souls of the deceased rather than living members whose names were being enrolled to benefit from the masses said by the Guild's priests and chaplains. Since most

entries are formulaic, giving the name of the new member when he or she was admitted to the fraternity, usually noting their status, trade and the entry fine paid, the editor provides a few examples of the earliest admissions recorded (pp. 39-40) and then calendars the rest in chronological order, identifying where possible place of origin (pp. 42-468). Appendix 1 lists Masters of the Guild, and Appendix 2, prints the particularly detailed and instructive will of Thomas Handys, a London mercer and son of a former Master of the Guild, dated 7 August 1502, among whose bequests are contributions towards the enlargement of the then newly-built but still surviving Almshouses owned by the Guild. As is essential with such a work, very full indexes of Persons, Places and Occupations have been prepared (pp. 491-583), and a short bibliography of a vast subject (pp. 486-9). Readers can thus easily pursue their own interests: a minstrel, John Dunweddyr, alias Crabbe, and his wife, from Stratford in 1452-53 attracted this reviewer's attention, but one who could well have had a more intriguing song to sing to Ricardians was John Merdley, minstrel from Loughborough, a rare East Midlander in the register, enrolled in 1484-85! Surprisingly the list of Abbreviations used for notes in the Introduction is found on the unnumbered p. 485, and in the copy sent to me a few pages are marred by smudging as sheets left the press. Otherwise, the editor and The Dugdale Society are to be congratulated on making a fascinating medieval prosopographical and toponymic record available which will serve a wide readership indeed for the extraordinarily rich range of evidence it provides for one of the best documented and powerful of medieval guilds.

MICHAEL JONES

ELEANOR THE SECRET QUEEN: The Woman Who Put Richard III on the Throne. John Ashdown-Hill. 2009. The History Press, Stroud, £25.

ISBN 978-0-7524-4866-4

Both the author and his interest in the life and marriage history of Lady Eleanor Talbot are well known to readers of *The Ricardian* and of the *Ricardian Bulletin*. *Eleanor the Secret Queen* not only brings together much of the work that John Ashdown-Hill has already published in several articles but also adds to it considerably, not least in providing a conjectural likeness of the lady herself. In this picture, and in the text, the somewhat shadowy figure of Eleanor Talbot is brought into the light of day, and, as is apparent from the title, some rather bold claims are made on her behalf. The opening sentence, for example, states that she was 'the rock upon which the royal house of York foundered' and much of what follows seeks to prove this.

The first half of the book establishes Eleanor's aristocratic credentials and suggests the nature of her upbringing. As few contemporary records relating to

her childhood have survived, relevant parallels are drawn with and through records of other families and households. The careers of her father, John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, her father-in-law, Ralph Butler, Lord Sudeley, and her first husband, Thomas Butler, and, perhaps more importantly, the character and actions of her mother, Margaret, Countess of Shrewsbury, are expounded in detail; indeed much is made of Margaret's tenacious, but ultimately unsuccessful, efforts to secure her alleged Berkeley inheritance. The scant details of Eleanor's first marriage are fleshed out, although much of Chapter 10, 'Married Life', deals with her mother's activities. Of Eleanor's actual relationship with Edward IV virtually nothing is known, but various plausible suggestions are made regarding 'the fateful encounter' (p. 101) that initially brought them together sometime in the summer of 1460 or early in 1461. Ashdown-Hill then discusses the secret marriage contracted between the two in the presence of Robert Stillington, soon to be appointed bishop of Bath and Wells. While readily admitting that the sources are not 'precisely contemporary with the event' (p. 103), he argues that 'it is reasonable to accept that such a marriage existed' (p.104). He considers the role and later career of Stillington, including the possible significance of his episcopal appointment, but the credibility of Commynes's account, written c.1490, of the event at which Stillington officiated is not questioned. It seems surprising that when Edward's subsequent secret nuptials with Elizabeth Woodville became public knowledge, Eleanor did not speak out, especially as she had witnessed the belligerent efforts of her mother to obtain her rights. She could have appealed to the church courts to uphold her marriage (there were precedents) but the author argues that she dared not cite the king for by so doing 'she may have been putting her life in jeopardy' (p. 115). Instead, she remained silent and probably retreated into the household of her sister, Elizabeth, Duchess of Norfolk, at East Hall, near Kenninghall.

Eleanor was a devout woman. During the 1460s she endowed Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, with a priest-fellowship. She also seems to have entered into a form of religious life as a Carmelite tertiary, a mode of living that is considered in detail in Chapter 15. She died in June 1468 and was buried in the choir of the Carmelite priory church in Norwich, of which now almost nothing remains above ground. Twenty medieval women of high social status are known to have been buried in that church. A medieval female skeleton found on the site in 1958 was examined in 1996. In the light of the findings of this examination, of information concerning the other nineteen women, and of the examination of the dentition of the skull of Anne Mowbray (Eleanor's niece) and of the skull of this skeleton, Ashdown-Hill has tentatively, and fairly convincingly, concluded that it could be that of Eleanor Talbot.

Appended material includes various illustrations; several family trees; a 'Summary of Key Events'; a summary of the documentary evidence, including

nine extracts and five full transcripts; an assessment of the representations of Eleanor in fiction; and a discussion of various definitions of a 'lady'.

As the biography of a late medieval lady about whom little had been published previously, this is a well-researched book, in which the author has taken great pains to assemble all of the known evidence about the subject and also other evidence that provides parallels with her life and situation and thus fills the lacunae. Inevitably there is rather lot of speculation about her movements, her activities and also her feelings, but most of this is plausible. Whether the bold claim in the title is equally credible is more doubtful since the reliability of the 'evidence' for that is not tested. For example, statements made in the so-called *Titulus Regius*, the Act of Parliament of January 1484 that set out Richard III's justification for assuming power, are taken as gospel truth. No mention is made of Rosemary Horrox's reassessment of its contents, particularly that they were not the same as those of the petition presented to Richard, as duke of Gloucester, in June 1483. (R. Horrox, *Richard III: A Study in Service*, pp. 118-19.) This is not to say that there was no marriage but that Richard's assumption of power did not rely exclusively on it: it was one excuse among many, not the sole reason. And surely the 'rock' on which the royal house of York foundered was a weapon wielded on a field somewhere near Bosworth?

HEATHER FALVEY

THE WORLD OF THE MEDIEVAL SHIPMASTER: Law, Business and the Sea, c. 1350-1450. Robin Ward. 2009. The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, £50.
ISBN 978-1-84383-455-7

Much has been written about medieval ships but the work of those who were responsible for sailing them has hitherto been largely unexplored. This masterly study redresses the balance. Although it has a notional end date of 1450 it has examples from the Yorkist period, drawn particularly from the Cely family. It is themed around the different skills a mariner needed to become a master. Alone, in partnership or as an employee he had to negotiate for cargo at profitable freight rates, victual and maintain his ship, recruit and manage the crew and navigate in all weathers unmarked seas, while at the same time being cognisant of maritime law. For all this there was no formal system of apprenticeship and a would-be master learned his trade on the job.

Ward sets the scene by dealing with Northern European maritime law which was largely based on the Lex d' Oleron, modified in England by articles resulting from the Inquisition of Queensborough, 1375. Throughout the first half of the fifteenth century, the admirals' courts dealt with cases concerning

maritime discipline and seamanship, while special 'conservators of truces' were appointed in various ports to handle piracy cases, and commercial disputes went largely to common law or merchant law courts. In the early medieval period, most shipmasters owned their ship, but gradually many ships came to be owned by merchants, either individually or as a group, who hired a professional master; these ships could be used to freight the merchants' own goods or could be put out to charter for a specific period or voyage. It was rare before the mid fifteenth century for shipowning to be seen purely as an investment with no mercantile interest.

Before he put to sea, a master had to find a cargo, sign freight agreements agreeing rates and payment, responsibility for risk, timings, pilotage and cargo-handling, sometimes in a foreign language, often involving different currencies, handle customs and keep a record of his transactions. For each 100 tons of ship, approximately thirty men were required to sail her. The *Lex d'Oleron* specified to some extent the sanctions the master had over his crew and there seems to have been some degree of democracy over which of a variety of punishments was inflicted in any given case. It also noted in some detail the duty of care owed to sick or injured crew. Accommodation was spartan; the officers, passengers and merchants shippers were housed in the after parts of the ship, in the stern castle or below the quarter deck, but the crew had no specific quarters and slept on deck or in the hold. Despite this, their health and rations were probably no worse than those of their peers at home.

By the mid fifteenth century, navigation, which had once been reliant on mariners' five senses and thus limited voyages to inshore, had advanced to the use of instruments: sand-glasses to measure time, magnetic compasses, instruments to measure astral heights and derive latitude. Speed could be calculated using a sand-glass and a log attached to a line knotted evenly; the length of line pulled out in a specific time equalled the ship's speed. There were also an increasing number of written sailing instructions known as rutters available, though these did not much decrease the need for local pilots. As Ward points out, the late medieval ship was the most complex of contemporary machinery. The late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries saw the introduction of carvels into northern European waters from the Mediterranean. These ships had their planking laid edge to edge rather than each overlapping the one below in clinker fashion, an innovation which increased the ship's speed. At the same time the addition of fore and mizzen masts enlarged the area of sail which could be carried and likewise enhanced performance. These designs and developments have attracted much scholarly attention but Ward, both a scholar and a sailor, has illuminated the increased skills required of the mariners who sailed the ships and, more particularly, the masters who were responsible for them. The book benefits from a number of black and white illustrations, but the index is certainly not comprehensive as far as personal names are concerned and

lax copy-editing allowed cross references to remain as pp.000-000 in more than one place.

ANNE CRAWFORD

IMAGE, TEXT AND CHURCH, 1380-1600. Essays for Margaret Aston. Edited by Linda Clark, Maureen Jurkowski and Colin Richmond. 2009. Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto, Papers in Mediaeval Studies 20, \$90.

ISBN 978-0-88844-820-0

The distinguished and prolific contributions of Margaret Aston to several fields of late medieval and early modern studies needs little introduction here. Beginning with several ground-breaking studies of Lollardy, its adherents and sedition, *Thomas Arundel: A study of church life in the reign of Richard II* (1967), and her very exciting survey *The Fifteenth Century: The Prospect of Europe* (1968), she has continued to the present to inform and illuminate by her meticulous researches and acute analysis not only of literary and archival sources, but especially by her largely unrivalled mastery of iconographical evidence for ecclesiastical and social history drawn from manuscript and early printed sources as well as from standing buildings and monuments. The present volume contains eleven substantive papers first presented at a one-day conference held in March 2008 to celebrate part of this achievement, together with an Introduction, briefly reviewing Dr Aston's *oeuvre* and explaining the current volume, together with a typically quirky though felicitous and affectionate appreciation by Colin Richmond not only of her own writings but of her generosity in sharing her work and enthusiasms with so many scholars. The day was clearly a remarkably full and successful one. Three major and interrelated themes stand out: Wyclif and various responses to his writings and thought, different aspects of late medieval and early modern church government and reform (frequently approached via biographical studies), and consideration of literary, codicological and graphic evidence for individual religious beliefs and theological ideas, reflecting very closely the diversity of Margaret Aston's own interests. This is most easily exemplified by a brief resumé of contents.

Anne Hudson, 'Wyclif's Books', poses straightforward questions with difficult-to-find answers about where Wyclif could have read the various authorities he cites and seeks to identify surviving manuscripts that he may have used, concluding that this was mainly in the libraries of Balliol, Merton and Queen's, the Oxford colleges he was most closely associated with during his career, but also perhaps more surprisingly, given his antipathy towards mendicants, he apparently consulted Robert Grosseteste's works in the library of the Franciscans convent: a fascinating piece of detection work! A Cambridge manuscript, Corpus Christi

College MS 32 'De Glose in Englyssche Tunge' with accompanying illustrations (once sniffily dismissed by M.R. James as 'rude') is informatively analysed by Ann Eljenholm Nichols who suggests the glosses were written for lay devotional use and shows how carefully text and drawings are integrated. Alison McHardy then contributes a very well-documented account of the career of 'John Scarle: Ambition and Politics in the Late Medieval Church', explaining how this chancery clerk, who rose in the service of Thomas Arundel, became chancellor of England under Henry IV. A full and intriguing picture is drawn of the various networks to which he belonged, whilst a good case is advanced for Scarle's part in providing some material for that very important source on Richard II, the *Westminster Chronicle*. Jeremy Catto, 'Shaping the Mixed Life: Thomas Arundel's Reformation', then makes a convincing case for considering Arundel himself as a more important reformer and devotional thinker than has hitherto been accepted. Maureen Jurkowski, 'The Career of Robert Herlaston, Lollard Preacher', provides readers with the very contrasting story of an obscure Staffordshire priest whom she has been able to trace over thirty-six years from a chaplaincy at Tamworth College until he was sentenced to life imprisonment for his heterodox views in 1428. Norman Tanner then briefly analyses the condemnation of Wyclif's teachings by the Council of Constance, the most detailed such condemnation of a named heresiarch's views by any late medieval or Reformation church council. 'Defamation, Heresy and Late Medieval Social Life' is the subject of a wide-ranging discussion by Ian Forrest, highlighting the Kafkaesque complexities of defining and prosecuting defamation (when, for instance, a person alleging a charge of defamation, might in turn be deemed a defamer). The analysis is usefully brought into focus by case studies of even obscurer figures than Robert Herlaston, who had run foul of the authorities and their neighbours after 1450. Richard Marks, in a very well-illustrated account of 'Picturing Word and Text in the Late Medieval Parish Church' shows that painted texts had long been displayed in parish churches (not only in mural paintings but as free-hanging parchment notices or tablets or as inscriptions on or accompanying tomb monuments) and that many of them had also for long been in the vernacular. Elizabeth Eisenstein's 'Seeing Images and Hearing Texts: Modes of Worship in Early Modern England' draws attention to a division of opinion among church authorities in which Catholics tended to emphasise the importance of orality and hearing, whilst Protestants favoured writing and sight as means of transmitting religious truths in the early Reformation. In 'Conformed and Reformed: John Colet and His Reformation Reputation', Andrew Hope provides a very full, revisionist account of Colet's thinking and influence. Finally, John Bossy analyses 'The Devotional Compositions of Lord Henry Howard, 1584-1596' casting light on an area of Elizabethan noble culture that has received little previous attention.

As readers will deduce from this summary, the amount of material

directly relating to Richard III and his age in the volume is small (neither Richard himself, Edward IV, Edward V, Henry VII nor the Wars of the Roses appear in the index: Richard II, Henry IV and Henry V, even Henry VIII, are much more prominent). But for acute commentary on how church and state inter-acted in late medieval and early modern England and how ordinary people's lives were affected by the opinions of academics, decisions of government or religious trends, this collection provides much that is informative and instructive. The main context is obviously an English one, but wider perspectives can be glimpsed, starting of course with Wyclif and those influenced by his writings whether at Prague or Constance, whilst the continental dimension of early Tudor history requires little comment though it is worth recording how far our understanding of this owes much to Margaret Aston's own distinctive contributions.

MICHAEL JONES

PARLIAMENTARIANS AT LAW. Select Legal Proceedings of the Long Fifteenth Century Relating to Parliament. Edited Hannes Kleineke. 2008. Parliamentary History Texts and Studies Series, 2. Wiley-Blackwell, Oxford, £27.99. ISBN 978-1-4051-8013-9

As Dr Kleineke remarks in his introduction, little is known of the transactions of medieval parliaments beyond the formal and formulaic record of the parliament roll. This volume is an attempt to supplement this picture, although the new details revealed relate only to the margins of the canvas. This is necessarily so, for even a trawling of the records as energetic as that conducted by Dr. Kleineke can do no more. The new discoveries relate to matters tangential to parliament's central business and, as they are largely drawn from the voluminous records of the central courts, chiefly concern the relationship between the common law and 'the privileges of parliament', that is, the freedom of MPs from arrest during parliamentary sessions, the right of communities to choose their MPs freely, and the entitlement of MPs to the payment of wages charged on their communities. From the second half of the sixteenth century such matters were to be governed by the Commons themselves, but, in the period of concern here, they were largely regulated by statute and pleaded in the courts of common law.

The least familiar of the documents presented here are the writs, extracted from the under-exploited *recorda* files of the court of king's bench (KB 145), which illustrate the practical operation of the privilege of freedom of arrest for Lords, Commons and those who attended them at time of parliament. This privilege was based on what was, in practical terms, a fiction, namely that the business of parliament would be impeded if members were arrested. The beneficiaries were

not crown and realm, but rather individual MPs, and this explains why the crown (and perhaps more particularly the judges) proved lukewarm to its statutory embodiment. It also explains why significant limitations attached to the privilege: it did not cover arrest for treason, felony or for surety of the peace or even, as Chief Justice Fortescue made clear in the famous case of the arrest of Speaker Thorpe in 1453, offences for which an MP or servant had been condemned before Parliament. None the less, the privilege evolved in the late fifteenth century in a way that was favourable to MPs. In Edward IV's reign it came to extend to the freedom not only from arrest but also from being impleaded. Dr Kleineke suggests that this might have owed something to the initiative of Thomas Ive, clerk of the crown in chancery from 1449 to 1481. He notes that the privilege writs issued by him from 1461 differ from those issued by his fellow chancery clerks in laying claim to the additional freedom from being sued. The judges, consistent with the earlier hostile attitude, disallowed these writs until 1478, when the crown's favourable response to a common petition recognised the extended privilege. The suggestion of Ive's initiative is an interesting one, providing another possible illustration of the influence of chancery clerks on legal developments to parallel Professor Biancalana's demonstration that it was they who, seemingly at their own initiative, extended the reach of the writ of *formedon*.

More vivid than these arrest writs are the documents relating to parliamentary elections. Although most of these are familiar from earlier work, it is valuable to have their complete and accurate texts gathered together. Of the editor's new discoveries, the most interesting is a case brought in the exchequer of pleas in May 1379. Sir John Strecche claimed that Sir John de la Mare, as sheriff, had informed him of his election for Dorset to the parliament which had met at Gloucester in the previous October, but, on his arrival at the assembly, he discovered that the sheriff had returned Sir Thomas Hungerford in his place. The sheriff replied that he had given Strecche warning not to travel after the crown had commanded him to return Hungerford. Such evidence of the government's direct intervention in elections is rare, and it is interesting that this example should have come from a period of royal minority. The basis of Strecche's action is also significant. Since no statute yet regulated parliamentary elections, he could not sue the sheriff on any statute, and had simply to claim damages for the cost of a needless journey to parliament. This, however, is the only case presented by Dr Kleineke that does not relate to the electoral statutes passed between 1406 and 1445. These statutes were important in that they defined the form of elections and the method by which the results should be returned into Chancery. Yet, in one respect, their impact was limited: the system they instituted for investigating complaints against sheriffs, whether by inquiry by the justices of assize or, under the terms of the 1445 statute, at the suit of party, was too slow to set aside false

returns. Inquiries were not held nor personal actions sued until after the dissolution of the parliament to which the allegedly false return had been made. The effect of the statutes was thus punitive not restorative, simply imposing financial penalties on allegedly defaulting officials without remedying the harm done by their actions.

A selection of documents concerning disputes over parliamentary wages are printed in full in the third section of the volume, supplemented by a calendar of all the cases that the editor has unearthed, almost exclusively from the surviving records of the exchequer of pleas. These clearly show that such disputes were not generally provoked by a simple refusal on the part of the sheriff to pay, and this, in turn, implies that the process by which wages were raised (embodied in the statute of 1445 which appears merely to have codified existing practice) generally worked efficiently. Disputes arose rather from structural failings, unique to a particular county at a particular time, and that county was most often Cambridgeshire, where the men of the bishop of Ely's liberty routinely resisted the demand that they pay one third of the wages due. The problem proved intractable until 1431, when the liberty's inhabitants of the isle agreed to pay £200 to purge any future demand against them. Disputes over borough wages were different in that they generally turned on whether the MPs had accepted election on the condition that they serve for a flat fee (or a reduced daily wage) rather than the standard burgess rate of 2s a day.

This is a valuable collection of documents, the standard of editing remorselessly high, and the editor, particularly in respect of wages cases, has left little for others to find. It is perhaps unfair to ask that he should have given us more, but there are omissions, notably some of the material relating to disputed elections to be drawn from the parliamentary returns (C 219). That concerning the Huntingdonshire election of 1450 and the Shrewsbury election of 1478 is already in print, but it would have been useful to have had the Shaftesbury 1384 material, when, as sheriff of Dorset, Strecche, perhaps in reaction to his setting aside in 1378, allegedly disregarded the election of one Shaftesbury MP on the grounds that the MP would act in the Commons to the king's advantage. It would, however, be wrong to end on a negative note: this volume is, in the best sense, a work of old-fashioned scholarship centred on records rather than theories.

S.J. PAYLING

DESIGN AND DISTRIBUTION OF LATE MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPTS IN ENGLAND. Edited by Margaret Connolly and Linne R. Mooney. 2008. York Medieval Press in association with The Boydell Press, an imprint of Boydell & Brewer Ltd, Woodbridge, Suffolk, £60.00. ISBN 978-903153-24-6

This volume, based around a number of papers given at the 2005 York Manuscripts Conference, although thematically cohesive, contains a sufficient variety of

materials and approaches to satisfy the most catholic of tastes. There is a balance between the secular and religious texts represented (six essays concern themselves with devotional and practical religious matters), and the book is divided into two principal sections, thus reflecting its title. The first section, on the design of manuscripts, is further divided, since the first three papers are concerned exclusively with Chaucer manuscripts.

These three are, perhaps, the most challenging of the essays to read, though in summary their theses are plain. Daniel W. Mosser, by taking as his starting point Linne Mooney's identification of Adam Pynkhurst as the scribe of the Hengwrt and Ellesmere codices of the *Canterbury Tales*, and Kathleen Scott's re-dating of their decoration, suggests that Hengwrt (Hg), the earliest surviving copy, was 'the first real attempt to arrange the tales and groups of tales into a coherent whole' (p. 36), an argument with which it is difficult to find fault. He further proposes, however, that if the project was begun when Chaucer was alive, and under his supervision, it was completed after his death. He also suggests, more contentiously, that the Supplementary Hand F in Hg is that of Hoccleve, and that Supplementary Hand B may be that of Chaucer himself (p. 38), an intriguing theory, if one that is impossible to prove. Jacob Thiesen, meanwhile, 'revisits' two *Canterbury Tales* manuscripts copied by Scribe D (in the nomenclature of Ian Doyle and Malcolm Parkes) of the Trinity College Cambridge copy of Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, MS R.3.2, namely Oxford, Corpus Christi College MS 198 and London, British Library MS Harley 7334. This is a linguistic study, but the most striking point to emerge is that the tale of *Gamelyn*, associated with many Chaucer manuscripts, but not generally considered to be by him, may after all be so attributed. He suggests that codices not copied by Pynkhurst but which contain authoritative material not present in his work are an important source in arriving 'at a more complete picture of the composition and early scribal transmission of the poem' (p. 60). This section concludes with Takako Kato's scrupulous examination of the scribe's correction of his mistakes in Cambridge University Library MS Gg.4.27, concluding that he copied by memorising one line at a time; that some mistakes occurred during the process of 'translating' from his own dialect; and that he was careless, in reality understanding the meaning of what he was copying. Kato's is the most accessible of these three pieces on Chaucer.

The second section of the first part, by Sherry L. Reames, opens up the range of manuscripts considered, asking how standardised the lessons for Saints' Days in the Sarum usage were. By looking at eleven such days, she has discovered 'more than a dozen different textual families' (p. 92) and found that standardisation, or reform, of the lessons, which placed emphasis on Biblical and patristic, rather than hagiographic sources, was probably complete by about 1390, and was intended to aid busy priests in their round of duties which extended beyond the conducting of services (pp. 117, 105). The following paper, by Amelia Grounds,

is a painstaking and interesting analysis of the Pavement, or Pulleyn Hours, now York Minster MS XVI .K .6, dating from c.1420, demonstrating how the original hierarchical programme of decoration which served to emphasise, for example, Christ's Passion, was supplemented with single illuminations sewn onto the tops of pages. The fact that these pictures range in date from c.1240 to the late fifteenth century (the instance of the latter being a tinted woodcut) encourages Grounds to speculate about the nature of the trade in such images, probably in York itself, and she suggests a plausible range of scenarios by which a customer could obtain them. Alexandra Barratt's study also shows how owners could customise their personal devotions, albeit in a different context. London, British Library MS 494 and Lambeth Palace MS 3600 are both examples of the *peces privatae*, or private prayer books, associated with the Bridgettine order. The former, whose principal scribe was Robert Taylor, Clerk of Works at Syon in the early sixteenth century, was owned by Anne Bulkeley (née Poyntz), born c.1470, who was 'fully literate in the vernacular and in the spiritual life' (p. 151). Lambeth, on the other hand, may have been copied by the Bridgettine nun for whose use it was designed: there is a greater preponderance of Latin than in Harley, although the two books share several of the same items. There are two useful appendices detailing the contents of the books, and altogether this essay offers a fascinating insight into female piety at the end of the Middle Ages. Julian M. Luxford's paper concerns the copy of the so-called Founders' Book of Tewkesbury Abbey, London, British Library Additional MS 36985, and its form of 'reproduction' (Jonathan Alexander's term). What is of interest here is the way in which the (uncompleted) text is made to look like a printed book from the late-sixteenth century, in its use of italic script, grotesque initials and drawings which are intended to resemble woodcuts. Its possible sponsorship is explored, but what remains of interest is the delineation of taste in 'refashioning' a late-medieval text.

Linne Mooney opens the second part of the volume with a comprehensive and useful survey of what is known of the location and professional affiliations of metropolitan scribes, reminding us that many such were not citizens of London and were often aliens, and that there were many places, from Westminster Abbey to the suburbs of extra-parochial liberties, where they could practise their craft, free from the constrictions of City regulations. Michael Sargent's contribution uses statistics to assess the chronology of book production of a number of works from the Wycliffite Bible to poems by Chaucer and Langland, thus arriving at an overview of peaks in market demand and, ultimately, by using cumulative data of production, to estimate when market saturation was reached. The essay opens up many lines of enquiry, not least that of the rationale behind the early printing of various texts. The next two essays, by John J. Thompson and Margaret Connolly, are closely linked, in that both use the concept of 'cultural mapping' (first proposed

by the late Elizabeth Salter) to examine the geographical and socio-economic distribution of the Middle English prose *Brut* and the *Contemplations of the Dread and Love of God*. Thompson shows how the *English* history interested those at the geographical peripheries of Wales, Ireland and Scotland and how it resonated through the centuries to the Act of Union with Scotland in 1707. Connolly maps the surviving numbers of the *Contemplations* (both complete and extracted texts), showing their especial appeal, according to inscriptions, amongst female religious houses, despite the text having been designed also for lay consumption. She puts this absence of evidence of lay ownership down to a reluctance to proclaim such ownership following Archbishop Arundel's *Constitutions* of 1409, but she also points out that some names need to be followed up. Another desideratum is a comprehensive dialectal study of the many manuscripts. A timeline for production of the extant texts forms an invaluable appendix.

The last two papers continue the theme of mapping although Ralph Hanna deftly uses a dialectal study of roughly half of the surviving texts of the critically neglected *Speculum Vitae* to demonstrate how it circulated in the North of England, having established that it was composed within 'a large rectangle covering the Vale of York from Wakefield area north into southern areas of the central North Riding' (p. 283). He concludes by putting forward the theory that the translation (of Lorens of Orlean's *Somme le Roi*) could have originated either in the Cistercian house of Jervaulx or at the Premonstratensian foundation of Coverham. His edition of the text for the Early English Text Society is much appreciated. George R. Keiser, in closing the volume, looks at the herbal in London, British Library MS Sloane 5, translated in part from the Latin of Macer by John Lelamour, probably master of Hereford Cathedral Grammar School. The discussion then broadens, offering glimpses into this other little-known area of medieval concern, covering issues of ownership of Sloane and other herbals (socially broad in its spectrum) and the apparatus gradually adopted in their manuscripts to make them more user-friendly.

All in all this volume provides a thoroughly satisfying read and one in which, perhaps unusually, the essays are of a consistently high standard – testimony to the judgement of the editors. It will be down to the individual reader to choose which essay(s) are of the greatest merit or interest. Finally, it should be said that the production values are high (which might reasonably be expected in a book of this price): from the dust-jacket, showing an illustration from a manuscript in the Huntington Library in California, to the initial letters of each chapter, imitating woodcuts, to the quality of the paper, the collection is a pleasure to handle and to look at.

CAROL M. MEALE

THE HERALD IN LATE MEDIEVAL EUROPE. Edited by Katie Stevenson.
2009. The Boydell Press, Woodbridge. £50. ISBN 978-1-84383-482-3

When Werner Paravicini, arguably the most prolific late-medieval historian alive, wrote his opening article for a special issue on heralds in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries for the *Revue du Nord* (vol. 88, no. 366-367, July-Dec. 2006) he listed seven areas in which more research on medieval heralds is needed: 1. basic sources, 2. chronology, 3. geography, 4. prosopography, 5. institutionalisation, 6. comparison and 7. function. He also emphasised that much of what we know, or think we know, about heralds still depended on the more or less amateurish work of *curieux, antiquaires et dilettantes* and claimed that the conference on heraldry held at Lille in 2005, of which the papers in the *Revue du Nord* were the result, was the first of its kind.

Much has happened since and the present book, which is the result of a late-night conversation in the bar of Merton College, Oxford, during the Fifteenth Century Conference of September 2006, is a good example of the progress that has been made. In her valuable introduction the editor touches on the many roles shared by heralds everywhere and the development of their office all over Europe, for example their rise in the fourteenth, flowering in the fifteenth and decline in the sixteenth century, even though the details of their circumstances and *raisons d'être* differed. For eastern and northern Europe the scarcity of sources is a common theme and the influence of the sometimes rather imaginative writings of earlier scholars, referred to by Paravicini, is also pointed out.

Jackson W. Armstrong, in his 'Development of the office of arms in England, c.1413-1485', maps out the road to institutionalisation of English heralds and considers the position of the office in the context of royal authority, the role of the gentry (a very English concept) and status generally in the fifteenth century. He quotes some of the literature of chivalric theory which shaped opinion on, for example, the question whether a man could assume arms on his own initiative, whether heralds held such power or only the prince. Closely related and still focussed on England is Adrian Ailes, 'Ancient precedent or Tudor fiction? Garter King of Arms and the pronouncements of Thomas, Duke of Clarence', which takes as its starting point the 1530 dispute between Garter (Thomas Wriothesley) and Clarenceux (Thomas Benolt) Kings of Arms concerning their spheres of influence. It involved some early examples of imaginative interpretation of sources, in this case of documents issued by Henry V's brother, Thomas, Duke of Clarence, in 1417, which are here meticulously disentangled. Two were specific and may well be authentic, the third is fundamental to the office of arms, but was probably a re-edition of the ordinances of Richard III made up to boost the position of Garter in 1511-21. A further document was used in the dispute, also

dated to the reign of Henry V, which may or may not be genuine, but is certainly a clever and competent concoction if it is not.

Chapter 4 sallies forth into several of Paravicini's required areas: Katie Stevenson's 'Jurisdiction, authority and professionalisation: the officers of arms of late medieval Scotland', tackles an understudied region, lays bare the anachronisms of ancient scholarship – especially about Lyon King of Arms – and examines the wide range of functions that the Scots heralds performed, 'legal, political, symbolic and diplomatic, as well as armorial'. Similarly Michael Jones in his 'The March of Brittany and its heralds in the later Middle Ages', deals with a relatively neglected area – except by the author himself – which also suffers from a scarcity of source material. In its fifteenth-century heyday under Duke Francis II, Brittany had as many as forty heraldic officers, though many did not exist for long and the duchy's absorption into the kingdom of France in 1491 led to the disappearance of almost all of them.

Even less well-known territory is covered by Franck Viltart and Henri Simonneau, 'City heralds in the Burgundian Low Countries', which shows that twelve cities in the lands of the dukes of Burgundy had their own heralds, most famous among them *Franquevie* of Valenciennes and *Espinette* of Lille. Their main role was to supervise the urban jousting competitions of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, but they also performed diplomatic duties and can be associated with the *phys* and chambers of rhetoric which flourished at the same time. Their existence was accepted and supported by the dukes, who sometimes used their services. Wim van Anrooy recapitulates all that is known about the 'King of Arms of the Ruwieren' (or *ruyers*), an officer of arms of the Empire, but nominated by the duke of Brabant as titular duke of Lorraine, and whose name appears to refer to the region between the two 'rivers', Rhine and Meuse. In the fifteenth century he was seen as the German counterpart of the French King of Arms of the 'Poyers'. Several famous kings of arms of the Ruwieren and their many heraldic writings are discussed in detail.

Another city herald is the subject of Laura Cirri's 'Heraldry, heralds and politics in the republic of Florence in the late middle ages'. She gives a brief survey of the political situation in Florence and other Tuscan cities at the time and shows that Florence itself had only one herald throughout most of the fifteenth century: Francesco Filarete, whose function was mainly that of master of ceremonies and as such he was also the symbol of Florence's civic identity. His surviving written work contains descriptions of princely entries into the city.

More 'undiscovered countries' are explored by Bogdan Brzustowicz and Katie Stevenson, 'Tournaments, heraldry and heralds in the kingdom of Poland in the late middle ages', and by Alexia Grosjean, 'A time when "fools and dwarfs were highly esteemed"? Seeking the late medieval Scandinavian herald'. Silesia,

its chivalric culture and the tournaments held there influenced Poland, as did the Teutonic Order, which had its own heralds, but the Polish royal court itself also had 'a thriving heraldic community'. The heralds' role was very similar to that of their western counterparts: organising the festivities at court, overseeing tournaments, in which only armigerous knights were allowed to take part, and domestic and foreign diplomacy. Curiously all officers of arms seemed to have disappeared from Poland by the mid-fifteenth century. In Scandinavia, or more exactly the lands of the Kalmar Union of 1397 (Denmark, Sweden and Norway) ruled from its Copenhagen-based monarchy, there was no formal heraldic hierarchy and no heraldic writings survive. Their role appears to have been the same as elsewhere, but lack of evidence makes this uncertain. Many Scots served as officers of arms and several brief biographies of Scotsmen and others are included.

There are four colour and twelve black and white illustrations and a short index of people and places. Generally this is a very satisfactory and interesting collection that contains a vast amount of information, in its text as well as its footnotes.

LIVIA VISSER-FUCHS

THE PRIOR OF THE KNIGHTS HOSPITALER IN LATE MEDIEVAL ENGLAND. Simon Phillips. 2009. The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, £50.00 (hbk). ISBN 978-1-84383-437-3

Among the most evocative contemporary images of the Wars of the Roses are those found in several Flemish manuscripts of the 1470s and 1480s which depict the executions of the defeated Lancastrians after the battle of Tewkesbury (e.g. Ghent, Universiteitsbibliotheek MS 236, f. 7v; Besançon, Bibliothèque Municipale MS 1168, f. 6v, illustrated and discussed in L. Visser-Fuchs, 'Edward IV's Memoir on Paper to Charles, Duke of Burgundy: the so-called "Short Version of the Arrivall"', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, vol. 36 (1992), pp. 197-200.) Among the scenes illustrated is the execution of Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, who is shown kneeling ready for the blow of the headsman's axe. Behind him, waiting to take his turn on the block, stands John Langstrother, Prior of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem in England, a reminder of the degree to which this cleric had allowed himself to be drawn into the politics of his day. Langstrother was not the first prior to play his part in English political life, nor was he to be the last, and it is this aspect of the careers of successive priors that Simon Phillips's book explores.

The discussion draws upon an extensive cross-section of the records of the English government over a period of some 250 years, an archive that, as Philipps rightly points out, has been neglected by many students of the Knights Hospitallers

who have concentrated on the international role of the order, rather than the place of its individual officers in the political life of the emerging nation states of western Europe. In England successive priors became particularly active in four areas of public life, to each of which the author devotes one of the book's five thematic chapters. Hospitaller priors served as members of the king's council and were summoned to parliament; they served the crown as ambassadors to foreign princes and took care of relations with foreign envoys to England; they had a part to play in the defence of the realm; and finally, they had some involvement in royal finance, which saw a select few take office as treasurers of England. The title of the fifth chapter of the book rather confusingly refers to the 'secularisation of the order' in England, when what is discussed is really the process of the leasing of the order's lands to lay tenants.

The author's critique of the work of other scholars is somewhat strident, and is thus oddly out of keeping with his rather more limited, if interesting, findings. The English public records contain useful evidence of royal appointments and the collection and disbursement of the crown's revenues, but are of rather less use for establishing the motivations or perspectives of individual office holders. These the historian needs to extrapolate from the context of particular appointments and the appointees' careers, and it is precisely such a context that Phillips's rigid focus on the bilateral relationship of the prior and the English crown leads him to neglect. A clearer account of the political circumstances affecting the order of St John in general during the period under discussion would have been helpful to the specialist in English affairs, to whom this background history is likely to be less familiar than it is to the author. Clearer comparisons, not only with the English provincial priors' counterparts in other kingdoms, but also with other English prelates and magnates would be desirable to set the role of the prior of St John in context. How did the English prior's service to the king of England compare to that of, for example, his French counterpart (who makes a brief and tantalizing appearance in the chapter on warfare) to the king of France? How did the English prior's place in the government of the realm compare to that of other members of the higher clergy or of the lay peerage? Did the prior as part of a military order differ from other spiritual magnates in what was expected of him in warfare? How did he compare to other prelates of martial disposition, such as the crusading Bishop Despensers of Norwich, or Dean Worsley of St Paul's who joined Edward IV's expedition to Scotland in 1481? In an era of personal government by the monarch, did proximity (or otherwise) to successive monarchs determine a particular prior's role in royal service? We know that Edward IV visited the priory of St John at Clerkenwell in August 1463, March and April 1464, and October 1477, while Richard III was there in March 1485. Were other kings more frequent guests at the prior's table?

Where such comparative detail is provided, particularly in the chapter on the

prior's place in parliament and the king's council, the book is at its strongest. Elsewhere, its argument is at times undermined by the author's incomplete understanding of the workings of late medieval English government and a less than rigorous methodology. This is particularly evident in the chapter devoted to the prior's role in royal finance. One of Philipps's themes is the abuse of the treasurership of England for personal gain. It is not clear what evidence of such abuses he expects to find in the issue rolls of the exchequer. The accounting system of the late medieval English administration relied on a complex system of tallies, written warrants, discharges and acquittances which had to be produced at audit, and it is unlikely that abuses of office by a treasurer of England (often, as Philipps rightly points out, appointed to guarantee a day to day cash flow which the crown could not otherwise rely on) would be openly apparent from the issue rolls. Similarly, there are problems with Philipps's discussion of John Langstrother's conduct in office in 1469 and 1470-71. The author appears to view the prior as the driving force behind the grants and payments made, whereas he was surely little more than a principal officer executing instructions of a council dominated by Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick? In particular it is unclear what influence the treasurer could have had over the warrants for the great seal cited in evidence – these were normally issued by the keeper of the privy seal in response to a further warrant under the king's signet or sign manual, or at least engrossed with broader conciliar authorisation. Equally unfortunate is Philipps's deployment of a rudimentary form of prosopography. In the discussion of Langstrother's activity, as elsewhere, references to 'Hospitaller kin' make an appearance, a shorthand, it would appear, for anyone with a surname also found in the ranks of the order of St John, rather than being based on any detailed investigation of careers and pedigrees. The Fine Rolls do indeed contain real evidence of appointments made by the treasurer, but the choice of appointees from families one of whose members was a Hospitaller clearly had often less to do with this latter connexion than with the family's standing in the locality, or other connexions at court. Thus, there is surely nothing surprising in the appointment of a Babington to the joint escheatorship of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire (Thomas Babington was in any case reappointed after Langstrother's fall and execution), and grants of office to a Tunstall during Henry VI's Readeption surely owed more to the king's chamberlain, Sir Richard Tunstall, than to the prior's patronage of a member of his own order.

The book's shortcomings are compounded to an extent by the author's poor writing style. Philipps's prose is at best dense, at its worst impenetrable. The volume is quite clearly the result of a doctoral thesis rushed into print without time for further reflection, revision, and above all, some polishing. The reader who prevails will nevertheless find much valuable original research, as well as some good ideas and important themes, which may be developed further by others, or – indeed – in

the author's own future work.

HANNES KLEINEKE

A COMPANION TO MEDIEVAL POPULAR ROMANCE. Edited by Raluca L. Radulescu and Cory James Rushton. 2009. D.S. Brewer, and imprint of Boydell and Brewer, Woodbridge, £50. ISBN 978-1-84384-192-0

Omitting the word 'English' in the title of this book was presumably a conscious decision, but it must be said immediately that even the accessible and informative contributions by Ad Putter and Karl Reichl focus almost solely on Middle *English* romances. Secondly, there is no doubt that the essays in this 'companion' are by experts in their field, but unfortunately some feel constrained to prove their expertise by weighing down their sentences with the inevitable present-day jargon of literary criticism and sociology, some pack their papers with so many unexplained titles and other insider information that to many a non-expert this book will hardly serve as a 'companion'.

After an introduction by the editors, explaining that the present book aims to fill a ('perceived') gap and provides 'comprehensive reviews of the state of play in the field', Rosalind Field, in 'Popular romance: the material and the problems' explains the double meaning of 'popular' (much read, not sophisticated) and looks at a selection of romances and the reasons for their popularity; she concludes that they tend to deal with basic aspects of human life, such as getting born, finding a mate and facing danger, and that gave them their enduring quality.

'Genre and classification' are discussed by Raluca Radulescu; she has to conclude that medieval popular romance has a 'chameleonic nature', 'always on the verge of becoming something else'. This paper contains sweeping statements which one would like to quarrel with, such as: 'Medieval audiences who could afford books or the exchange of books gave precedence to religious values and cultivated the exemplary element in material used for the instruction of their offspring'. Maybe middle-class English audiences did ...? Next Maldwyn Mills and Gillian Rogers look at the surviving collections of romances in 'The manuscripts of popular romance', listing and analysing their contents and paying special attention to the mid-seventeenth-century Percy Folio Manuscript (BL Add. 27879).

Jennifer Fellows deals with 'Printed romance in the sixteenth century', and the textual relationship between the manuscripts and the printed versions. It turns out there are similarities and differences and that the changes were mostly made for the sake of updating them and making them more accessible to a new readership (just like manuscript texts had been modernised frequently over time?). Joanne Charbonneau and Désirée Cromwell in 'Gender and identity in the popular romances' explore the way in which various romances offered glimpses

of alternative social behaviour, both to women and men, within and without the family sphere: making questionable, for example, 'the notion that women are merely passive objects of male desire', and picturing infringements of the chivalric code.

In 'Middle English popular romance and national identity', Thomas Crofts and Robert Rouse look for signs of awareness of 'Englishness' in *Guy of Warwick*, *Bevis of Hampton*, and some English Charlemagne material. After a little struggle with sentences such as: 'By adhering to the binary paradigm of Christian as good and Saracen as evil, the oppositional model of identity formation produces a construction of identity that, while reductive, allows a clearer and less problematic definition of self and nation', we come to the very down-to-earth conclusion – the authors rather self-consciously call it a 'truism' – that every romance is different and should be studied individually, generalising is not much of an option.

Ad Putter's study of 'The metres and stanza forms of popular romance' comes like a breath of clarifying air, its little introduction on verse and prose putting the subject nicely into a larger context and the main part of the paper taking the reader thoroughly and entertainingly through the how and possible when and why of the rhymes and rhythms of Middle English poetry. As said above, Karl Reichl's 'Orality and performance' is also particularly informative and very clear. It deals systematically with some of the many questions concerning the transmission and performance of romances, focussing on English verse romances for a 'popular' audience. He concludes that 'reading a romance' generally meant reading it aloud to an audience, that the performer's voice played an important role, whether he was reciting, singing or reading, and that there is no real proof of transmission by memory. Also discussed are the theory of the 'hack-writer', who is blamed for the low quality of some popular texts, and the *lingua communis*, a dialectically mixed language, used by the minstrel who travelled around. 'The popular romance was meant to be orally performed, and it is as orally performed narratives that they should and can be appreciated'.

An important aspect of medieval romances in general is highlighted in 'Popular romances and young readers', by Philippa Hardman, who discusses a few so-called 'household' collections that include many texts to which Felicity Riddy's priceless phrase 'parental fantasy' can be applied. Some, for example *Guy of Warwick*, have been divided up to make them easier to follow, many emphasise the family background, childhood and education of the hero and teach practical lessons suitable for all ages, but particularly for the young. The last item, Cory James Rushton, 'Modern and academic reception of popular romance', states that 'today's popular narrative has, at its core, a deep relationship with popular medieval narrative' and looks at different views on romances as sources of historical information and the reasons for present-day interest, focussing on the role of *Sir Thopas* and *Gawain and the Green Knight*.

There is a bibliography of manuscripts (that merely lists them, not explaining what contains what), a split bibliography of primary and secondary sources and a selective index. The book's title is, I feel, misleading: 'a companion to medieval popular romance' suggests a more helpful, 'basic' text and a far wider range than is actually offered. It is for the greater part a book for specialists and one also gets the impression that the Continent did not exist at the time and produced virtually nothing in the way of popular romances (true, they were often not in verse, but they were none the less 'popular' for that). Is this a case of the usual English xeno-indifference (rather than xeno-phobia)? If the present book's title had been, for example, *Studies in Popular English Verse Romances* I would not have been disappointed.

LIVIA VISSER-FUCHS

THE CULT OF ST GEORGE IN MEDIEVAL ENGLAND. Jonathan Good. 2009. The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, £50.00 (hbk). ISBN 978-1-84383-469-4

Medieval England was not short of indigenous saints. Those of the Anglo-Saxon era, such as the English prothomartyr Alban, the royal martyrs Oswald of Northumbria and Edmund of East Anglia, and the early saint-bishops aside, post-conquest England also acquired its own holy men of supra-regional standing, such as Thomas of Canterbury and Edward the Confessor, whose shrines attracted pilgrims from across western Christendom. There was thus ostensibly no reason to import an obscure Cappadocian soldier-martyr, and even less cause why this alien immigrant should have come to be the embodiment of England and its spirit. To explain this apparently odd development, Jonathan Good examines the evolution of English national identity and the arrival and growth of the cult in medieval England, before launching into a full discussion of the veneration of the saint, both official and popular, from the late thirteenth to the early fifteenth centuries. A chapter on the public role of the saint in the centuries since the Reformation concludes the book.

It is Good's argument that while the adoption of St George as the patron saint of England was no catalyst in the formation of an English nation, it had an important part to play. Nevertheless, the author accepts James Campbell's contention that even Anglo-Saxon England possessed some claim to being considered a nation state. As such, England provided fertile ground for the semi-deliberate introduction of a national cult. By the early eleventh century legends of St George were being written in England, although it took a further two centuries for him to acquire (courtesy of James de Voragine's *Legenda Aurea*) his familiar dragon. At this date, however, George was one saint among many venerated in England.

This was to change only with the accession of Edward I, who had become familiar with George as a warrior saint during his days as a crusader in the Holy Land. In his wars of conquest in Wales and Scotland Edward openly harnessed the support of the saint, displaying the familiar arms of St George (*argent, a cross gules*) on banners and pennons alongside his own royal arms. This initiative was abandoned by the rather less warlike Edward II, but revived with renewed vigour by Edward III: it was in Edward's association of the saint with his new order of chivalry, the order of the Garter, that St George became irrevocably identified with the cause of the English crown. England's ancient royal saints, like Edward the Confessor, had to play second fiddle to the Greek interloper: Henry III's chapel of St Edward at Windsor castle was given additional dedications to the Virgin and St George, and it was the latter's feast day, rather than that of the Confessor, on which the brethren of the Garter were to gather annually. If the less martially minded of Edward III's successors, such as Richard II or Henry VI, could look to more peaceful saints such as St Edward for patronage, none of them could afford to ignore England's military patron.

In the interim, so Good tells us, the veneration of St George had also gained unofficial popularity in England: the author's analysis of pre-Reformation church dedications places the saint among the twenty most popular patrons, and guilds dedicated to him sprung up across England. By the early sixteenth century George came to be perceived in some quarters as the patron of 'Englishmen', rather than just of the king or his realm of England. Nevertheless, so the author suggests, the adoption of St George as the patron of civic guilds represented at least in some part a conscious adoption of an authority that emanated from the king, whose special protector the saint continued to be.

The book's two core chapters on the royal promotion of the cult of St George from the late thirteenth century and the saint's popular veneration in England are based on extensive archival research and contain many interesting and challenging ideas. They supplement the extensive existing literature with documentary, material and literary evidence to add detail to our picture of the cult of St George, both official and popular. Good has clearly devoted much thought and work to his subject over a period of time. The chapter on the saint's popular veneration is supported by useful tables of English churches and guilds dedicated to St George, and of artistic depictions of him in murals and stained glass.

Instructive as all of this is, it is hard to avoid the impression that (particularly at its price) this is a rather slight book, filled out with much ingeniously devised padding. The ample typeface is generously spaced, and a substantial final chapter is given over to the saint's 'post-medieval career'. Its account of the fate of the 'cult' of St George after the Reformation fails to make any clear connexion between his veneration in the Middle Ages and his political role after the Reformation.

While it may be interesting to learn that since the late twentieth century the saint's banner has undergone something of a renaissance among sporting supporters, this surely tells us little about the medieval veneration of the Cappadocian martyr. The chapter sports a curious body of references, taken partly from the on-line editions of a range of publications such as the *Daily Mail*, the *Daily Telegraph* and *Planet Rugby*, and also including a number of other websites. Equally, there has to be some question mark over the decision to devote a third of the book's eighteen black and white plates to illustrations for this final chapter (do we really need a picture of an English football supporter dressed as St George?). There is a substantial bibliography, but – irritatingly, in view of all the other ballast – only a highly selective index, that (*inter alia*) omits place names completely, and is far from comprehensive for personal names.

HANNES KLEINEKE

THE MEDIEVAL COOK. Bridget Ann Henisch. 2009. The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, £25. ISBN 978-1-84383-438-0

Medieval cookery has been the subject of popular and scholarly study, with a focus on the food and its presentation. The premise of Bridget Henisch's volume is that it will take us into the world of the medieval cook at all levels of society and in a variety of kitchens. Her distinctive approach is to use historical and fictional personas as a focus, rather than the food they provided. Henisch uses a wide range of sources, including art and literature, to explore how cooks worked and how society viewed them. It is clear from the outset of *The Medieval Cook* that Bridget Henisch is truly passionate about her subject. This is a work written with enthusiasm and delight, something that no reader will escape to notice. It is, indeed, an attractive piece of work, beautifully illustrated, making the subject highly approachable for the general reader.

In six chapters, we are given an overview of cooks, ranging from the peasant wife and her management of scarce resources, to sellers of fast food, and the court cook. Chapter 1, 'The Cook in Context', summarises contemporary views of cooks (positive and negative) in a wide range of sources. Chapter 2, 'The Cottage Cook', and chapter 3, 'Fast Food and Fine Catering', discuss amateur and professional cooks, while the following two chapters ('The Comforts of Home' and 'The Staging of a Feast') discuss the realities of cooking for a household or for a grand scale feast. By their nature, chapters 4 and 5 bear similarities to the preceding chapters. One of the highlights of the volume is chapter 6, 'On the Edge: the Cook in Art', which provides intricate details of misericords, carvings and manuscript decorations that depicted cooks, kitchens and tools of the trade.

The notes on the text and select bibliography are useful, and show Henisch's wide use of secondary material. Finally, the appendix of medieval recipes, taken from *The Goodman of Paris: A Treatise on Moral and Domestic Economy*, translated and edited by Eileen Power in 1928, provides examples of cooking methods, about which Henisch bemoans throughout the main text are somewhat lacking in contemporary sources.

One of the charms of this book that makes it so accessible to the general reader is the division of the chapters into short sections. While at times this makes the volume somewhat disjointed, it does clearly signpost the contents of the chapters. Section titles range from different roles of cooks – 'Bakers', 'Waferers', and 'Pie Makers' – to more enigmatic titles such as 'The Paris Connection' and 'Hell's Kitchen'. These chapter divisions make the reader skip quickly from one topic to another, and while the transition is sometimes smooth, it is frequently too quick and gives the impression that the previous topic has been left unfinished. This indicates one of the difficulties with the volume. While *The Medieval Cook* is an entertaining and approachable read, it may leave the academic scholar somewhat wanting. There is little analysis in the volume, and there is no overriding argument to hold the volume together. The work is descriptive, and does not pause at any juncture to offer deeper analysis of pertinent points, such as why there were widely contrasting contemporary views of the cook and his profession. A further example is that she brushes over the contrast between female and male cooks; the peasant cook is always 'she', but the professional cook is always 'he'. Even in the sections 'The Master' and 'The Mistress', there is a happy acceptance that if the master chose to take an interest in household provisions, it was only in their supply, while the mistress thoroughly enjoyed cooking, citing a story told from *The Book of the Knight of La Tour-Landry* (pp. 106-12). This seems to be a rather idealised view, and the reality hidden behind the contemporary literature was probably somewhat different.

One of the disappointments with this volume is that it offers little new research on the topic, despite looking at it from an uncommon angle. Henisch repeats some of the work she used in her earlier, and much admired, study of food in the middle ages, *Fast and Feast: Food in Medieval Society* (Penn State University Press, 1976). Within the volume itself there are a number of repetitions of the same anecdotes, such as the snobbery of the fourteenth century royal chef Taillevent, who would not write about cooking methods of what he viewed as common food (pp. 55 and 127). There is also a repetition of a quote from Sir Gawain and the Green Knight (pp. 3 and 107). It is a pity that with such a wide range of sources at her disposal this repetition occurs, and it is perhaps something that the editorial process should have picked up.

Despite a few minor drawbacks, however, *The Medieval Cook* is an example of good popular history. It is accessible, with plenty of colour and clarity that will

satisfy a general reader, and is likely to entice further reading. It has its merits for the academic scholar too; it clearly presents printed primary and secondary works as a useful introduction to further research. This volume has been well researched and competently annotated, allowing the reader to follow up on points should they wish to do so. At no point does Henisch declare that this volume is the final word on the medieval cook, or that it is deeply analytical of the role, and there is still clearly scope for further, in-depth work. Overall, this volume is a useful and highly entertaining introduction to the study of the necessity and artistry of cookery in the Middle Ages.

JESSICA LUTKIN

RICHARD III AND THE MURDER IN THE TOWER. Peter A. Hancock. 2009. The History Press, Stroud, £20. ISBN 978-0-7524-5148-0

RICHARD III AND THE DEATH OF CHIVALRY David Hipshon. 2009. The History Press, Stroud, £20. ISBN 978-0-7509-5074-9

RICHARD. THE YOUNG KING TO BE. Josephine Wilkinson. 2008. Amberley Publishing, Stroud, £25. ISBN 978-1-84868-083-8

Hancock. This book is focussed solely on what happened in the Tower on 13 June 1483, and the 'murder' referred to is the death of Hastings on that day. The protagonists of the story are William Catesby and the pre-contract of marriage between Edward IV and Lady Eleanor Butler. Hancock argues that the events of this Friday all centred round Catesby's sudden revelations to Richard of Gloucester: the existence of the pre-contract and the fact that Hastings knew about it but had decided not to share this knowledge with Richard, thereby betraying his trust and committing a crime of omission. Catesby's career and the amazing flight it took after Richard's accession are followed and explained in the light of these revelations. All other main actors, their backgrounds, their lives and their possible motives are presented in detail, embellished with arguments and speculation. The book is on the whole well written and well argued and holds the attention. Ricardians will find it interesting, if not to agree with, certainly to discuss its main thesis.

One point for discussion can be suggested: is it likely, given the complications and implications of the pre-contract, which was only important if considered *together with* the fact that Edward IV's marriage to Elizabeth Woodville was clandestine, that Richard immediately comprehended all its political possibilities – as well as the implications of Hastings' silence – and understood them so well that he became 'incandescent' with rage on the spot and had his brother's trusted

associate executed at once and without trial? Unfortunately Hancock himself blithely passes over the intricacies of the legal problem: he says he will not go into 'the nuances of the law', but leave them to others. He does, in fact, not refer at this stage to Professor Helmholtz essential exposition of the issues involved (though the article is in the bibliography one is not sure it has really been used) and does not seem to have understood which of these 'nuances of the law' were actually important if Richard wished to base his claim to the throne on them and have the princes declared illegitimate. It is complicated stuff; one may well wonder whether Richard would have fully grasped it in the short while he was away from the council room on that fateful morning.

It would take far too long – and it would not be fair to the author, who is well aware of the extent to which he allows himself to speculate – to discuss every instance in which the individual building blocks of his structure could be made unsafe, for one reason or another and in spite of the author's obviously extensive research. To take one very minor example, in this case a curious choice of source which leads to some wholly unnecessary fighting against windmills on the author's part. It occurs in his discussion of Philippe de Comines' description of Bishop Stillington's role in Richard's learning about the pre-contract. Because the author chose to use an 1855 translation of Comines' memoirs he has to struggle for a while with the word 'discovered', which is used twice in this ancient edition, once to translate French *mist en avant*, and once for *descoverit*. Hancock concludes that 'discover can mean advertise or broadcast' like modern 'uncover'. Indeed, if he had consulted the original, or failing that, Michael Jones' 1972 translation, he would have realised that in both cases the words are unambiguous; Jones uses 'revealed' and 'disclosed' when describing how Stillington told Richard about the pre-contract.

There is a considerable list of 'reference materials' unfortunately for the greater part divided up per chapter so that some titles appear several times, six appendices containing various relevant documents and providing an overview of Catesby's remarkable acquisition of lands, endnotes – which do not always make very clear what the author used for each of his statements – and an index. LVF

Hipshon. The dual thesis of this book is that Richard lost the battle of Bosworth, not because of revulsion over his usurpation by the nobility and gentry of England, but because of the defection of the Stanleys to Henry Tudor, which was the direct result of their feud with James and Robert Harrington. Secondly, that placing Bosworth in the 'shadow of Agincourt' Richard's brave charge towards Tudor ending with his death was an anachronistic act, and never to be repeated, and so chivalry died that day. The author then proceeds to tell Richard's story from the background to the Wars of the Roses through to Bosworth.

The history of the feud between the Harringtons and the Stanleys appears rather like an excursus nestled between the Yorkist victory at Tewkesbury and the reburial of the duke of York and earl of Rutland in 1476. The feud makes fascinating reading, a tale of a struggle between neighbours for power within the palatinate of Lancaster and for the possession of Hornby castle, which displays the loyalty of the former family and the fickleness but shrewdness of the latter. Sadly the loyalty of the Harringtons becomes a poor substitute to the indispensability of Thomas Stanley to the crown. By 1475 the dispute was settled in Stanley's favour, and the unfortunate Richard of Gloucester was charged by his brother to enforce the king's decision, which meant the disinheritation of Richard's friend James Harrington. Hipshon presents a document which indicates that Richard, as king, intended to re-open the case, as he now had the power to overturn his late brother's ruling. The Stanleys could take no chances and threw in their lot with Tudor at Bosworth in order that Richard did not proceed. What is rather frustrating is that the document refers to a 'Note' instigated by Richard asking the chancellor of the Duchy (Lancaster) to look into the matter but there is no mention of further research in the Duchy's archive for corroboration. Lack of references generally are a problem and certainly readers may wish to know why Hipshon promotes James Harrington to Richard's 'banner-bearer' at Bosworth, when it is generally thought William Parker had this duty – other than the fact that Sir William Harrington fulfilled this role for Henry V at Agincourt.

The problem with this book is that it has all been said before and nothing really new is being brought to the table, other than the examination of the feud, and this might have been better served in an article rather than a book. From the select bibliography and the endnotes, it appears only published sources were consulted, except for the passages regarding the feud, and the book falls into the category of a tertiary work.

However, Ricardians may enjoy the book, as right up until the end, Hipshon is generally sympathetic of Richard. When, however, he considers Richard's role in the death of the princes – taken out of the chronological sequence – he delivers a double whammy: Richard was the killer as they would 'become the focal point of treason and rebellion' and 'their polluted blood might infect the realm'. Later he concedes that if Richard was not directly responsible then they were still killed on his 'watch' and that he failed them. These two views are very traditional and frequently rehearsed. What leaves a rather nasty taste in the mouth, however, is Hipshon's attack on those who believe Richard was not guilty of the princes' demise and who feel 'Richard was far too noble to do such a barbaric thing, they say, and those that believe otherwise will burn in hell. This is a quasi-religious phenomenon, a cult of adulation that brooks no heresy'. Hipshon believes this is based on a misunderstanding of the medieval aristocratic mind and that it is not

surprising that Richard regarded the murder as simply collateral damage and that a 'body count' of six during the period of the 'usurpation' is not bad compared to the thousands who died at Sandal or Towton due to the bids his father and brother made for the throne. Whilst *realpolitik* certainly existed in the fifteenth century, if writers are trying to understand the 'medieval mind' they also perhaps need to take some account of the religious beliefs of the time and certainly examine evidence of the piety in their subjects.

A new book on Richard III by Hipshon, as part of the Routledge Historical Biographies series, is due to be published in June this year. Will this be a more in-depth and originally researched work or another re-hash? WM

Wilkinson. This is a study of the life of Richard from his birth to 1475. It mixes in varying measure fact and speculation, and as a result, like all books that hold the middle way between scholarly biography and *vie romancée*, one's enjoyment of it is also mixed.

It is true that the author has left few stones unturned: in the first chapter we find astrological details relevant to Richard's birthdate, the medical and 'superstitious' aspects of a child having teeth when it is born, even the virtues and vices of swaddling infants. And so on through all the chapters: whenever a castle is mentioned its previous history up to the mid-fifteenth century is given, the ceremonies surrounding certain events, such as the creation of a knight of the Bath, are described in detail. Quotations and information derived from Richard's books are often extensive, discussions of controversial points, such as Richard's deformity, the killing of Edward of Lancaster and the possible illegitimacy of Edward IV, are long and sometimes rambling. The author's speculation is usually inspired by common sense, but there are exceptions. It is suggested, for example, that Richard may have ordered his 'mess' of strawberries from the bishop of Ely's garden on purpose, to go and eat them in private, give himself an allergic rash and that storm back into the council chamber to accuse Hastings and others of using sorcery against him.

Generally there is a tendency to use old sources of different dates and varying quality without explaining their value and trustworthiness, and though many modern sources have been used these are often not properly acknowledged. There are curious gaps, for instance in the chapter on the invasion of France in 1475 – seen as the moment when Edward's reputation was fatally damaged in his younger brother's eyes. Here the French historian Philippe de Comines is used as the main reference, with foreseeable consequences. As usual the book also completely ignores the fact that Edward IV himself regarded the treaty of Picquigny as the best and cleverest military and political move he ever made, witness his very private celebration of it on the misericord of his seat in the Garter chapel at St George's,

Windsor.

Was this book meant to be a scholarly study? On the one hand the many informative excursions into medieval daily life will benefit the so-called 'common reader', on the other hand the long discussion of Richard's treatment of Elisabeth, Countess of Oxford, and his acquisition of her lands, is probably wasted on the uninitiated reader, who will also not find it easy, generally, to disentangle the events of the period and the many people brought on to the stage by the author. There are no family trees, only a list of *dramatis personae*; the endnotes are few and far between and very brief; and many quotations have not been modernised. The index is limited and of the page-number-only variety; the bibliography is adequate but shows where the gaps are.

In spite of all these doubts Ricardians may well enjoy the book and its attempts to take a fresh, common-sense look at some of the controversial issues. The colour photographs, all from the author's own collection, are attractive and so is the cover. LVF

WENDY MOORHEN and LIVIA VISSER-FUCHS

ST EDMUND, KING AND MARTYR. Changing Images of a Medieval Saint. Edited by Anthony Bale. York Medieval Press in association with the Boydell Press, Woodbridge, Suffolk, and Rochester, NY, USA. £50.

ISBN 978-1-903153-26-0

Edmund, King of East Anglia, who was defeated and killed by Danish invaders on 20 November 869, is one of those luckless-seeming martyrs whose status as a saint seems surprising to us in the twenty-first century. According to the hagiographic Life of him that was written by Abbo of Fleury, c. 985×7, he died in a most unheroic way, agreeing to submit to a pagan Danish warlord, Hinguar, if the latter would convert to Christianity. Hinguar instead had Edmund tied to a tree, shot at with arrows until he resembled a hedgehog, and then beheaded; his head was thrown into woodland, where it was found and guarded by a wolf until miraculously reunited with his body. Edmund, the virgin martyr of East Anglia, came to be seen as a model Christian king; in about the early tenth century his body was removed from the site of his martyrdom to the abbey at Bury, and the abbey soon proved to be the most vigorous and steadfast supporter of his cult.

Bury St Edmunds Abbey was influential throughout Suffolk, and owned extensive estates in other counties too; but Edmund's fame was also spread by other devotees, including such monarchs as Edward I, Henry III and Richard II. In the 1430s and 1440s John Lydgate, monk of Bury, wrote a versified Life of Edmund and then a versified collection of his miracles, the first work at least being

presented to Henry VI.

As a saint whose significance far transcended his immediate *locale*, Edmund clearly well merited this collection of eight essays as a modern tribute to his memory. It is, above all, a literary historians' offering, but it nevertheless succeeds in covering a good many aspects of what might be called his afterlife. Abbo's *Life of Edmund* is nowhere subjected to extended scrutiny, but Carl Phelpstead considers the Old English abbreviation of it by Aelfric, in his collection of *Lives of English Saints*, written at the end of the tenth century. Alison Finlay investigates the possible significance of the mention of Edmund's death in the earliest history of Iceland, the *Íslendingabók* of 1122×33, and she puts this in a broader Scandinavian context (while admitting that the Icelanders may have identified as much with Edmund's killer's family as with Edmund himself). Paul Hayward examines the mid-twelfth-century *Liber de infantia sancti Edmundi* written by Geoffrey of Wells, who seems to have been a canon of St George's Priory at Thetford, a small religious house that then belonged to Bury St Edmunds Abbey; this is a thorough and persuasive piece of historical research.

Lisa Colton looks at music that was written in honour of St Edmund: this is a helpful discussion, but it is strange that she seems unaware of the extensive coverage of the abbey's library in two of the volumes of the *Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues* (edited by Richard and Mary Rouse and by Richard Sharpe and others). Rebecca Pinner's survey of medieval images of Edmund in Norfolk churches leaves one wondering why she did not also tackle Suffolk and regretting that she has not made any use of documentary evidence.

John Lydgate's hagiographic works provide the basis or at least the starting-point for each of the final three chapters. A.S.G. Edwards gives a succinct general account of the *Lives of Saints Edmund and Fremund* – although he should know that the three crowns were a coat of arms (rather than a badge), and were used by other East Anglian institutions, apart from Bury (p. 135). Anthony Bale looks in detail at the London setting of certain of Edmund's miracles: this is a chapter which offers some fascinating sidelights by the way, such as the mention of a drowned girl, who had been brought back to life, being subsequently taken by her parents, with a wax image, to Hereford cathedral (before 1307). Finally Alexandra Gillespie assesses Lydgate's work afresh, from a New Historicist perspective.

Together, these essays amount to a collection that is valuable, without however being in any way comprehensive. The index is inadequate. There is curiously little evidence of cross-fertilisation from the British Archaeological Association's Conference Transactions volume on Bury St Edmunds (edited by Antonia Gransden, 1998): rather, it is as if the contributors have shied away from considering Bury St Edmunds Abbey itself. The omission of any serious treatment of St Edmund's shrine is bizarre, especially given the survival of sixteenth-century

THE N-TOWN PLAY: Drama and Liturgy in Medieval East Anglia. Penny Granger. 2009. Westfield Medieval Studies Volume 2. D.S. Brewer, Cambridge, an imprint of Boydell and Brewer, Woodbridge, £50. ISBN 978-1-84384-189-0

British Library Cotton Vespasian D VIII is the manuscript of the so-called 'N-Town Play'. Headed, 'the play called Corpus Christi', the manuscript contains a sequence of pageants recounting sacred history from Creation to Doomsday, and was first edited in 1841 as *Ludus Coventriae*, a title based on a seventeenth century misattribution by Dugdale and Stevens, and a presumption of similarity with the York cycle. The integral 'banns', however, announce performance in 'N-Town', suggesting a touring performance. Bids have subsequently been made linking the play with Lincoln, Bury St Edmunds, Norwich, Thetford, or East Harling. It is now also clear that the manuscript is an 'anthology or hybrid', as it is 'clearly more than a mere gathering together of miscellaneous texts' (p. 45). It contains the earliest surviving creation to doom sequence in English, a two-part Passion play and two Marian plays. Penny Granger concludes with others that the text was probably never played in its current form, although its constituent parts were, and are, playable (173). Her study is particularly concerned with the liturgical material within the compilation, long acknowledged to be significant in quantity and creative use, an 'anthology within that anthology' (p. 40).

Most medieval drama scholars are aware of the need to familiarise themselves with medieval liturgies. Knowledge of ecclesiastical practice makes an important contribution to understanding not only the organisation and emphases of content in religious plays, but also of modes of performance and reception in the original owning community. Penny Granger's perspective is refreshingly unusual in this regard, as she evidently approached her study as someone with a confident command of liturgy, but perhaps less familiarity with theatre research. Consequently her fine category-distinctions between 'rite' and 'ritual' are well-judged, but she oddly does not see the need to make the same distinctions between 'drama' and 'theatre' (p. 7).

The third chapter is the heart of the book, as this is where the different types of liturgical material incorporated into the play are enumerated and analysed. The inclusions are divided into structural categories 'Latin quotations, sung set pieces, vernacular paraphrases, sacraments, structural borrowings from liturgy, and prayer' (p. 82). This chapter, and the tables at the end of the book, provide a useful catalogue of importations, and say something of their contextual contribution to

meaning, though a more thorough-going analysis of the affective use of these passages might have added value. In particular there is frustratingly limited discussion of the rhetorical effects of liturgical echoes on the stylistic register of the performance; the discussion of style, and the signficatory function of stylistic shifts, is rather limited, betraying some modern prejudice in dismissive epithets ('flowerly language', p. 101), and unsympathetic comparisons ('point-scoring in a children's argument' and 'Gilbert and Sullivan patter-song'). When it comes to discussing the incorporation of liturgical material translated into the vernacular, the author also avoids discussing how much the audience was expected to understand, and how any audience receives, and recognises aurally, material familiar in one language delivered in another. There are, in short, a number of interesting questions which are raised but left unanswered or underdeveloped in this chapter, because of constraints of space that it could usefully have borrowed from elsewhere.

The comparison of the *N.Town Play* with other 'cycles', is arguably less useful given the widely differing status and dates of the comparators. The author preserves an understanding that there is a body of 'cycle plays' which are in some way normative, despite evident recognition that each member of the set is quite distinct. What emerges is that, as might be anticipated, the *N.Town Play* has most in common with material from the same part of the country. The concluding assertion that this play is *primus inter pares* (p. 171) rather depends on the questionable existence of *pares*. Again, when the final chapter compares the *N.Town Play* with other devotional anthologies, the author's enthusiasm for finding points of comparison rather downplays the quiddity of the individual materials pressed into service. The most illuminating comparison is between the manuscript's *mise en page* and the standard rubrication of service books, suggesting how a private reader might have imagined performance.

Many of the study's weaknesses are symptomatic of an adapted doctoral dissertation. The author treads into areas of serious contestation without always acknowledging their significance. For example there is brief discussion of elements of the play that would be understood by a knowledgeable reader but not by a listening audience, that demands reference to reception theory. Then there are comparisons with other art forms (such as octagonal fonts), which struggle to acknowledge the fundamental difference between embodied playing, and other modes of representation, although gestures are made towards the 'movable' nature of dramatic performance (p. 68). The didactic purpose of religious drama is also taken as read, when that too is an established area of scholarly debate. The closer to discussion of theological and ecclesiastical issues the study is, however, the more confident its argument. Here, for example it appropriately resists what is now commonly acknowledged to be a specious divide between 'orthodoxy' and

'heterodoxy' in late medieval England, judiciously preferring to place the *N.Town Play* somewhere on a continuum between two hypothetical poles (p. 80).

This book shows its provenance most evidently in its opening chapter which is the obligatory literature-search beloved of thesis examiners. Here the author rehearses a number of arguments, some of which have direct application to what follows, but others of which have either long been superseded, or make guest appearances that are of limited application in the later discussion. Some cutting of this necessarily derivative material would have cleared space to expand the interesting core study, widening and making more incisive the focus on the relationship between liturgy and the performance of vernacular occasional plays, and thereby enhancing the study's contribution to a number of related current debates.

PAMELA KING

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

Richard Beadle, editor, *The York Plays. A Critical Edition of the Corpus Christi Play as recorded in British Library Additional MS 35290*. Volume 1. *The Text*. 477 pages. Frontispiece. Oxford University Press for the Early English Text Society, Supplementary Series 23, 2009, £65 ISBN 978-019-957847-4

A considerable expansion of the author's now out of print, earlier edition. This volume contains the text of the forty-seven plays from the Barkers to the Mercers, an appendix adding the Cardmakers, Scriveners and Innholders with the music of the Weavers, and a discussion of all aspects of the manuscript.

Phil Butterworth, Pamela M. King and Meg Twycross, editors, *According to the Ancient Custom. Essays Presented to David Mills*. Part 1. *Medieval Theatre*, volume 29, 2007. 151 pages. Illustrated. Lancaster University, £12 to UK subscribers (£15 overseas). ISSN 0143-3784

This edition includes two discussions of specific scenes from play cycles and how they could have been staged: Pamela King, 'Playing Pentecost in York and Chester: transformation and texts' and Peter Meredith, 'The sealing of the tomb: N. Town and its contents'.

Michael Powell Siddons, *Heraldic Badges in England and Wales*. 4 volumes. 1,320 pages. 2009. Published for the Society of Antiquaries of London by the Boydell Press, Woodbridge, £350. ISBN 9-781-84383-493-9.

Extensively illustrated and comprehensive study of badges in all their contexts, from tournaments to plate and monuments. From their first use in the fourteenth century to their decline in the early sixteenth.

Monique Sommé, *La correspondance d'Isabelle de Portugal, duchesse de Bourgogne (1430-1471)*, Instrumenta 18, published by the Thorbecke Verlag for the German Historical Institute at Paris, 2009. 415 pages. 54 ISBN 978-3-7995-7918-6

From a correspondence that must have been immense only 254 (closed) letters sent and received by Philip the Good's third wife and mother of Charles the Bold, have been found and are here edited, in French, Latin, Dutch, Portuguese and Spanish. An introduction lists and analyses their characteristics such as physical appearance (e.g. size and standard phrases), their content (mainly financial and administrative) and their recipients and senders. It is not surprising that the greatest number date from the time that she was ruling her husband's lands in his name during his absence. In spite of her close relationship with her son only one letter survives from him and one to him. Of particular interest are the instructions

concerning the ceremonies surrounding the birth and christening of a ducal child, a long letter to Isabel's brother, Edward I of Portugal, about the treaty of Arras (1435) and the well-known newsletter concerning the battle of Barnet from her daughter-in-law, Margaret of York. The book includes a list of secretaries, bibliography, indices of name, places and subjects and a chronological list of the letters.

Peter Spufford, *How rarely did medieval merchants use coin?* Van Gelder-lezing gehouden voor Geldmuseum en Stichting Nederlandse Penningkabinetten te Leiden op 16 November 2006. Geldmuseum, Utrecht, 2008. 64 pages. ISBN 978-90-73882-21-8.

A wide-ranging paper, 1160s to the sixteenth century, this has much of relevance to the fifteenth century by which time larger merchants rarely dealt in coin if they could avoid it; it was the nobility who kept great stores of coin. Many details on banking practices, bills of exchange, the failure of local banks and the increasing regulation of those that remained. Well illustrated with images, maps and diagrams. With comments by Joost Jonker, and a bibliography.

ARTICLES

John Ashdown-Hill, 'The shrine of the Holy Rood of Dovercourt', *Essex Journal*, volume 44, number 1, Spring 2009, pages 4-9.

The Rood which once stood on the surviving beam in the chancel of All Saints Dovercourt, Essex, was an object of pilgrimage. Devotions took place in its chapel on the south side of the nave. Illustrations of beam and stairway. It was in the patronage of the De Veres and received offerings and robes from Sir John Howard and his wife. Analysis of the theft of the supposedly speaking Rood in 1533.

John Ashdown-Hill, 'A pyramid seal matrix of Sir John Marney (1402-c.1471)', *Essex Archaeology and History*, volume 38, 2007, pages 120-25.

This matrix in Colchester Museum was originally attributed to John Marney III died 1525. This article sets out evidence that it was the seal of his grandfather, Sir John II. He inherited the estates at Layer Marney, Essex, in 1421; he served in France and at Calais in 1450s; involved in treason 1468-69 he was pardoned, but is likely to have died at Barnet or Tewkesbury in de Vere service. Richard of Gloucester received the wardship of the heir 1472. Illustrations and description of seal and its heraldry.

Mark Bailey, 'The form, function and evolution of irregular field systems in Suffolk, c. 1300 to c. 1500', *Agricultural History Review*, volume 57, part 1, 2009, pages 15-36.

This study reconstructs the changes that occurred in the field systems over this period of demographic decline and concludes that there was a stronger tendency to remodel fields than has been thought.

Ann Bowtell, 'The economic fortunes of a London hospital: Elsyngspital 1330-1536', *Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society*, volume 59, 2008, pages 191-212.

Founded near Cripplegate by a London mercer for the sick poor especially the blind, the initial project for 100 beds underwent diminution over the years. It was an Augustinian priory, took care of a moderate number of sick and ran an almshouse for twelve poor women by the end of its existence. This is a detailed overview with extensive material on the house's finances and the benefactors who salvaged its fortunes in the fifteenth century, such as William Gray, Bishop of London and William Flete of Rickmansworth. Illustrated; tables.

William Connor, 'The Esholt Priory charter of 1485 and its decoration', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, volume 80, 2008, pages 121-52.

This charter is a licence under letters patent from Richard III allowing Margaret, daughter and heir of Henry Bromflete, Lord Vescy of Londesborough in the East Riding, widow of John, Lord Clifford (killed Towton), and wife of Sir Lancelot Threlkeld of Cumberland, to make a grant of the advowson of Belton-in-Axholme to the nuns of Esholt in Otley on the River Aire. This is a detailed study of every aspect of this document, its making, decoration and subsequent history until it was rediscovered in 1990. A comprehensive array of illustrations in black and white and colour puts its illustration into context.

John T. Driver, 'Sir Thomas St Leger, c. 1439-83: the rise and fall of a royal servant during the reigns of Edward IV and Richard III', *Surrey Archaeological Collections*, volume 94, 2008, pages 209-23.

This detailed account of his many offices, emphasises his closeness to Edward IV, the Bouchiers and Lord Hastings and his importance in south west and south east England. He became the lover of Anne, the king's sister, who divorced her husband, the duke of Exeter, in November 1472 and married him. Anne's daughter, the Holland heiress, died in 1474 and she in 1476, but Thomas was allowed to retain the inheritance for his own daughter by Anne, the intended bride of the son of Marquess Dorset. In 1483 Thomas joined the rebellion against Richard III and was executed at Exeter. He was buried with his wife in the chantry he had established in Windsor Chapel.

J.T. Driver, 'The career and affiliations of Sir Roger Tocotes of Bromham (c. 1430-92): a political survivor in late fifteenth century England', *Wiltshire Studies*, volume 98, 2005, pages 307-15.

A brief study of a man who benefited from the patronage of Richard Beauchamp, Bishop of Salisbury (to whom he was an executor), and married the widow of Lord St Amand. He was closely associated with the duke of Clarence and the Hungerfords. Attainted after the 1483 rising, he survived to act as a local official, sheriff and JP under Henry VII.

Mark Gardiner, 'Dales, long lands, and the medieval division of land in eastern England', *Agricultural History Review*, volume 57, part 1, 2009, pages 1-14.

The long parallel fields in the marshlands of the Fens and the Humber estuary were originally created in the twelfth to thirteenth centuries and intended to be as equitable a division as possible, whether for grazing, arable, salt-making or cutting fuel. Comparisons are made with Yorkshire and Northamptonshire.

Mark R. Horowitz, *Who was Henry VII? The 500th Anniversary of the death of the First Tudor king (1509-2009)*, *Historical Research*, volume 82, number 217, August 2009, pages 375-92. Available from Emeline Morrella at the Institute of Historical Research, The University of London, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU, £10, p&p £2.

A volume of ten essays with an introduction, chronology and bibliography. The essays are: Steven Gunn, 'Politic history, new monarchy and state formation: Henry VII in European perspective'; David Grummitt, 'Household, politics and political morality in the reign of Henry VII'; Mark R. Horowitz, 'Policy and persecution in the reign of Henry VII'; Sean Cunningham, 'Loyalty and the usurper recognizances, the council and allegiance under Henry VII'; P.R. Cavill, 'The enforcement of the penal statutes in the 1490s: some new evidence'; James Lee, 'Urban policy and urban political culture: Henry VII and his towns'; Penny Tucker, 'Reaction to Henry VII's style of kingship and its contribution to the emergence of constitutional monarchy in England'; John M. Currin, 'Henry VII, France and the Holy League of Venice: the diplomacy of balance'; Margaret McGlynn, '"Of good name and fame in the countrey": standards of conduct for Henry VII's chamber officials'; Mark R. Horowitz, 'Henry Tudor's treasure'.

D.A.L. Morgan, 'Hearne's "Fragment" and the long prehistory of English memoirs', *English Historical Review*, volume 124, number 509, August 2009, pages 811-32.

The 'Fragment' was apparently written to correct some statements in Richard Pynson's *The New cronycles of Englande and of Fraunce* shortly after these were printed in February 1516. It is here argued that the text represents the (fragmentary) memoirs of Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk (died 1524). The author discusses the 'lively literary culture of the aristocratic world to which [Thomas and his father] belonged', but also the scarcity of memoirs produced in England in the fifteenth, sixteenth and much of the seventeenth century when compared to the Continent, in spite of the popularity of the genre. Includes a description of the manuscript, Bodleian Library Ashmole 845, in which the 'Fragment' survives.

A. Compton Reeves, 'John Gunthorpe: keeper of Richard III's privy seal, dean of Wells Cathedral', *Viator*, volume 39, number 1, 2008, pages 307-44.

Detailed survey of Gunthorpe's career (died 1498) in the service of three kings, including the background of his administrative, diplomatic and ecclesiastical activities, his life and building work as dean of Wells, and his books. 'If Gunthorpe

is a guide to the sort of company Richard (III) chose to keep, Richard would appear to come off nicely'.

John Ridgard, 'Mettingham, Suffolk: the building of a religious college with particular reference to the acquisition of books for its library', *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History*, volume 42, part 1, 2009, pages 21-31.

The author traces the early, complex history of the foundation of the college before 1399. The patronage and advowson lay with the Willoughbys of Eresby, Lincs., and Parham, Suff., in the 1400s. Rebuilding and furnishing culminated in the dedication in 1415. Using the surviving accounts, the article concentrates on all aspects of its books, their making by the brothers, with help from illuminators and artists from Yarmouth; and speculates whether they were made for sale and whether there was contact with the local Lollard cell.

Alan Rogers, 'A fifteenth-century family Bible from Northamptonshire?' *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, volume 51, 2007, pages 167-80.

Bodleian Library MS Lat. Liturg. e. 10 is part of a fifteenth-century book of hours containing many notes concerning the family of William Fairfax esquire of Deeping Gate in the parish of Maxey, Northamptonshire, made after 1472. The precise details of births, baptisms, and godparents of fourteen children by two wives provide an intriguing insight into the social circle of this family. Full transcript of entries.

Alan Rogers, 'Some kinship wills of the late fifteenth century from Stamford, Rutland and the surrounding area', *Rutland Record*, volume 28, 2008, pages 279-98.

Transcripts of eight wills (Latin translated) from five generations of the Brownes of Stamford and their relatives by marriage, 1433-1518. John and William Browne were wealthy wool staplers and William (d. 1489) established the almshouse in Stamford which still exists. With a commentary on their trade, land holdings, business connections and possessions. Illustrations and pedigree.

Alan Rogers, 'William Browne's title deeds and late medieval Stamford', *Archives*, volume 34, number 120, April 2009, pages 1-7.

William Browne, stapler of Stamford (d. 1489), divided his considerable property in Stamford, Lincolnshire, and elsewhere, between his sole surviving daughter, Elizabeth, wife of John Elmes of Henley on Thames, and his Hospital in Stamford. The deeds relating to the Elmes' share (rural and urban) are all lost; those of the Hospital's share are almost complete for the rural area, but the deeds for Stamford were mislaid during their use by antiquaries, including Francis Peck who only completed the first volume of his History up to 1460.

Alan Rogers, 'Stamford and the Wars of the Roses', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, volume 53, 2009, pages 73-108.

Stamford was part of the estates of the duke of York and then Edward

IV, who gave it to Cecily, Duchess of York; the control exercised was always light. This article puts into perspective the town's pro-Yorkist stance during the crisis periods of 1450-52, the mythical sack of 1461, 1469-71 and 1483-85, and sets out the historiography of the traditional view. Four appendices cover the prosecutions of 1450-52, the 1452 pardons to men of Stamford, the chronicle accounts of the so-called sack and the fate of the parish churches.

Anne F. Sutton, 'The Merchant Adventurers of England: the place of the Adventurers of York and the North in the late middle ages', *Northern History*, volume 46, part 2, September 2009, pages 219-29.

A brief history of the national company which existed overseas under the privileges granted to it by the princes of the Low Countries and how its branches in England, such as London and York, coexisted, from 1296 to 1580. The foundation of the great hall in York, the successive fraternities and the increasing dominance of the Mercers' Company of York are put into context. The famous complaint of the northerners to the king in 1478 (and its exaggerations) is explained.

Meg Twycross, 'The king's peace and the play: the York Corpus Christi Eve proclamation', *Medieval Theatre*, volume 29, 2007, pages 121-50.

A detailed examination of the sole surviving proclamation made at the sheriffs' riding concerned with the peaceful conduct of the Corpus Christi festivities. This extends our knowledge of the organisation and route of the procession and play.

**THE ACCOUNTS OF WILLIAM WORSLEY,
DEAN OF ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, LONDON
1457-1497**

Edited by Stephanie Hovland and Hannes Kleineke

The accounts calendared in this volume illustrate the daily life of the household of a senior cleric during a dramatic period of English history. They shed light on the Dean's everyday life, but also document some extraordinary events, such as Worsley's participation in Edward IV's Scottish campaign of 1481 and his imprisonment in the Tower for his part in Perkin Warbeck's conspiracy in 1495.

Available to members for £18 plus £5.50 p&p (within UK) from the Society's Sales Liaison Officer, 42 Pewsey Vale, Forest Park, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 2YA.

Notes on Contributors

Jane Bridgeman, Associate Lecturer in Fashion History and Theory at Central St Martin's College of Art, London, is an historian of Italian renaissance dress and textiles.

William Connor has worked as an archivist for Southampton Corporation, the West Riding of Yorkshire and as Principal Archivist in Leeds 1982-2003. He is now a consultant.

Anne Crawford is the Archivist at Wells Cathedral. She is the author of *The Yorkists* and *Yorkist Lord: John Howard, 1st Duke of Norfolk*.

Clifford S.L. Davies is an Emeritus Fellow of Wadham College, Oxford. He has written extensively on fifteenth and sixteenth century English history, as well as, more recently, on seventeenth century topics.

✕ *Heather Falvey* tutors the Society's Paleography-by-Post course and is a member of both the *Bulletin* and Research sub-committees. Her PhD was on custom, resistance and politics in early modern England.

Alison Hanham is working on a revised edition of the Stonor Letters, to be offered in modern spelling, with extensive commentary.

John Hare teaches history at Peter Symonds' College Winchester and has written widely on aspects of medieval economic and social history in southern England.

Michael Jones, Correspondant de l'Institut, is Emeritus Professor of Medieval French History at the University of Nottingham.

✕ *Pamela King* is Professor of Medieval Studies at the University of Bristol. Her monograph, *The York Mystery Cycle and the Worship of the City* (2006) is a double award-winner.

Hannes Kleineke is a Senior Research Fellow at the History of Parliament. He is the author of *Parliamentarians at Law* (Wiley-Blackwell 2008) and *Edward IV* (Routledge 2009).

Tig Lang obtained her PhD in 1998 for her work on London surgeon John Bradmore. She has a long-standing interest in medieval medicine and in the fifteenth century.

✕ *Jessica Lutkin* recently completed her PhD thesis at Royal Holloway, University of London, and is currently the research assistant on the WARD 2 cataloguing project at The National Archives.

Carol M. Meale is Senior Research Fellow, University of Bristol. She has published extensively on fifteenth-century literature, including Malory; and on codicology and the history of the book.

Wendy Moorhen joined the Society in 1987 and is chairperson of the Thames Valley Branch and a former Research Officer of the Society. Currently researching the life of James Tyrell.

S.J. Payling is a Senior Research Fellow at the History of Parliament Trust.

James Petre. A member since 1967. Currently Assistant Director-General, Chartered Institute of Public Relations, London, and completing a thesis on the medieval fortifications of Cyprus.

X *Lynda Pidgeon* studied BA and MA at Reading with dissertations on members of the Wydevile family. Now working for a PhD at Southampton under Professor Curry on 'The Wydeviles: A Reputation Reviewed'.

A.J. Pollard is emeritus professor of history at the University of Teesside. He has published widely on fifteenth-century English history. His current focus is on late medieval popular politics.

Nigel Ramsay is a historian of the late medieval English Church: google on 'English Monastic Archives' for his current project, a reconstructional catalogue of the archives of English monasteries.

Livia Visser-Fuchs is writing a book on Jean de Wavrin's historical work.

Matthew Ward has recently commenced his PhD research at the University of Nottingham. He is preparing a thesis on elite monuments, c. 1440 to c. 1530.

Instructions to Contributors to the Ricardian

Contributions are welcome on any subject relevant to the aims of the Society. These may be illustrated by photographs (glossy prints showing good contrast) or by line drawings. All contributions, including letters, must be typewritten, with double line spacing and adequate margins, on one side of the paper only. Permission must be obtained for the use of copyright material, but this is not usually necessary for short quotes. References and notes must be given in one sequence at the end of the article. Details need not be given in full for second and subsequent references to the same source. They must take the form of the following examples:

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

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

Anyone interested in taking display advertisement space – full, half or quarter page – should contact the Editor.

Contributions for the 2011 issue of the *Ricardian* should be sent to Dr Anne F. Sutton, 44 Guildhall Street, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 1QF. Further advice on presentation may be obtained from the Editor.

Richard III and the Knave of Cards: An Illuminator's Model in Manuscript and Print, 1440s to 1490s

Anne F. Sutton and Livia Visser-Fuchs

The Antiquaries Journal, volume 79 (1999), pages 257-99.

For over 200 years it has been asserted (originally by Joseph Strutt) that an unflattering portrait of Richard Duke of Gloucester exists in the presentation miniature of the copy of the Chronicle of England by Jean de Wavrin owned by Edward IV. The authors recite the history of this assertion and prove that no such portrait exists. In fact the figure of the courtier concerned turns out to be a figure commonly used by illuminators and painters of all sorts, ranging from Dürer to the first designers of playing cards. The figure was in fact the original knave of cards. When Strutt and his imitators searched for a figure that answered their imaginary idea of what a villainous Richard looked like they chose, by chance, the knave of cards! They did not find a portrait of the historical Richard III. This article is extensively illustrated.

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