

Book Reviews

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY X: Parliament, Personalities and Power. Papers Presented to Linda S. Clark. Edited by Hannes Kleineke. The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, £50.
ISBN 978-1-84383-692-6

This volume is a tribute to Linda Clark, who edited the previous seven volumes in the series. As Linda Woodger she wrote an important DPhil. thesis ('Henry Bourghier, Earl of Essex and his Family (1408-83)', University of Oxford 1974). Also as Linda Woodger she wrote or co-authored no fewer than 1554 biographies for the 1386-1421 volumes of the *History of Parliament: The Commons* (4 vols, Stroud 1992), although as Linda Clark she was one of the three editors of the same volumes (with J.S. Roskell and Carole Rawcliffe). This bibliographical confusion is the only complaint one might bring against her. As Linda Clark she is now editing the subsequent (1422-1504) volumes, as well as contributing massively to the biographies (as she has to the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*). All in all, this is a prodigious contribution, by its nature far removed from the self-regarding egoism of most historians. It is good to have a photo of a cheerful Linda at grips with a formidable roll which I ought to be able to identify.

The volume follows the familiar pattern of the series: a mixture of very specific essays on particular subjects with wide-ranging surveys of major themes. The former are perhaps best briefly listed. Simon Payling bravely tackles the 'disputed descent' of the manor of Dodford (Northants.), which raged intermittently for no fewer than 175 years (1306-1481). Charles Moreton and Colin Richmond focus on Henry Inglowe, an East Anglian soldier, a sort of deuterio-Fastolf. James Ross examines the murder of Henry Howard by Lord Scrope in 1446; Henry VI's pardon to the blatantly guilty Scrope is cited as an example of the king's blatant irresponsibility. Carole Rawcliffe expounds the career of John Somerset, physician to Henry VI, Chancellor of the Exchequer, MP, influential in the establishment of Eton and King's; a fascinating example of the political significance of access to the royal person. Caroline Barron examines the young Thomas More's relations with the London Carthusians, arguing that More did not try his vocation in the monastery, but lived close-by, attending services, while studying at the Inns of Court. Perhaps the coincidence of the martyrdom of the Carthusians and of More himself in 1535 led his biographers to exaggerate the earlier connection. Hannes Kleineke looks at the East Anglian elections of 1461, especially the county elections in Norfolk and Suffolk. The former, of course, has been much studied since C.H. Williams published the sheriff's account of events in 1926. In spite of the victory at Towton the duke of Norfolk found his nominees vigorously opposed in Norfolk, but carried the day in Suffolk. Kleineke suggests that the touchiness of the Norfolk gentry (led by Paston and Berney) may have been due to the relative paucity of local borough seats to assuage their parliamentary ambitions.

More general in scope is John Bolton's examination of the ledgers of the Borromei Bank, kept in the family archive at Isola Bella (Lake Maggiore) as part of the 'Borromei Bank Research Project', to elucidate the volume of credit supplied to London merchants by Italian companies in the 1430s, a decade of serious disruption for both wool and cloth exports. The results are provisional. It is good to be reminded of the often overlooked commercial relationship between England and Italy; also to note the willing co-operation of London historians in identifying the often garbled names in the accounts. Particularly wide-ranging and stimulating is the chapter by Matthew Davies. Beginning with the employment of professional clerks by the London companies for record keeping, he shows how the companies developed an increasing self-vaunting image, in the late fifteenth century and again (Stow etc.) in the later years of Elizabeth I. Interesting and surprising is the tendency to celebrate those Londoners who had risen to military prominence, Sir John Hawkwood providing an early example. Since Burckhardt historians have treated 'civic chivalry' with derision as an incongruous incursion by the bourgeoisie into aristocratic territory. Whether contemporaries such as Edward IV or the Burgundian dukes – or, later, Henry VIII and Elizabeth – who pandered to civic pretensions did so while laughing behind their sleeves is, of course, difficult to determine. Equally intriguing is the demonstration by Elizabeth Danbury that *Domine salvum fac regem* was a royal motto under Henry VI, as was its French version under Edward IV, but that the English 'God save the king' only became common under Henry VII. David Grummitt argues, very bravely, that the image of the soldier was at a very low ebb from 1417 (so much, then, for the cult of Henry V), then gradually improved from Edward IV's reign to Henry VIII's, when soldiering became, apparently, the essence of civic virtue. Grummitt's use of criminal records is ingenious, and I would dearly like to believe his argument. I do, however, feel that for Henry VIII's reign he has too readily assumed that the preaching of military virtue by government propagandists like Richard Morison was accepted by their target audience.

Finally, the volume's lead article is Tony Pollard's 'The People and Parliament'. This is a well-trodden field but here significantly advanced. Pollard argued that 'the people', or at least some of them, actually played a part; as representatives of those smaller boroughs which had not yet had their representation taken over by the gentry; or by attendance at elections, where checking on formal qualification must have been almost impossible, while unqualified by-standers could intimidate those actually voting. Most interesting is Pollard's contention that the concept of a fundamental right to petition was widespread, so that what looked to the authorities like rebellion (Cade's Revolt, or the later Pilgrimage of Grace) might appear to participants as a legitimate example of that right. He has put his finger on a continuing democratic tradition, notably alive in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, or even today.

There is a good deal to chew over in this volume. It is also evidence of that friendly co-operation among historians which, perhaps exceptionally, characterises

our period. It is superbly produced by Boydell Press, complete with the index indispensable (but not always provided) for such collections of assorted papers. But it is expensive. I wonder if a less elegant format (paperback, a less elegant print), as with the Richard III Society's *Richard III and East Anglia*, edited Livia Visser-Fuchs (2010), at a mere £5, might be a sacrifice worth making.

CLIFFORD S.L. DAVIES

HERESY AND ORTHODOXY IN EARLY ENGLISH LITERATURE, 1350–1680. Edited by Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin and John Flood. 2010. Dublin Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Literature. Four Courts Press, Dublin, €55
ISBN 978-1-84682-226-1

This interdisciplinary collection of essays by medieval and early modern literary scholars publishes the proceedings of a one-day conference held at Trinity College Dublin in 2007. The editors' introduction not only summarises the papers, but prefaces them, firstly, with the broad definition of heresy in use here – that is, one that ranges from religious doctrinal deviation to political rebellion to divergence from social norms and expectations – and, secondly, with a brief history of religious heresy in the British Isles throughout the middle ages. Challenging the notion that Britain was a heresy-free zone before the advent of Wyclif, the editors cite a plethora of earlier heresy cases in England and Ireland.

The first essay is John Flood's intelligent examination of the problem of identifying Lollard texts. He takes as his point of departure *The Two Ways*, a rather puritanical tract by the 'Lollard knight' Sir John Clanvowe, which strongly advocates a *sola scriptura* approach to theology. The essay gently meanders through the subject, pointing out the ambiguities and pitfalls involved in defining heretics generally and Lollard texts in particular. Much of this discussion is not new, but it avails itself of the latest scholarship and cites little-known examples – for instance, Archbishop Arundel's praise of Anne of Bohemia, Richard II's consort, for her possession of a 'good and trewe' English translation of the glossed gospels in a eulogy that he delivered at her burial in 1394 (p. 29, fn. 38). In the end Flood suggests what he calls a 'cluster account' approach to the problem of identification – namely, whether a text meets at least three of what he has identified as the key criteria. This proposed solution shares similarities with the 'family resemblance' theory recently advocated by J. Patrick Hornbeck (in *What is a Lollard?*).

The next essay, by Frances McCormack, author of *Chaucer and the Culture of Dissent* (2007), places two of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* in binary opposition to one another and locates them firmly within the religious debates of the time. She argues that Chaucer's depiction of the Parson and the Pardoner 'surrounded them with images and language redolent of the false prophet motif that was bandied about in heresy accusations of the period' (p. 39). Both orthodox and heterodox preachers accused their opponents of being false prophets – a concept firmly

grounded in Scripture and patristic writings, and an issue of contemporary concern. Chaucer's portrayal of both characters, particularly the Parson, who dared not be accused of heresy, is steeped heavily in this prevailing climate of fear and mistrust. That Chaucer understood well the theological questions under debate and had to tread a fine line himself is her contention. His own inscrutable attitude towards religion in the poem is thus explained.

In a long essay full of interest ('Erasing Oldcastle: some literary reactions to the Lollard Rising of 1414'), John Scattergood examines literary attitudes towards Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, leader of the abortive Lollard uprising in the first year of Henry V's reign. After a brief review of the career of this erstwhile royal favourite and the events that precipitated the revolt, he draws attention to two documentary erasures relating to Oldcastle. The first is found in the indictment and mesne process against Oldcastle and two of his co-conspirators enrolled in the records of the king's bench court, around which Paul Strohm articulated an elaborate thesis of a Lancastrian frame-up of the great man. The second occurs in a copy of the Brut chronicle that is now in Trinity College, Dublin, MS 990 (on f. 175v), where an attempt was made to erase the phrase 'that was the lord Cobham' from its account of Oldcastle's arrest for Lollardy and escape from the Tower of London in 1413. The Trinity MS was once owned by the nuns of the Dominican priory of Dartford, located near to the Cobham seat of Cooling Castle, and it was still in Kent in the sixteenth century when Scattergood surmises that the unsuccessful erasure was made in deference to the locally-powerful Cobham family. The embarrassment caused by Oldcastle was most famously manifest in Shakespeare's renaming of the character Oldcastle (to Falstaff) in the play *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth*, upon which his *Henry IV* was based. Scattergood moots the idea that it may have been the Cobhams or possibly Puritan sensibilities which forced Shakespeare's hand, the character's buffoonery being at odds with the proto-Protestant image of Oldcastle put forward by John Bale in 1544. Scattergood might also have mentioned the discomfort that Oldcastle's treason caused for Lollards themselves, as attested by the insistence of Richard Belward, prosecuted in Norwich diocese in 1424, that Oldcastle 'was a true catholicke man, & falsly condemned and put to death withoute any reasonable cause' (John Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, 1563 edition, Book 3, p. 400).

Scattergood then turns to contemporary literary attitudes to Oldcastle. These include the well-known chastisements of Hoccleve, Lydgate and the anonymous author of the poem *Defend us All from Lollardy*. The latter in particular complained of knights and laymen meddling in the clergy's affairs and urged Oldcastle to restrict his reading to the sorts of texts that befitted someone of his estate – namely, military texts, romances and conduct literature. Less familiar, however, are the veiled references contained in a sermon putatively delivered before the king at Epiphany 1414, just days before the revolt. Preaching on Moses and the burning bush, the preacher's approach is subtle, but politically well chosen, as he warns laymen not to be too inquisitive in looking into the Bible, baldly stating 'prestes

shuld principally entermet to lern Pe lawe of Christe and lawfully to teche itt. And lower men shuld holde hem contente with Pe questions and Pe sotelte of Per own labour' (p. 60). Scattergood concludes by pointing out that lay men and women nevertheless enjoyed a privileged position when it came to the possession of forbidden English texts and here Oldcastle broke the rules, upsetting 'the delicate balance of conformity and freedom that the gentry enjoyed in relation to religious issues' (p. 73), hence the embarrassment, erasures and oblique allusions.

Felicity Cable's essay on misogamy as heresy is not about religious heresy at all, but the social heresy committed by women who refused to marry, as depicted in two medieval romances, *Ipomadon* and *Partonope*. Her analysis of the characters and plots of these works is intermeshed with historical context to buttress her argument that women who would not marry posed a threat to the fabric of late medieval society. She cites as evidence, for example, the strictures placed on the beguins in the Low Countries and legislation enacted in Coventry in 1492 which forbade single women to live alone. While her analysis of the romances, which she sees as a form of conduct literature, seems plausible enough, her thesis would have been significantly strengthened if she had included contextual information on the composition, dissemination and reception of the French and English versions of the romance texts themselves.

Amanda Piessé's 'Hidden heresies in *Jacke Jugeler*' is an analysis of a Tudor classical drama, attributed to Nicholas Udall, a playwright, royal servant, schoolmaster and Protestant reformer (1505–56) and based on the play *Amphitruo* by the Roman dramatist Plautus. It is an existential drama which questions how truth is encountered, tested and understood, focussing on the difference between appearance and reality. The play's epilogue clearly engages with matters of religious belief and the overall theme, in Piessé's view, has resonances with the contemporary eucharistic controversy. Kate Roddy returns us more directly to religious heresy with her essay on the martyr Anne Askew, who was burnt at the stake during the crackdown on Protestant reformism in the latter years of Henry VIII's reign. Her offence was reading Scripture publicly (in church), which had been forbidden to the laity under new legislation. A purportedly faithful record of Askew's interrogation in Newgate prison has been preserved by John Bale and John Foxe, and Roddy's analysis of this interrogation concentrates on Askew's deep faith in the doctrine of *sola scriptura*. She argues that Askew's stance was a conscious attempt to absorb or subsume the text itself into her body, thereby imagining the body as a receptacle or means of preserving the text, an idea with echoes throughout the entire apostolic tradition.

Mark S. Sweetnam's essay on heresy and religious toleration in the later thought of John Donne examines how this poet and preacher used the concept of heresy as a unifying force at a time of internecine strife in the Church. He preached sermons at the beginning of Charles I's reign which advocated moderation and denounced accusations of heresy as damaging sources of conflict. A tactic often employed by Catholic polemicists, he insisted that such accusations should be

eschewed by the tolerant and accommodating English church. Finally, in 'Obscure and giddy sects: John Milton and the scandal of divorce' Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin describes how Milton was himself the victim of accusations of heresy for his advocacy of divorce on grounds of incompatibility. Much of this impressive essay is devoted to explaining the historical context of this charge: the early modern concept of scandal, the religious climate of the 1640s and Milton's own simultaneous struggle to maintain his credentials as a mainstream Protestant and justify his progressive views on divorce.

All in all, a high standard has been maintained throughout. The editors have been assiduous in correcting typographical errors and have commendably produced a useful combined bibliography. One anomaly, however, must be noted: puzzling spaces occur in many of the Middle English quotations in Scattergood's essay. These evidently denote where a yogh character (ȝ) should have been inserted (by the author), probably in a late stage of production. (The true culprit here, surely, is Bill Gates.) A final quibble is that at €55 this volume (of 174 pages) is overpriced.

MAUREEN JURKOWSKI

THE MEDIEVAL GENTRY. *Power, Leadership and Choice during the Wars of the Roses.* Malcolm Mercer. 2010. Continuum, London, £65.

ISBN 978-1441-19064-2

RICHARD III AND EAST ANGLIA: *Magnates, Gilds and Learned Men.* Proceedings of the 8th Triennial Conference of The Richard III Society held at Queens' College, Cambridge, 15-17 April 2005. Edited by Livia Visser-Fuchs. 2010. The Richard III Society, London, £5, plus £3 p&cp UK and £4.50 RoFw. Available from A.F. Sutton, 44 Guildhall St., Bury St Edmunds, IP33 1QF; sterling cheques to be made payable to Richard III Society. Or from sales Liaison Officer.

ISBN 978-0904-893-19-9

'Henry I pray you ffayle not now as ever I may do ffor yow', Warwick the Kingmaker's autograph postscript to his appeal on 25 March 1471 to Sir Henry Vernon to join him in opposing 'yonder man Edward, the kinges oure soverain lord gret ennemy rebelle and traitour ... now late arrived in the north parties of this land and commyng fast on southward accompanied with Flemynges, Esterlinges, and Danes' is well known. As are the more extensive letters which George, Duke of Clarence, sent at the same time, urging Vernon, one of his own retainers, to raise his men and hurry to meet him in the West Country; so too the delaying tactics shrewdly deployed by Vernon to avoid being present either at Barnet or Tewkesbury and the way in which he worked his way back into Yorkist favour once those battles had apparently resolved the struggle for the English throne. With hindsight unavailable to Vernon when he was reacting to his lords'

peremptory requests, we know, of course, that the Wars of the Roses were not yet over in 1471 and that making choices about political conduct, who to support or whether to rebel, would continue to exercise most gentry of late medieval England. Not least when Richard III acceded and was then challenged by Henry Tudor. It would influence their behaviour either individually or as a social group until well into Tudor times. In this lively, confident and informative account, Mercer provides a clear and generally instructive analysis of the place of the gentry (defined here in the Stubbsian sense of all those 'between the baronage and the yeomanry'), the essential personnel for administration whether for local government or for aristocratic households; what might shape their decision making, their part in warfare and violence, their public service and personal concerns. If in the end, the conclusions to be drawn are fairly predictable, given the wide variety of experience, age, wealth and connections among what at first may appear to be a relatively homogeneous social grouping (that some men or families were loyal, chivalric, prepared to die in defence of a master or cause, took their contractual obligations or public duties seriously, that others were more independent or more cautious, tried to avoid commitment, to perform only the minimum requested of them, yet others could be bribed to change camp and ruthlessly pursued their own interests at the expense of their neighbours, and so on) this should not surprise us. Was this not already the contradictory sort of behaviour displayed by particular knightly families that can occasionally be glimpsed in the Anarchy of Stephen's reign, or during the rebellions led by Simon de Montfort and Thomas of Lancaster? What is perhaps new in the later fifteenth century is simply that the careers of so many relatively minor figures in so many parts of the country, thanks to the wealth of public and private records for late medieval England and to a host of modern regional studies (several still in thesis form), can be followed in such detail that plausible suggestions can be made about what was driving them to make the choices that they did. All readers will find new and interesting information, even on men or families or regions they think they know well, thanks to a wide trawl of this good modern secondary literature, the major printed sources and nuggets Mercer has mined in The National Archives. Just a few caveats should be entered: his sense of geography is occasionally awry. Hedgeley Moor and Hexham are strangely located in Yorkshire (p. 28); Bredwardine lies about fifteen not fifty miles south-west of Mortimer's Cross (p. 53). There are other small factual errors. The jousts referred to on page 37 took place in 1390 not 1380; Sir Hugh Calveley and his companions were ordered not to join Charles II of Navarre in 1364 not 1346 (p. 54); if French mercenaries had been supplied in 1471 it would have been by Louis XI rather than Louis XII (p. 55), where the account of the career of the Gascon exile Gaillard de Durfort is also muddled; John Romney could not have been serving Ralph, Lord Cromwell at Northampton in 1460 since that old warrior had died in 1456; the battle of Shrewsbury occurred in 1403 not 1404 (p. 63), were the main ones I noted. Nor am I convinced that 'the vast majority of the [English] gentry would have had limited access to a master at a school of

defence' (p. 37) before 1500, but these are quibbles which should not seriously detract from recognizing Mercer's achievement in bringing into focus the political and psychological pressures that drove the myriad-hued gentry in a turbulent, swiftly changing world.

Several of the papers which Livia Visser-Fuchs has brought together in *Richard III and East Anglia* provide further evidence for the political behaviour of individuals or of families in the late fifteenth century, though the majority of those concerned come from magnate rather than gentry circles. Anne Crawford shows why the Howard family remained loyal to Richard to the bitter end; James Ross considers the personal choices of the Veres, certainly the most devoted Lancastrian nobles in the region, while Sean Cunningham examines the role of Edmund de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, finally executed by Henry VIII in 1513, but paying particular attention to his activities in the years 1499–1501 when he was at the heart of the Yorkist cause. Anne Sutton contributes a valuable survey of Richard III's own East Anglian landed possessions, suggesting a more nuanced interpretation of his controversial acquisition of the lands of the dowager countess of Oxford (1472–73). Along with the editor, she also relates, after a concise retrospective on the interventions of Henry VI and Edward IV in Cambridge affairs, the fascinating story of Richard's generally friendly relations with the University where colleges such as Queens' and King's particularly benefited from his generosity, with the result that individual fellows like Thomas Barowe (d. 1499) were still keeping his memory publicly alive a decade and more after his death. This is a significant contribution on Yorkist patronage of learning and learned men, among them Andrew Doker (d. 1484) and Hugh Trotter (d. 1503), and on the connections between Richard's College at Middleham and Cambridge. Finally, David Dymond produces a brief but lively synthesis on the functions and popularity of socio-religious guilds, with emphasis on East Anglian examples, the later Middle Ages and the period down to their abolition in 1547–48. This, he provocatively suggests, 'stopped, or even reversed, the spread of lay participation in local affairs for a century or more'. A mixed, slightly tardy outcome of an enjoyable conference, this is a collection from which not only Ricardians but many other readers will derive much benefit.

MICHAEL JONES

BLOODIED BANNERS. Martial Display on the Medieval Battlefield. Robert W. Jones. 2010. The Boydell Press. £50

ISBN 978-1-84383-561-5

How is it possible that a fifteenth-century author can bring himself to call a bloody and hard-fought battle *une belle besongne* (a beautiful thing)? Particularly as the author himself did in his time fight on numerous battlefields and knew very well that he was fortunate to have ended his military career and reached old age without physical injury or moral blame. The book reviewed here is one of the studies I turned to for an answer.

The author's argument is that display was as important and vital on the battlefield as it was in the 'social arena, both at an individual and at a collective level'. Eight of the book's nine chapters provide the evidence, citing many and varied – perhaps too many and too varied – fictional and non-fictional sources from the early middle ages to the Napoleonic era (the latter for comparison). The first three chapters describe the role of heraldry in battle. Painted shields, horse trappings and all kinds of flags greatly contributed to the 'beauty' of the event, and they not only showed to those present who was who and told friend from foe, they also reminded the onlookers of the martial reputation and the family and other associations of the individual aristocratic warrior and thus contributed to his effectiveness in the field. Above all the colourful banner of the commander served as 'a symbol of identity, authority and status', and so it continued to do down the ages. Badges worn by lower status combatants on the other hand fostered a sense of community and safety and promoted good discipline.

Chapter Four discusses 'audible display', the use of drums and other musical instruments and also war-cries of various kinds, which were needed to communicate between members of one party, but were also meant to inspire fear in the enemy. Here as in the earlier chapters comparison is made to the instinctive behaviour of humans and animals when trying to impress an opponent. It is argued that all these types of display had meaning in a social context, establishing a hierarchy, and could save the life of the individual, noble or common, in deadly surroundings. An equally double role is given to body armour in Chapters Five and Six: it gave a man status, made him look bigger and more threatening, and made him feel safer, but did it actually protect him? On the one hand there is enough evidence that every sensible warrior was careful to put on his protective wear before he engaged, but many quotations from romances can be given in which the hero splices his opponent's armour from top to bottom and which seem to indicate that its protective efficiency was actually not great. (It could be argued, however, that such feats are described in romance *because* they were impossible in real life and thus created an image of supernatural prowess, as it were, at one stroke, *lvf*). Particularly interesting is the section that discusses the ceremony of arming a knight, claiming that it was a transitional process, turning a man of peace into a 'war machine'. Gerald of Wales is quoted: 'when [the warrior] has laid aside his arms, ferocity should also be laid aside, a humane code of behaviour should be once more adopted'. Emphasis is put on the symbolic importance of wearing or not wearing the helmet as donning it further 'dehumanised' the wearer and signified his actual intention to fight.

The great value of his sword and horse to the fighting man may be another obvious fact, but it is useful to see many examples of their symbolic significance. Yuval Harari in his study of Renaissance military memoirs has shown how their authors were more likely to describe the loss of their favourite horse than the death of their wife, and how the moment the protagonist 'could mount a horse' is the turning point in his life. In the book under review more could perhaps have been

made of the ceremonies performed at a chivalric funeral, during which the deceased seems to be totally identified with his *mistère*: his helmet, sword, shield and fully accoutred horse, which are all offered at the altar with the utmost solemnity and perhaps pre-Christian symbolism. The last evidentiary chapter deals with religious symbolism used in war: the religious significance of every item of the knight's equipment (e.g. the spurs signify love and fear of God), the evolution of the 'good Christian knight', the use of relics carried into battle and devout images and inscriptions on shield and harness.

Finally Jones brings his collective material to bear on the argument whether there was a military 'revolution' in the fourteenth century, citing many examples of scholars who have put forward such a theory. Put very simply he claims that as there were no significant changes in military display – not even with the coming of larger armies and the rise of the common soldier – and the underlying ethos and culture remained the same (passing into those of the officer class of later centuries), there was no real revolution in the way war was waged.

There are fourteen illustrations, nine colour plates and a shortish index. Argument or no argument, theory or no theory, this book provides a large amount of material for those interested in medieval military culture, and a number of new viewpoints and emphases. The 'beauty' of a battle – and not only before it had started – apparently had a vital part to play in the survival of the participants.

LIVIA VISSER-FUCHS

FATAL COLOURS: The Battle of Towton 1461. George Goodwin. 2011. Weidenfeld and Nicholson, an imprint of Orion Publishing Group, London, £20.

ISBN 978-0-297-86071-6

TOWTON: The Battle of Palm Sunday Field 1461. John Sadler. 2011. Pen and Sword Books Ltd, 47 Church St, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S70 2AS, £19.99.

ISBN 978-1-84415-965-9

Last year, 2011, was the 550th anniversary of the battle of Towton fought between Lancastrian forces under the command of the duke of Somerset and Yorkists under the command of Edward of York. Predictably two books were published celebrating this fact. They are very different books. John Sadler is a military historian, an expert on medieval warfare, George Goodwin is a more general historian. Sadler's book thus deals more with the battle and with the military aspects of events. With this battle, this is important since the tactics adopted on both sides and the number of men that were present on each side are both important points in talking about what is always spoken of as England's bloodiest and biggest battle. It is unfortunate that both books use so much of their space describing events before the battle, thus both are as much histories of the Wars of the Roses as of the battle of Towton, Goodwin's particularly so.

Sadler begins in 1400 with a summary of the events leading to the outbreak of hostilities between the forces of Lancaster and York in 1455 at the first battle of St Albans. The battles, of first and second St Albans, Mortimers Cross and Wakefield are dealt with in some detail. All battles are complicated and in these cases particularly so, and it was probably a mistake to go into them in detail without any plans to help understand events. Goodwin is better in that he summarises them more. He also uses the recent book by Helen Cox (*The Battle of Wakefield Revisited*, 2010) which radically reinterprets the events at Wakefield. Sadler does not use Cox's book. Goodwin begins his book with an account of the first battle of St Albans in 1455 and then goes back to 1422 and discusses events up to 1455. Following this, he goes on to the events of 1460/1461 and the claim to the throne by Edward of York. Both he and Sadler begin their accounts of the Towton campaign proper at this point.

Before the main battle of Towton there was a skirmish at Ferrybridge, south of the main battlefield. This was important since the Yorkist victory here ensured that the main Yorkist army could advance north without hindrance towards the main Lancastrian position just south of the village of Towton. Sadler deals with this in most detail.

Both authors deal well with the course of the actual battle, Sadler at greater length and in general displaying his greater knowledge of medieval warfare. Both authors bring out the horrific nature of the battle, fought in a blinding snowstorm over many hours. Both acknowledge that the Yorkists quite probably only won because the strong wind blowing from the south gave them an initial advantage. This wind, by blowing the snow into the faces of the Lancastrians and by ensuring that the Yorkist arrows had a much greater range while the Lancastrians arrows fell short, made the Yorkist archers very much more effective, causing heavy Lancastrian losses and ensuring they had to advance from their strong initial position and attack the Yorkists. In addition, the duke of Norfolk, who arrived late on the battlefield with his troops, and attacked the Lancastrian flank must have contributed to the final collapse of the Lancastrian lines. The resulting slaughter was undoubtedly horrific and both authors are aware of and bring out this aspect of events.

The question of how many men were present at the battle of Towton is one of the interesting points about the battle. It has been credited with being the largest engagement in terms of the numbers present ever fought on English soil. How many were there has been calculated in different ways but Sadler settles for up to 35,000 Lancastrians and up to 30,000 Yorkists after a thorough discussion. Goodwin also discusses this matter but comes to no definite conclusion. Both authors suggest that the number killed could have been more than 20,000.

Both authors discuss the grave pit containing thirty-six bodies found in 1996 in the course of works at Towton Hall, although only Goodwin includes information on the very recent battlefield finds. He describes the composite lead and iron ball found recently, thus confirming the use of guns heavier than hand guns, as well as

describing the shattered hand guns also found recently. He gives more information on soldiery, weapons, and their life and training than Sadler. Goodwin's description of weapons and their use is perhaps more informative for readers not familiar with the period. He has an excellent discussion of the use and power of the long bow. He is good on the food the army would have eaten and the problems of provisioning such large bodies of men. Sadler has an appendix covering the war in the north, 1461–1464, that is the battles of Hexham and Hedgeley Moor and the siege of Bamburgh castle, which ended the campaign in the north.

The maps in Goodwin's book are considerably better than those in Sadler's and very much more informative both as to the course of the battle and the area fought over. Both books are well illustrated, Sadler in black and white, Goodwin wholly in colour.

These books are complementary in some ways although Sadler's is more accurately a history of the battle than is Goodwin's. Both have notes of sources and a bibliography. Both have references to websites, Goodwin also to online *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* articles. These only work if you have a subscription to the *ODNB*. He also has a long introduction by David Starkey about kingship and leadership in the fifteenth century.

PETER HAMMOND

THE WOLLATON MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPTS. Texts, Owners and Readers. Edited by Ralph Hanna and Thorlac Turville-Petre. 2010. York Medieval Press, in association with Boydell and Brewer, Woodbridge, £50.

ISBN 978-1-903153-34-5.

The library of the Willoughby family, latterly Lords Middleton, of Wollaton (Notts.), is very possibly the best-preserved book-collection of any English family of the later Middle Ages. Much of it has remained together, deposited in 1947 at Nottingham University Library, and then, in large part, purchased by the University of Nottingham in 2007. The family's archive and manuscripts were together the subject of an excellent Report by W.H. Stevenson, published by the Historical Manuscripts Commission in 1911; but it nevertheless remains true to say that the medieval riches of the collection have not been as well known as they deserved to be.

As with almost every large library, there have in the past been losses, some substantial. In 1925 the then Lord Middleton sold several hundred books, including a few manuscripts, at Christie's; and a further few were sold at Christie's in 2005. There has thus been created the challenge, of reconstructing what has been dispersed, as well as of describing what has been brought into a permanent safe home. Can the present book be said to have met this challenge successfully?

Most of the book's chapters are of a high calibre. A context-setting preface is followed by a brisk run-through of the collection's history. It is shown to have been

formed between about 1460 and 1540, principally by Richard Willoughby (d. 1471), who was perhaps also responsible for the purchase of the very handsome Wollaton Antiphonal for Wollaton parish church, and by his cousin and heir, Henry Willoughby (d. 1528). The second chapter, by Gavin Cole and Thorlac Turville-Petre, very appropriately discusses the books of one of the Willoughbys' wealthiest Nottinghamshire friends, Sir Thomas Chaworth (d. 1459); two of his books may have passed to or through the hands of Richard Willoughby. Alixe Bovey then discusses what is in effect the star of the whole book, the Wollaton Antiphonal. This is a useful account, setting it in the context of 'Kinship and Commemoration' – though it is disappointing that she has so little to say about its abundant coats of arms, preferring to refer the reader to an article published in the *Transactions of the Thoroton Society*, volume 36 (1932). We are then brought back in time, to the early thirteenth century, for Alison Stones's careful description of two French manuscripts – one of them the earliest fully illustrated romance collection that is extant today – which was acquired by one of the Willoughby family, perhaps in the fifteenth century. No less valuably, Derek Pearsall analyses the Wollaton copy of Gower's *Confessio Amantis*; this is a masterly piece of work, well worth reading quite apart from its relevance to the rest of the volume. And Rob Lutton then brings two or three threads together by looking at the Willoughbys' religious and devotional texts in terms of what they may tell us about their owners' and readers' outlooks – not easy, given that no wills survive for any of the late medieval Willoughby women.

In a sense, the real meat of the book is in its second part, 'The Catalogue'. This offers detailed descriptions of a dozen manuscripts and a great many more binding fragments and 'Miscellaneous Items' that are in the Nottingham University Library today, as well as of another dozen manuscripts that have been lost to the collection. Many of these descriptions are both detailed and discursive, longer and more satisfactory than the style of cataloguing which the late N.R. Ker exemplified at its best. The section concludes with a list of the earlier of the printed books that were dispersed by sale in 1925 – but without its obvious complement, a list of the earlier printed books that were purchased with the manuscripts in 2007. The volume itself then finishes with a large array of photographs and some family trees of the Willoughbys and Chaworths. The photographs would be far more useful if they had had their relevance explained, perhaps with cross-references to the printed text.

To some medievalists, the family collection is in fact best known for some (early?) Tudor Willoughby's dismemberment of a most splendid Bible of c. 700 from Jarrow or Wearmouth. The editors have not shirked this embarrassment, although the whimsical suggestion is made: that since ten leaves were used to protect cartularies that already had parchment covers, 'the bible leaves were perhaps as much for show as protection' (p. 16).

It is perhaps unfair to criticise a book for what it is not, but this reviewer finds it a great pity that the book's focus is so rigorously on the Willoughbys' literary,

devotional and liturgical texts. The family was professionally at home with legal works, for generation after generation, and it does seem regrettable that the editors are clearly so uninterested in that side of their lives. This is shown most strikingly in the meagre account (p. 118) of the book of readings and other legal texts, MS Mi L 18/2. It is not clear whether this has actually been looked at; and in any case no reference is given to the close and far more detailed account given of it by Sir John Baker in his *Readers and Readings in the Inns of Court and Chancery* (Selden Society, Supplementary Series, 13, 2000), page 551. He points out that its various text-explicits are signed 'per me R.W.', that it has Willoughby mentions in various places, and that its front cover is also lettered 'R.W.' Equally perversely, the editors say nothing of use to the historically-minded reader about the family's cartularies (p. 116), beyond describing their binding-materials, layout and script. Who commissioned these books, and why? To this reviewer, such questions cry out to be posed – and addressed.

NIGEL RAMSAY

LATE MEDIEVAL IPSWICH. Trade and Industry. Nicholas R. Amor. 2011. The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, £... ISBN 978-1-84383-673-5

Ipswich, by 1400 'a self-governing borough for two hundred years and an important trading port for six hundred more', has been seen as a relatively successful town in the difficult circumstances of the late middle ages. Nicholas Amor's primary aim is to test this view of Ipswich. His book focuses specifically on the fifteenth century and is the first systematic exploration of the town's economic history in this period.

Dr Amor establishes a clear context for developments in Ipswich. In his introduction he surveys the longstanding interest of economic historians in the fifteenth century – as one of transition to a more 'modern' economic structure, as one of particular difficulty for public urban life, and as one of harsh European economic problems, which produced a particularly severe slump in the 1440s to the 1470s. He also provides a brief physical description of the town and includes here two useful maps of its wards, parishes and main features. His first chapter then explains in more detail the structure of England's economy, with sections on population, supply and demand, business organisation, investment and innovation, regulation and competition. These provide the conditions for the changes in Ipswich's trade and industry. The following six chapters, arranged in pairs to cover first overseas trade and then domestic trade and industry, examine the town's fortunes in more detail.

Chapters Two and Three cover the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when Ipswich's overseas trade was fairly healthy. The Low Countries and Gascony were the major markets; Ipswich also had contact with the Baltic; and Ipswich men and ships played an active part in this trade alongside other

Englishmen and foreigners. Wool and cloth were the major exports, and wine was the most valuable import, followed by dyes, iron, foodstuff, tiles and timber. Dr Amor analyses Ipswich's economic hinterland, which included villages and small towns in a twenty mile radius as well as London, through litigation at the town courts, the distribution of wine, the victualling of the town, and industry in the town itself. Although the urban cloth industry was feeling pressure from rural makers and the leather industry was declining, nonetheless Dr Amor is able to entitle Chapter Three 'A flourishing town'.

Chapters Four and Five show a more troubled town in the middle of the century. Wars and political disputes upset Ipswich's markets. Wool exports collapsed entirely, probably because of the credit demands of the new Staple regulations in the 1430s; wine imports crashed after the English loss of Gascony; fewer Ipswich men and ships engaged in overseas trade in the face of London and Hansard competition. Nonetheless for a time cloth exports rose in response to growing Hanseatic activity at the port and slight links with Spain through Juan Perys (not Pevys) suggest some attempt to compensate for the Gascon loss. Internally the town also had problems of falling trade and rent receipts, and dropped steadily down the league of cloth producing towns in Suffolk. Yet here too the picture is mixed, with the commercialisation of the ale industry, the introduction of beer, thriving victualling trades, some growth in leather and metal industries, and a greater variety of consumer products on offer suggesting bright spots.

Chapters Six and Seven cover the last thirty years of the century. Overseas trade in the east coast ports remained difficult, and London competition has been blamed for this, but Ipswich showed a stronger recovery than others and Dr Amor argues for positive advantages in Ipswich's relationship with London. Imports and exports rose; the Ipswich merchants' share of overseas trade (except for wool) began to grow again; and trade with the hinterland grew. The continued growth of the victualling trade, the active cloth finishing processes in the town, new buildings, and a taste for pewter goods all suggest comfortable prosperity in the town at this time.

Throughout the book the picture Dr Amor paints is nuanced. Some activities rise, others decline, others change shape. Trade and industries change in response to general trends and to causes and factors specific to Ipswich. Much of what he has to say on the trends in Ipswich's trade and industry will probably not surprise historians, but through his constant analysis of record sources he has placed future discussions of Ipswich's economic fortunes on a firm evidential base. His succinct final chapter sums up his own argument from this evidence. He concludes that Ipswich does not fit neatly into a black and white picture of urban crisis or success. It looked promising at the beginning of the century; it certainly suffered in the mid-century slump, but Hanseatic trade and internal developments left it some prosperity; it then fared quite well at the end of the century, certainly recovering better than other east coast ports. Its resilience at least partially justifies the more optimistic views of its fortunes.

The book is logically and clearly structured, readable, and admirably grounded in archival research in local and national repositories. Twenty-six tables and four graphs drawn from the record material display the evidence on which Dr Amor bases his conclusions, and six maps of Ipswich, its hinterland and its European markets are helpful to the reader. Appendices include biographies of prominent Ipswich citizens and lists of Ipswich bailiffs, of memorials to Ipswich burgesses, of merchants shipping wool from Ipswich 1396–1413, of Ipswich merchants active in 1396–98, and of denizens other than Ipswich men trading in 1459–66. Such a clear study will be welcome to economic and local historians alike.

WENDY R. CHILDS

JOHN DE VERE, THIRTEENTH EARL OF OXFORD 1442–1513. 'The Foremost Man of the Kingdom'. James Ross. 2011. The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, £60.
ISBN 978-1-84383-614-8.

The thirteenth earl of Oxford was one of only a handful of nobles who, after 1461, were committed Lancastrians. He played a decisive role in the defeat of Richard III at Bosworth and served Henry VII, whom he outlived, loyally and effectively. It is surprising therefore that no scholarly life of the earl had been written until the appearance of this outstanding study by James Ross. It is not that the sources are sparse. Ross makes excellent use not only of government records, but also family estate papers and the Paston Letters. Given that de Vere was a patron of the Pastons, and features prominently in their correspondence, it is all the more remarkable that until now no one has used them systematically to illuminate his career.

John de Vere was the second son of the twelfth earl of Oxford, whose estates, notwithstanding the title, lay predominantly in Essex and Suffolk. He inherited the title as a consequence of the execution of his father and elder brother for treason in 1462. Ross offers the first wholly satisfactory explanation of this puzzling incident. He suggests that the Lancastrian plotter was Aubrey de Vere, John's elder brother and heir to the earldom and that their cautious father was guilty of no more than misprision – failure to inform the king. His condemnation and execution by Edward IV was, for that king, exceptionally harsh. It made of his twenty year old second son a life-long enemy of the house of York. It was personal, not political. John, however, was treated kindly; there was no attainder and after a year he was admitted to the earldom. Almost certainly this was because of the support of the mighty earl of Warwick, whose sister he married before 1465. Thereafter the young earl was a close ally of the Kingmaker, following him into opposition and rebellion later in the decade. His continued resistance to the house of York after 1471 was fired by an unsatisfied thirst for revenge for the deaths of 1462. For him, it seems it was a matter of family honour. And his vendetta extended to Edward IV's younger brother, Richard of Gloucester, who in 1473–4

(he later claimed in an account of her mistreatment) bullied his defenceless, elderly mother into granting her estates to him. It may be argued that Gloucester negotiated fairly; but there can be no denying that in Oxford's eyes she was made an offer she could not refuse. This man hated Richard III as much as he hated Edward IV. Imprisoned in Hammes Castle, near Calais from 1474, there was little he could do until Richard III's controversial accession to the throne opened the door for him: literally in the autumn of 1484 when his gaoler, Sir James Blount and he defected to Henry Tudor.

Oxford led the van at Bosworth and had the extreme satisfaction of seeing Richard III slain on the field. While Ross suggests, plausibly, that Oxford did not arrive at Henry Tudor's side out of any great conviction of the future Henry VII's title to the throne, he nevertheless subsequently served him with absolute loyalty. His relationship with the king was remarkable. He was first and foremost a soldier. There is almost something modern in his role as the general of Henry's armies in the first dangerous years of the reign. And, as Ross shows, learning from his experience at the debacle of Barnet, he was a gifted commander. He was not a court creature, not personally that close to the king, but he was a man whom the king respected and admired (he enjoyed a more eminent lineage), on whom he relied absolutely and without reservation for objective advice and support. His role was principally in the country, in East Anglia where, as he wrote in 1497, he had been given the rule and governance by his Highness. And East Anglia, greater East Anglia, was absolutely secure in the hands of the new regime; it could have been so different given the restlessness of the de la Pole family. Ross compels us to look afresh at Henry VII's kingship, which it has been argued recently was distrustful, arbitrary and Frenchified. But here in East Anglia nothing could have been more traditionally English: it could have been, somewhat ironical considering the personal baggage, a continuation of the kingship of Edward IV. Henry VII ruled the different parts of his kingdom according to circumstance. In the process Ross pours scorn on the veracity of Sir Francis Bacon's unsubstantiated story that even Oxford was fined by the king for illegal retaining. This is a shame, for the story is so well told by Bacon, but it adds another important corrective, for the earl, unusually perhaps, was one subject not tied up in a web of bonds and recognisances.

The study is, however, more than a political story; Ross is able to provide a reasonably full account of the management of the earl's estates and finances as well as a detailed analysis of his relationship with local society, including the retinue through which he exercised that rule and governance. It stands additionally as an important regional study, another in a series of excellent studies of East Anglia in which the publishers have built up an enviable reputation. But in the end we return to the man himself, his family and conventional religious life of which something is known. One of the more remarkable aspects of de Vere to emerge is that he bore no personal grudge against the Howard family, and the Howards none it seems against him. They were the principal beneficiaries of de Vere's exile before 1485, and he defeated them on the field of Bosworth. His vendetta was strictly with

the house of York. He died in 1513, much honoured. He was one of the richest peers of the realm, a man of great lineage, of which he was intensely proud, deeply imbued with the chivalric qualities which contemporaries admired. The successful establishment of the Tudor dynasty owed a great deal to this remarkable 'feudal dinosaur'. And we now owe our understanding of this to this notable work.

A.J. POLLARD

WOMEN AND RELIGION IN LATE MEDIEVAL NORWICH. Carole Hill. Royal Historical Society Studies in History, New Series. 2010. The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, £50. ISBN 978-0-86193-304-4

Religion in late medieval Norwich has hardly been neglected as a subject, whether as part of the discussion of the writings of Julian of Norwich or in more statistical analyses, such as that of Norman Tanner using the wills of Norwich testators (*The Church in Late Medieval Norwich 1370-1532*, Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, Toronto, 1984). Carole Hill pays due acknowledgement to Tanner's seminal work, while noting the probable under-representation of women in his analysis. This volume, however, is based on a very different approach, offering both less and more than its title might suggest. It is not in any sense a comprehensive overview of women's priorities as shown by the fifty two Norwich wills that the author uses, and nor does it discuss in detail the vibrant anchorite tradition in the city, although this is referred to as part of her argument as are the apparent *beguinages* or *maisons dieu*. Instead she looks for a distinctive local 'female piety' and in so doing spreads her net far from the city bounds well into Norfolk and beyond. Moreover Dr Hill makes use not only of documentary sources (such as women's wills, the Paston Letters and the writings of Julian of Norwich and Margery Kempe), but also of the material evidence in rood screens, wall painting, memorials and stained glass. Her method is to centre a chapter on each of four female saints, St Anne, St Margaret of Antioch, St Mary Magdalen and St Bridget of Sweden, followed by one on the seven corporal works of mercy. The first four chapters discuss, *inter alia*, the significance of these particular saints, the popularity of the cult of St Anne in Norwich and the dissemination of St Bridget's writings, and often range wider than might be expected. A recurring theme is the importance of links with the Continent, raising again the question (first expressed by Tanner) as to how far the Norwich/Norfolk religious experience was exceptional and how far illustrative of what was happening elsewhere in the country.

There are, as always, minor *caveats*. This reviewer has grave doubts as to whether there was ever a parish church of St Anne in Norwich (p. 48) and is sorry that the author, like Tanner, underplays the evidence for an earlier anchorite tradition in the city (p. 15). Sometimes, too, there seems to be limited support for her more general statements, such as that the Magdalen 'occupied a unique place in

Norwich religious life' (p. 170). Such points aside, however, this is an interesting and thought-provoking book which throws new light on our understanding of the feminine aspects of religious life in the long fifteenth century.

ELIZABETH RUTLEDGE

THE SEA AND ENGLISHNESS IN THE MIDDLE AGES: Maritime Narratives, Identity and Cultures. Edited by Sebastian I. Sobecki. 2011. D.S. Brewer, Cambridge, an imprint of Boydell and Brewer, Woodbridge, £.

ISBN 978-1-84384-276-7.

This collection of papers, some of which started out as contributions to sessions at the Fifteenth International Medieval Congress at Leeds in 2008, covers a range of aspects concerning the sea in English literature. The papers do not define Englishness, as the title might seem to suggest and as modern politicians might wish, but they all examine how English writers have viewed the sea and how views of the sea have shaped the imagining of England and Englishness at various times. The authors, all English literature scholars, range widely over time, exploring both medieval texts and the writings of later centuries when medievalism helped to create popular views of England and the sea. The following brief summaries of the papers cannot do justice to the depth and breadth of the material the authors use and the complexity of their arguments, but they do reflect the range and richness of the collection.

In the first chapter Sebastian Sobecki re-examines the legend of King Edgar ruling the four seas, tracing it through the twelfth century forgeries at Worcester and its reworking by seventeenth-century and Victorian writers to explain and justify England's claim to maritime domination. Winfried Rudolf then considers the Anglo-Saxons' views of the soul through an examination of maritime motifs in Old English homilies, arguing, among other things, that awareness of island living within the vastness of the ocean enhanced humility and also gave a sharper meaning to the metaphor of life as a perilous sea journey in which the ship-church guides the traveller to haven-heaven. Fabienne Michelet contrasts the importance of the theme of sea voyages in Anglo-Saxon vernacular poetry with the apparent lack of interest in the actual voyage made in the stories of the Anglo-Saxon migration. She argues from this that what was important to the Anglo-Saxons' self-identity was where they came from, not how they arrived in England; their voyage was not interpreted as a quest or a test but a simple event. Catherine Clarke examines pre- and post-Conquest texts, including those of Bede, Symeon of Durham, the *De laude Cestrie* and Welsh poems on the Rood of Chester, for their descriptions of tides and tidal areas. Although the imagery is sometimes very precise in location, Clarke argues that it varies in meaning, sometimes showing the limits of human power in the face of God's, sometimes hinting at unknown other worlds as tides ebb and flow, bringing and taking things on the waves.

Judith Weiss moves on to Anglo-Norman narratives, emphasising the ambiguity of attitudes to the sea by contrasting the *Vie de St Edmund* and *Waldef*. The *Vie*, as a religious text, expects that the ship of the church with God's help will lead to salvation, but its author also reveals detailed knowledge of the technical skills of seamen, 'master under God'. On the other hand, *Waldef*, a romance, displays the sea as a place not of salvation but of perils (storm, sea-robbers, invasion, wreck), all necessary to its plot. Kathy Lavezzo discusses ideas of empire and borders in the fourteenth century alliterative poem *Morte Arthure*, which attributes Arthur's failure before Rome as due not only to Mordred's treason but at least partly to his overambitious crossing of the ocean. Seagoing themes within the poem point to the English awareness of their insularity on the edge of the world as well as experience of the fourteenth century costs of overseas war. Alfred Hiatt examines the learned geographical views embodied in the *mappae mundi*, in which England's insularity on the edge of the world is clear, and compares them with the sea charts and routiers of practical navigators, in which geographical contact rather than distance is a more pronounced feature. He emphasises not the dichotomy between the two types, but 'the diversity and richness of English geographical cultures' in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Jonathan Hsy's essay on the Book of Margery Kempe brings us to a fifteenth-century setting in which, again, contact rather than insularity is the main characteristic. Margery is very aware of her Englishness but Hsy explores the text as a 'trans-Channel production'. He addresses the theme of Englishness and other through the language used in Margery's text for her travels at home and abroad, and draws particular attention to the Francophone register used for her prayers at sea.

With Chris Jones's paper we move into the nineteenth century with a study of Stopford Brooke's role in popularising Old English poetry to Victorian readers. Jones argues that Brooke drew out of the texts themes of Englishness and the sea which were important in his own nineteenth century 'Romanticist and nationalist ideals'; since, unlike modern literary historians, Brooke saw Old English poetry as part of a continuous English literary culture, he thus imbued these ideas with a strong notion of continuity from earliest times. Joanne Parker also takes up a nineteenth century theme. She examines how medieval texts were used to support colonialism, political union, and the supremacy of England at sea. In relation to the last she examines two competing origin legends: Saxon Alfred, founder of the navy, Christian and law-giver, or Viking sea-adventurers, ship-builders and colonisers. The role of the Vikings was popular in the more peripheral areas of Great Britain, which, she suggests, perhaps indicates a shift of interest at that date from defining Englishness to defining Britishness. The volume concludes with David Wallace's 'Afterword', which ranges through the ten papers, drawing attention to contrasts and disparities, continuities and disjunctions.

This is a well-produced, well-written and well-conceived volume. It shows us a rich variety of medieval writers, who all had something to say about the relation-

ship of England and the sea and whose use of sea imagery is ambiguous, contrasting and always stimulating. Medievalists of all disciplines will find something of interest here.

WENDY R. CHILDS

THE ACT BOOK OF ST KATHERINE'S GILD, STAMFORD, 1480–1534.

Edited by Alan Rogers. 2011. Abramis Academic Publishing, Bury St Edmunds, in association with the Stamford Survey Group, £19.95.

ISBN 978-1 64549-509-1

This is the second volume of Stamford material to be edited by Alan Rogers in association with the Stamford Survey Group. The first, an edition of the Hall Book of 1465–1492, appeared in 2005. The format of this volume is similar. Latin is translated (except, oddly, the year of entry) with some shortening of entries in standard format and English is transcribed verbatim apart from Christian names, which are given their modern spelling. The gild was centred on the altar of St Katherine in the parish church of St Paul and evidently existed before the extant record begins in 1480. The Act Book itself opens with the constitutions of the gild recorded fourteen years later, in 1494. By this date membership of the gild was on a marked upward trajectory, socially as well as numerically, which may explain the decision to record formally the benefits and obligations of membership. Apart from the constitutions and a 1480 list of the land and goods of the gild, the Act Book consists almost entirely of annual listings of members and officials designed primarily to keep track of payments. The expenses of the gild steward and of the two men responsible for providing the annual gild feast are given each year as lump sums, so one cannot see what members tucked into at their feasts or the cost of the gild's religious functions. Individual payments can only very occasionally be glimpsed as when the entry fee of the prior of Crowland was earmarked for the painting and gilding of the image of St Katherine.

For the general reader the Act Book is therefore perhaps less immediately appealing than the itemised accounts produced by some other gilds of the same period. But what it does allow is a close study of the membership year on year. Membership was generally paid for by instalments, and members were also expected to contribute to the cost of wax each year. Each year's account therefore identifies new members, lists those members who were still paying off their entry fines, and lists current members from whom *waschott* was due. The operative word here is 'due': the listings do not represent actual income. David Malpas esquire seems never to have paid his entry fine and when he finally disappears from the record it is because the gild officers had, rather belatedly, caught up with the fact that he had died rather than that the money had finally been paid. Malpas was probably too important in the town to be dunned, but one does wonder on whose initiative he had entered the gild. Margaret Beaufort, Cecily Lady Welles and

Elizabeth Countess of Oxford, by contrast, all paid up promptly. The admission of these noblewomen emphasises the extent to which the gild was increasingly attracting the regional, not merely local, élite. The same trend is apparent among the clerical members, who in the early sixteenth century included the heads of many of the religious houses in the region. In 1503 the master and two fellows of the Yorkist collegiate foundation at Fotheringhay became members, to be followed in due course by other colleagues. The gild had evidently become fashionable, although by the end of these accounts its attraction beyond the town was fading. New members were still coming forward but again, it seems, from a mainly urban background. The gild officials also found themselves dipping into reserves to meet their expenses. The expectation that the gild should 'abyde, endure and be maynteyned without ende' was to be proved vain.

ROSEMARY HORROX

JOHN STONE'S CHRONICLE. Christ Church Priory, Canterbury, 1417–1472. Selected, translated and introduced by Meriel Connor. 2011. Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, \$13 (pbk).

ISBN 978-1-58044-107-0

The chronicle of John Stone, monk of Canterbury Cathedral Priory, was once described by Professor Barrie Dobson as 'the most engagingly vivid piece of historical writing to survive from any fifteenth-century monastery'. Stone was not a high-flier within the Christ Church community, but it is in a sense his mixture of the humdrum with the exceptional that helps us to feel that when we read his account we are entering his mental world and seeing it through his eyes. His chronicle was printed in full by W.G. Searle, as part of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society's Octavo Series of publications, in 1902; but its Latin text was presented in untranslated form and with only the most sparing of annotation. Meriel Connor has therefore performed a most welcome service by both translating most of its text (apparently, sixty per cent) and by elucidating it clearly and helpfully. John Stone was writing for his own brethren, and there is much in his writing that only a scholar with an intimate knowledge of both Canterbury Cathedral specifically as well as the medieval monastic world generally can explain and interpret satisfactorily: this edition provides just this sort of information, helpfully but unobtrusively.

The translation is reliable and easy to read. Only rarely does one have cause to question it (e.g., the top two lines of page 62, where the English is in any case also at fault). It is not clear how far Connor has compared Searle's edition with the original manuscript, which is now in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. For instance, his figure of £60 6s 8d seems excessive for the cost of copying the book called *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*, and Connor's £10 6s 8d is on the face of it more likely (also p. 62); on the other hand, Searle's figure of £10

(*x li.*) as the annual pension given to Walter Causton when he stepped down from being prior of Dover seems preferable to Connor's £41 (and Searle's figure is also given by Joan Greatrex in her *Biographical Register of the English Cathedral Priories*). Still, Connor has not sought to supersede Searle; her aim has been to introduce us to John Stone, and it can certainly be said that her translation does that as pleasurably as his own writing, while no scholar will in future wish to read Searle's text without her book constantly open beside it.

NIGEL RAMSAY

SOLDIERS, WEAPONS AND ARMIES IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

The Journal of Medieval Military History, IX. Edited by Anne Curry and Adrian R. Bell. 2011. Published by The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, £60.

ISBN 978-1-84383-668-1

The annual journal of De Re Militari: The Society of Medieval Military History aims to cover medieval warfare in the broadest possible terms, both chronologically and thematically. Topics range from traditional studies of the strategic and tactical conduct of war, to explorations of martial aspects of chivalric culture, examinations of the development of military technology and analyses of the composition of medieval armies.

The articles in this volume focus on the fifteenth century with several drawing on Burgundian archives and five with an urban theme. Laura Crombie looks at the Flemish shooting guilds which emerged as urban defenders in the fourteenth century and went on to form small but important components of ducal armies such as those of Charles the Bold. Bastian Walter looks at urban espionage during the Burgundian Wars, while Buylaert, Van Camp and Verweft's study of the Antwerp Army during the Flemish-Brabantine revolt of the 1480s suggests that while the city council hired large numbers of foreign mercenaries, feudal methods of recruitment still remained the key method of raising troops. The urban theme continues with Andrea Remy's comparison of the descriptions in town chronicles of the Swiss victory over the Burgundians at Grandson in 1476 and the siege of London in May 1471. The latter will be of particular interest to Ricardians for although it is often only briefly mentioned in modern studies of the military campaigns of the Wars of the Roses, Fauconberg's attack on London is particularly well-documented in the city's *Great Chronicle*. Randall Moffett looks at military equipment in the town of Southampton during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, charts the transition from 'traditional' artillery to gunpowder weapons and highlights the role played the townspeople themselves in this process.

Two studies feature the Welsh. Welsh archers have achieved an almost mythical status in the popular view of the English armies of the Hundred Years War but Adam Chapman shows that they cannot be said to have won the battle of

Agincourt for Henry V. He points out that it is unlikely that more than four hundred Welsh archers were still with Henry's army when it left Harfleur for Calais and that, despite Shakespeare's characters, Agincourt was in fact a peculiarly English victory – a fact underlined by the lack of references to it in Welsh culture. With the announcement of a major archaeological project to investigate Welsh battlefields and the unwelcome news that the proposed HS2 rail link cuts across the probable site of the battle, Barry Lewis's study of Edgcote through the eyes of contemporary Welsh poets comes at a particularly apposite time. In the same way that the Somme can be said to be a British battlefield, Edgcote is surely a Welsh one. Pembroke's royalist army was largely Welsh in composition and the heavy losses it suffered in the defeat sharpened Anglo-Welsh enmity and led the battle to be dubbed by some 'the Welsh Flodden'. Yet Edgcote is one of the most poorly understood battles of the Wars of the Roses. Lewis ascribes this to the fact that the battle was fought between Northerners and Welshmen at a time when most chronicles were either written in the south of England or on the continent. But, as Lewis points out, there were contemporary observers who have left us texts and who were in a position to be well-informed about the battle: the Welsh poets of the time. Lewis demonstrates how their work, more and more of which is becoming available in translation, sheds light on the battle. In doing so he makes a convincing case for the increased use of such sources, not only in constructing a narrative of events but also, and perhaps more importantly, in assessing political motivation and emotional responses, in this case to a catastrophic defeat.

Finally two further papers look at English interests in France. Andy King draws on data from the Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded project 'The Soldier in Later Medieval England', to shed more light on the personnel of the ordnance companies in Lancastrian Normandy while Guilhem Pepin offers us a most welcome narrative of a hitherto overlooked topic: the attacks on Anglo-Gascon Aquitaine at the start of the fifteenth century.

JULIAN HUMPHREYS

A PROSPERING SOCIETY: WILTSHIRE IN THE LATER MIDDLE AGES.

John Hare, 2011. Hertfordshire University Press (Studies in Regional and Local History, 10), Hatfield, £35 (hbk) and £18.99 (pbk).

ISBN 978-1-902806-84-6 and 978-1-902806-85-3.

John Hare's detailed studies of late medieval Wiltshire are well known for their careful working with the data at his disposal. It is a pleasure to welcome now an extended, county-wide, survey of his findings, putting his earlier works into a broader framework. Wiltshire is a county with such distinctive characteristics that it is well worth concentrated study in this period of its history. At a time when textile manufacture was one of the few significant sources of industrial expansion in England, Wiltshire was at the forefront of development, registering 7,000 cloths

a year in the aulnage accounts of the 1390s. Salisbury was among the top ten English towns through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, partly because of its eminence in the cloth trade. The title of the book alludes to one of the consequences of this good fortune: Wiltshire was less beset by problems of declining demand for its products than many English counties during this period.

Hare offers no simple message of late medieval economic development, however. Along with other economic historians of the period he is at pains to nuance his account by recording and explaining variations of experience, both spatial and temporal. They were spatial because different resource endowments presented different opportunities in different locations. They were temporal because of severe fluctuations in demand, some of them originating in markets for English products elsewhere in Europe. In this respect the book contributes particularly well to current debate about the late medieval economy, which has moved strongly away from naive models based on single variables (population, overseas trade, money) to more complex analyses in which close observation and comparative analysis are of central concern for the formulation of hypotheses.

Spatial analysis in the case of Wiltshire starts from the distinction between different landscape forms, particularly the contrast between the chalklands in the south and east (including Salisbury Plain and the Marlborough Downs) and the clay vales to the west (including the Vale of Wardour, the Vale of Warminster, the Vale of Pewsey and the valleys of the Avon and upper Thames). The former Hare describes as having larger demesnes, extended open fields, and large sheep flocks. In the clay vales, by contrast, demesnes were smaller, there were more enclosures, and there was greater emphasis on cattle and dairy farming. In the context of a general retreat from arable husbandry after 1350, these two regions drew further apart because of their different specialities. The location of the cloth industry was a further source of regional variation within the county. It grew most rapidly in the west of the county away from the chalklands, though throughout the period Salisbury was the principle centre of the county's cloth trade and Marlborough was another outlying cloth town. The largest number of separate centres of cloth marketing was along an eastern strip of the county from Heytesbury and Warminster in the south to Malmesbury in the north. Industrial growth had significant effects on employment and rent levels that distinguished these regions from less industrial parts.

In his examination of variations through time, Hare is most acutely aware of the interruption to the county's development in the crisis of the mid fifteenth century. In his general analysis of chronological development in chapter 12 he places little emphasis on any arrested recovery or growth before about 1450. It seems that this county was more able than most to overcome the forces making for recession in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries except perhaps in parts of the chalklands: even in Wiltshire the expansion of sheep flocks was more a feature of the period before 1390 than it was later. A crisis in barley production at Downton and a few other places in the 1420s is attributable to temporary

weather conditions. One of the problems of the 1450s and 1460s, on the other hand, was a decline in the demand for England's wool and woollen cloth, and this was a direct blow to one of the principal sources of Wiltshire's good fortune. Hare describes both the impact of the crisis and some of social unrest to which it gave rise. As elsewhere in England, agrarian recovery from the 1470s was very slow, to judge from the figures for cash liversies that Hare supplies for Bromham, Coombe Basset and Durrington. Even in the chalklands farmers were hampered by low prices for wool. However, the growth of the cloth trade, especially through exports, ensured that the county fared better than parts of England with fewer commercial opportunities. The growing role of London as a commercial centre is documented for Wiltshire as for other textile regions in this period. Industrial recovery was associated particularly with the western centres of production so that Salisbury's pre-eminence was gradually reduced.

Of course, spatial and chronological variations interacted, because some regions were more affected than others by changes in the market for particular commodities like cloth, rabbits, pork, or barley, whose prominence as a crop increased in the later fourteenth century particularly around Salisbury. In all these changes, Hare frequently comments on emerging local opportunities for economic specialisation as a feature of the prospering society he describes. Institutional changes of the later Middle Ages also varied with space as well as with time. It is noteworthy, for example, that the leasing of demesnes – a general feature of Wiltshire as elsewhere in this period – was earlier in the chalklands than in the clay vales, though sheep flock were often not leased until the middle of the fifteenth century.

The rich description here of many other features of development – patterns of cropping, the decline of serfdom, the development of leasehold, the development of the land market, urban development, patterns of local trade – makes this a very rewarding contribution to late medieval economic studies. Like the others in this series, it is attractively produced and generously supplied with maps, photographs and tables. There is an extensive bibliography and an index of names and topics.

RICHARD BRITNELL

SAVING THE SOULS OF MEDIEVAL LONDON. *Perpetual Chantries at St Paul's Cathedral, c. 1200–1548.* Marie-Hélène Rousseau. 2011. Ashgate Publishing, Farnham, Surrey, and Burlington, Vermont, USA, £65.

ISBN 978-1-4094-0581-8.

Almost any attempt to rediscover the non-parochial religious life of medieval London is made difficult by the lack of surviving documentation – quite apart from the fact that London actually had relatively few significant ecclesiastical institutions. One exception stands out, however: St Paul's Cathedral. Its history, architecture and location set it far ahead of all other ecclesiastical bodies in terms of its integrality to the city's history: it had a symbolic importance that dwarfed all

possible rivals. Moreover, its extant medieval archive is rich and diverse, and yet still hardly drawn on by any modern researcher. Marie-Hélène Rousseau's study of the Cathedral's perpetual chantry foundations is a model demonstration of what riches there are, and of how to interpret them.

The Dean and Chapter archive is not a straightforward one to tackle. There is only one medieval Chapter Act book, covering just the years 1411–48, and one Dean's Book, for 1536–60. The evidence for the history of the eighty-four chantry foundations with which Rousseau concerns herself has therefore had to be sought from a wide range of separate documents within the archive, supplemented principally by wills. In six chapters, she deploys this material skilfully, to discuss the chantries' foundation (principally in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries), the duties of the chantry priests (both as celebrants of mass at their assigned altar and as members of the Cathedral choir), the priests' residential life (living together in what came to be called St Peter's College – on the site of the present-day Stationers' Hall – or in either of two other colleges), their social life (that is, their occasional misdeeds and their regulations), their career patterns, and finally the suppression of their institutions in 1548–49. It was a small world, and all the evidence suggests that it became rather smaller with the passage of time, as the chaplains tended more and more to stay in post for their entire lives; but Rousseau has an alert and sympathetic eye for the sort of details that help bring it to life, from the book bequests that they sometimes made to each other (there is a good section on book-ownership at pp. 116–19) to their permitted holiday-breaks (about forty days a year may have been the norm), their choice of burial-place, and even an instance of the bullying of one chaplain by four others.

Standing in the background throughout are the Dean and Chapter. What gradually emerges is how very well the setting up of the chantries served them. Rousseau has not made any close examination of the finances of the chantries in relation to the Cathedral's overall income, but she does twice remark that the Chapter seems to have gained what became by 1535 an annual profit of £200, from the difference between the income of the chantries' endowments (which comprised real property and rent-charges and the like, scattered across London) and what was paid out to the chantry priests. The Chapter was careful only to sanction the setting-up of chantries that were well-endowed, and almost always kept control of the chantry estates (just as the priests themselves were bound by an oath, made at the time of admission to office, to obey the Dean and Chapter). In 1345 the Mayor and Aldermen of London complained that far too few chaplains were singing, in proportion to the number of chantries that had been set up. If that problem continued in later times, it would hardly have been for lack of applicants for vacant posts, since the St Paul's chaplaincies must have been the *crème de la crème* where chantry priests were concerned.

Rousseau's book is avowedly only concerned with the endowed chantries, where the post was a benefice and its holder was a member of the Cathedral body. It may be guessed that there were others like that set up for the soul of Thomas Carleton

(d. 1389): this was endowed and managed through the Merchant Tailors' Company, and accordingly does not feature in the Dean and Chapter archive. The changing relations between the City and the Cathedral would indeed have been an interesting topic to learn more about: Rousseau's details about the chantries give one a sense that there was a gradual drifting apart of the two authorities, as the City developed its own ecclesiastical institutions and even its own colleges of chantry priests. It would, however, be unfair to criticise this book's author for what lies beyond its scope. It is by itself a close, clear and readable account of what comes across as a strikingly self-contained world. Misprints are few (Chesthunt for Cheshunt, Herts., is one); and 'sacristan' should probably be replaced by the word 'sacrist' throughout. Overall, this is a wholly fascinating glimpse into a scarce-imagined way of life.

NIGEL RAMSAY

THE BOWMEN OF ENGLAND. Donald Featherstone. 2011. Pen & Sword Military, Barnsley, £12.99. ISBN 978-1-848-84583-1

If, like me, you enjoyed playing with toy soldiers as a boy (a fascination which, I hesitate to confess, has never really gone away), then you will be familiar with the name of Donald Featherstone. Featherstone is the author of some forty books on wargaming and military history, spanning Ancient Greece to the armoured warfare of World War II and beyond. This book was first published in 1967, re-issued in 2003 and now finds its third incarnation as a handsome and inexpensive paperback. The book is well written and jogs at a lively pace through some of the battles in which the English longbow played a decisive part: Falkirk, Halidon Hill, Crécy, Agincourt and Flodden, to name the better known encounters, and Morlaix, Mauron and Rouvray among the more obscure. This was not really a work of penetrating scholarship when it was first published and this new edition does not add anything to our knowledge either. The bibliography lists Colonel Alfred Burne and Sir Charles Oman among its historical sources, while the author's knowledge of the fifteenth century is culled from Shakespeare, E.F. Jacob and Sir James Ramsay. The Wars of the Roses are dealt with in a mere five pages and the impact of the longbow on the fighting is illustrated by reference to the battle of Towton. This is ironic as it is one of the battles of which we have no strictly contemporary accounts of the fighting and Featherstone's rather uncritical account of the Yorkist archers' actions is taken from the Tudor chronicler, Edward Hall. I guess if you are on a long train journey or lounging on the beach this summer you might find Mr Featherstone's prose engaging, but the serious student of archery might be better placed in reading the work of Jim Bradbury or even Robert Hardy. Similarly, for the cultural importance of the bow in our period Steven Gunn's recent article in *Past and Present* might be a better point of reference.

DAVID GRUMMITT

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY IX. English and Continental Perspectives.

Edited by Linda Clark. 2010. The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, £50.00.

ISBN 978-84383-607-0

This is an interesting volume which, despite the partial attempt in the preface to suggest an overall coherency of content, contains a diverse collection of essays without any central theme. That is not to say, of course, there is no common ground between any of the contributions. There are five articles which could be described loosely as political culture: Christine Carpenter's examination of the deskilling of the later Lancastrian bureaucracy under Henry VI; Andy King's article on the decision-making and behaviour of one man, Sir William Clifford, under Henry IV; Sarah Rose's investigation into the political geography of the honour of Pontefract in the late medieval world; and Jess Lutkin's critical re-examination of luxury and conspicuous display at the oft-ignored court of the Henry IV. Frederick Buylaert and Jan Dumoplyn take political culture across the North Sea to examine the world of chivalry and nobility in the historiography of the court of the dukes of Burgundy. Remaining on the continental side of the Channel Vincent Challet considers the relationship of peasant communities and the self-defence movements in Normandy during the Hundred Years War. The volume is completed by two articles, the first by Juliana Dresvina on the unpublished Middle English prose of the life of St Margaret of Antioch and Alessia Meneghin's journey into the uncharted world of wet-nursing in Renaissance Florence.

While there might not be a common theme to the collection this is still an important volume in which the contributors have succeeded in providing some fresh insights into particular subjects. Carpenter's article presents some powerful arguments for the declining performance of the royal bureaucracy, from an efficient administrative elite of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries to a deskilled administration that was run by a new group of bureaucrats who were linked to each other through common interests and education yet who shared no traditions of service with the departments that they now controlled. Some unwelcome comparisons can be drawn to the decline of the British civil service in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries where such traditions have been actively undermined by governments with disastrous consequences for government departments.

It is particularly gratifying to read three articles whose focus is the reign of Henry IV. All too frequently has this king been marginalised and his reign written off as a failure. Yet a number of points emerge from the essays of King, Rose and Lutkin. The first, described by King, is that in the world of governance at the local level Henry IV was forced to rely on men whom he knew needed him less than he needed them. The relationship between king and local administrators was one based on mutual self interest and benefit. Studies elsewhere have shown that decision-making of the gentry was shaped by a complex framework based on public, private and personal considerations. Loyalty to the monarch was just one

of these. Clifford like Henry Vernon, the Derbyshire esquire, who successfully avoided committing himself to either Warwick or Clarence between 1469 and 1471, quite clearly looked to his own survival in the new Lancastrian era. In certain circumstances geography could play a critical place in the decision making of the political elite. As Rose demonstrates, though, it was often a dominance defined by the leadership of an individual. When that link was broken then the political and geographical coherence could wither as it did in the honour of Pontefract. Conversely, at the centre of political life at the court of Henry IV, Lutkin shows that the king not only recognised the importance of gift-giving and conspicuous consumption in the world of public relations, he was prepared to spend considerable sums of money to demonstrate his largesse even at times of acute financial pressure. The distribution of the SS collar, for example, which the king was forced to purchase rather than issue from a pre-existing supply, was seen as a necessary measure that would help to strengthen his royal authority in the localities.

The patronage of the dukes of Burgundy, analysed through critical discourse theory, provides an intriguing perspective on how societies could be controlled through a dominant (hegemonic) ideology. Buylaert and Dumolyn argue that ideas of noble lineage and chivalric behaviour were used to bind together the territories of the Valois dukes of Burgundy. The positive interpretation placed by Burgundian chroniclers upon particular aspects of nobility and chivalry created the necessary cement by which the evolving late medieval nobility could therefore behave. This is certainly an interesting case study, but given the divisions that existed within Burgundian territories, it might also have benefited from a more explicit recognition of how these chroniclers treated the negative aspects associated with nobility and chivalry.

Challet's study of the relationship between peasant communities and self-defence movements in Normandy during the Hundred Years War concludes that they deserve to be placed alongside other 'social bandits' evident in other areas of France in the same period which also sought to protect themselves and their communities from the worst excesses of the English occupation. He finds no evidence of patriotic motives and concludes that what marked the Norman brigands apart was their willingness to combat directly the worst excesses of the English occupation.

It is difficult to see quite where the analysis of St Margaret of Antioch fits into this volume, unless one regards the possession of a prose manuscript of her life by a member of the East Anglian gentry as something on the margins of political culture. Yet it is difficult not to agree with Dresvina's conclusion that this volume was never intended for anything other than domestic consumption. St Margaret's cult was strong in this region; the fact Lady Wingfield possessed a volume of this nature is not a particularly startling fact. It was really just a statement of her own piety and taste. At the same time it is hard not to feel that if it was indeed a prestige item then the poor quality of production and lack of care was presumably hidden from its owner.

Menghin's essay about wet nursing, while also sitting at odds with the rest of the volume, is nonetheless an extremely interesting contribution with much to recommend it. The study is based on evidence derived primarily from an account book by Piero Puro i Francesco da Vicchio of Florence who ran a wet nursing agency. Piero and his wife put their own children out to other wet nurses while taking on other more lucrative contracts that enabled them to make a profit from their labours. It could be a lucrative business, yet not one lacking in sentiment. Parents would remove children from a wet nurse if they felt the child's welfare to be under threat.

In summary, this is a useful and informative collection of essays which continues to strengthen the reputation of *The Fifteenth Century* series. As such it is a welcome addition to the field of late medieval scholarship.

MALCOLM MERCER

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

Martin Allen, *Mints and Money in Medieval England*. 2012. 750 pages. 55 black and white illustration, 11 maps. Cambridge University Press, £120.

ISBN 978-1-107-01494-7

A full history of all mints, which is set within the economic, political and commercial background. The working lives of the workshop and factory style mints and their people from the Anglo-Saxon period to the late Middle Ages are examined, as well as the interest of the kings in quality and revenue. Includes full data of output and profit of English mints; lists of mints and coin hoards.

Helen Clarke, *Discover Medieval Sandwich*. 2011. 120 pages. Illustrated. Oxbow Books, Oxford, £12.95.

ISBN 978-1-842217-47-6

The town's growth from Anglo-Saxon times. It enjoyed a very important harbour in the fifteenth century, which has since become land locked. Describes and illustrates surviving medieval properties.

Tina Kane, editor, *The Troyes Mémoire. The Making of A Medieval Tapestry*. 2010. 196 pages. The Boydell Press, Woodbridge. £50

ISBN 978-1-84383-570-7

The text edited here is the only surviving example of written instructions for the design of a fifteenth-century tapestry, showing the erudition of the composer and the pictorial details that he did and did not specify. The tapestry telling the lives of Saints Urban and Cecilia was intended for the choir of the church of St Urban in Troyes, Champagne, but never made. To complete the story of the production of such work the account books of another church are used, which provide details about the other craftsmen and women involved, their methods, the materials needed and the expenses. The author is a restorer of medieval tapestries and her practical experience is used to good effect in the sections explaining the actual weaving. The French (and Latin) text of the instructions is given in full with a parallel English translation.

Judith Middleton-Stewart, editor, *Records of the Churchwardens of Mildenhall. Collections (1446-1454) and Accounts (1503-1553)*. 243 pages. Suffolk Records Society, Volume 54, 2011. The Boydell Press, Woodbridge. £35 (price to non-members).

ISBN 978-851115-578-4

Mildenhall was a market town, with a cloth industry, in a large parish adjacent to the Fens on the border between the counties of Cambridge and Suffolk; the manor was owned by the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds. A volume that just misses the Yorkist period but the General Introduction has much that is relevant: the building of the church in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (benefactors included Henry Barton and William Gregory, mayors of London); the nine guilds including Corpus Christi; lists of vicars, chaplains and parish priests; chantries; bells; and clock; town plays and ales. Additional introductions to the Collections (purposes unspecified but probably including the church tower and bells) and the Accounts. Transcripts of English; translations of Latin. Appendices include notes of selected local wills. Index; photographs; plans.

M.B. Parkes, *Pages from the Past: Medieval Writing Skills and Manuscript Books*, edited P.R. Robinson and Rivkah Zim. 2012. Variorum Collected Studies Series CS 1000, Ashgate, Farnham, £80. ISBN 978-1-4094-3806-9

These papers (published 1992–2007), bear witness to the range and depth of Malcolm Parkes's contribution to the study of palaeography and codicology; they are organised under four headings (Scribes and Scripts, Punctuation, Readers, and Book Provision). Of interest to *The Ricardian's* readers are the following. The study of the well-known scribe of the 'Great Cowcher' of the Duchy of Lancaster and its transcript (TNA 41/1–2 and DL 42/192–93) in 'Richard Frampton: a commercial scribe, c.1390–c.1420'. Other manuscripts by him include copies of the *Statuta Anglie* and three literary works. A study of Frampton's handwriting enables Parkes to suggest a probable order in which these books were written and leads to interesting speculation about the possibility of his scribal training as a chancery clerk. 'Archaizing hands in English manuscripts' discusses reasons for a scribe's attempts to imitate an earlier script than that current when he was writing, before focusing on a succession of scribes who copied books and supplied leaves in hands with a pronounced archaic aspect at Christ Church, Canterbury, in the late-fifteenth- and early-sixteenth centuries. The occurrence of hybrid hands recreating the impression of styles of script produced there in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is found especially in new books commemorating the feasts of saints and for readings in the chapter house. This development may have been due to renewed interest within the monastery in its long tradition of religious life and its antiquities. Finally, 'The provision of books', written for *The History of the University of Oxford, II, The Medieval University*, (ed J.I. Catto and R. Evans, 1992), provides a overview of book production and provision in Oxford from the twelfth to the late fifteenth century, and discusses the collections of various scholars, the growth of the colleges' libraries, Duke Humfrey's gifts to the University, and the role of university stationers.

John Schofield. *St Paul's Cathedral before Wren*. 2011. 382 pages. 275 illustrations. English Heritage Publishing, London, £100. ISBN 978-1848020-566

Includes surveys, with specialist reports, of all recent excavations and the geology. Chapters cover the period 1066–1530, 1530–1666, and the Great Fire and rebuilding 1666–1711.

ARTICLES

Martin Allen, 'Monthly mint output figures for the coinage of Richard III', *The Numismatic Chronicle* 2009, pages 213–15.

Accounts of the mint in the Tower of London record the outputs of gold and silver coins in each month of the reign of Richard III, and also provide detailed figures for the last few months of the reign of Edward IV and the brief reign of Edward V. Production of Richard III's gold coinage ceased on the day of the Battle of Bosworth, and silver coinage ended on the previous day.

Mark Bailey, 'Beyond the Midland field system: the determinants of common rights over the arable in medieval England', *The Agricultural History Review*, volume 58, part 2, 2010, pages 153–171.

Recent research into the field system of medieval England has revealed much about their layout, variety and likely origins. This article surveys the state of that research, and contends that too little attention had been paid to the function and evolution of fields, while too much attention continues to be lavished upon the Midland system at the expense of other types of common field systems. It also argues that there is insufficient direct analysis of how common rights actually developed over the arable.

Richard Beadle, 'Nicholas Lancaster, Richard of Gloucester and the York Corpus Christi play', in *The York Mystery Plays. Performance in the City*. Edited by Margaret Rogerson. The York Medieval Press, the University of York, and Boydell and Brewer, Woodbridge 2011, pages 31–52.

Lancaster, a lawyer employed by Gloucester, was chosen as common clerk of York (who had special responsibility for the plays) at the time Gloucester and his wife joined the Corpus Christi Guild. Beadle argues a close inter-relationship between the improved production of the plays, the careful recording of the plays' consolidated text at this time, Lancaster's appointment, Gloucester's interest, and the influence of Thomas Wrangwish. Gloucester's interest in other civic plays is mapped, and his ownership of certain metrical paraphrases of some Old Testament stories (known to the York dramatists) is also suggested as significant.

C.S.L. Davies, 'Information, disinformation and political knowledge under Henry VII and early Henry VIII', *Historical Research*, volume 86, number 228, May 2012, pages not known at time of going to press; available to subscribers online.

Rather than a vigorous campaign of propaganda, the author argues that Henry VII's policy was one of selective obfuscation, even deliberate concealment or silence about recent history. Emphasises the unavailability of accurate chronological information for Richard's reign and the vagueness of detail provided before the works of Polydore Vergil and Thomas More, which were not widely circulated until 1534 and 1543.

C.S.L. Davies, 'Tudor: what's in a name', *History*, volume 97, February 2012, pages 24–42.

The almost obsessive use of the term 'Tudor' is misleading: these monarchs in fact stressed continuity with the preceding royal house and certainly did not stress the liaison between Owen Tudor and Queen Katherine which was considered shameful until well into the sixteenth century. The term also gives a false sense of unity and a false notion that subjects identified themselves with their rulers. The author counters the 'state of denial' of his argument by further exploring the implications of his contentions, and advises an avoidance of the 'booby-trap' of the 'Tudor age'.

Susan Franca, 'The spice of life? The multiple uses of cumin in medieval England', *The Local Historian*, volume 41, number 3, August 2011, pages 203–15

Given that some freehold rents were due, and paid, in spices, often cumin or pepper, this article considers where cumin was cultivated and thus from whence it came, where and from whom tenants might have obtained it, and the uses to which the recipient might put it, whether for cooking or for medicinal purposes. Using material from a diverse and imaginative range of sources, a seemingly eccentric, not to say archaic, payment is elucidated.

Graham Javes, 'Priests in the Vintners' Company in the fifteenth century', *Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society*, volume 61, 2010, pages 191–95.

An examination of the lives of four ordained priests who were admitted to the Vintners' Company, their motives in joining and the reasons why the company admitted them. Priests were employed in chantries maintained by the companies, while the freedom (acquired through a company) allowed men to own and bequeath property in the city. Two of the four priests in question chose to leave property to the Vintners to support chantries. Biographies of each man are provided, of whom the most eminent was Peter de Taster, a Gascon who chose to come to England, member of the councils of Henry VI and Edward IV.

David Lepine, 'Cathedrals and charity: almsgiving at English secular cathedrals in the later middle ages', *English Historical Review*, volume 126, number 522, October 2011, pages 1067–96.

A study of the records surviving of the nine secular cathedrals: Chichester, Exeter, Hereford, Lichfield, Lincoln, St Paul's, Salisbury, Wells and York. They had few formal charitable obligations but they are found to be regular dispensers: charity: to beggars in their Closes (food, clothing and sometimes money); administration of charity attached to obit foundations; and to the parishes of appropriated churches. Percentages of charity to income are given when possible (Salisbury was notably parsimonious). Only St Paul's had a full time almoner. Comparison is made with monastic houses, and consideration given to the donations made by individual canons during life and at death, as well as the discrimination made between the deserving and undeserving poor. Tables

Jordi Sánchez Martí, 'Longleat House MS 257: a description', *Atlantis. Revista de la asociación española de estudios anglo-americanos*, volume 27, number 1, June 2005, pages 79–89.

Extensive codicological description of Richard of Gloucester's collection of romances and Old Testament stories (see *The Ricardian*, vol. 7) with an introduction which argues on the basis of its decoration that the book was made in Yorkshire (because of its particular use of green) between 1457 and 1469 (because of the style of its borders).

Medieval English Theatre, volume 31, 2009.

This issue includes a study by Charlotte Steenbrugge which reiterates that 'Mankind', an East Anglian play of c. 1480, was designed for a Latin-educated and orthodox audience. David Mills discusses the treatment of the story of Abraham and Isaac in six medieval play cycles and in particular in the version ascribed to the Northampton area which survives in a manuscript of 1461.

Eleanor Quinton and John Oldland, 'London merchants' cloth exports, 1350–1500', *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, volume 7, 2011, pages 111–39.

By 1500 London shipped 61.1% of England's cloth export (rising to 90% by 1553). The authors explain how this dominance came about, making extensive use of the particular and enrolled customs accounts and biographical material. They conclude the trade was dominated by specific companies to which any ambitious merchant had to belong to succeed in the trade, and these were led by the Mercers and Drapers. How the other companies were sidelined is also set out. Tables.

John Oldland, 'Making and marketing woollen cloth in late-medieval London', *The London Journal*, volume 36, number 2, July 2011, pages 89–108.

The interaction between the makers (burellers, weavers, fullers, shearmen and dyers) with the drapers who sold the cloth through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and the complex evolution of the Drapers' Company. By 1500 London merchants dominated the export of English cloth and the city's textile workers had come to concentrate on the finishing processes.

John Oldland, '"Fyne worsted which is almost like silke": Norwich's double worsted', *Textile History*, volume 42, number 2, November 2011, pages 181–200.

Norwich's main textile industry 1400 to 1500 was the making of worsted for clothing and furnishings. Double worsted became a profitable export and only declined somewhat in the face of the cheaper light draperies from the continent in the second quarter of the sixteenth century. Historians have underestimated its importance: Norwich had reasonable success in diversifying its worsteds and was able to go on to even greater success in the seventeenth century. Much detail is provided about fifteenth-century developments and success in the home market; Norwich possibly escaped the worst of the mid-century depression because of its worsted industry.

John Oldland, 'Variety and quality of English woollen cloth exported in the late middle ages', *Journal of European Economic History*, volume 49, Fall 2010, pages 211–41.

Extensive and important analysis based on customs accounts, inventories and mercantile accounts from fourteenth to sixteenth century of the myriad English woollens (broadcloth, straits, kersey, scarlet, bastards, frieze, Coventry cloth, Guildfords, etc, etc). Comparison is made with the products of the Low Countries in price and quality. Argues how English production improved dramatically through this period in quality and quantity, including the important production of white cloth for the Antwerp finishers. Sizes and types of cloth explained. Eight tables.

Nicholas Orme, 'The medieval church in north Devon', *The Devonshire Association. Reports and Transactions*, volume 142, 2010, pages 49–71.

Concludes that the 117 parish churches were the centre of local religious culture and were linked to the rest of the south-west of England despite their highland remoteness.

Nicholas Orme, 'Beccles School in the 1430s', *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History*, volume 42, part 3, 2011, pages 325–46.

This grammar school was run under the aegis of the abbey of Bury St Edmunds.

A manuscript of grammar treatises, including some by John Leland of Oxford 'the flower of grammarians', as well as a large number of school exercises, survives in the hand of John Hardgrave of Beccles. The author identifies as far as possible the scribe and the contemporary schoolmaster, John Drury, and his connections. Includes an edition of selected Latin exercises with their English translations where they exist or the author's own; these give glimpses of school conditions and local life.

Ellie Pridgeon, 'The function of St Christopher imagery in medieval churches, c. 1250 to c. 1525: wall-painting and brass', *Monumental Brass Society Transactions*, volume 18, part 1, 2009, pages 2–24.

Includes a brief account of the cult in England from the ninth century and the use of images from the thirteenth century onwards, especially on walls. Viewing of the image was essential in order for the supplicant to receive freedom from sudden death, fatigue, or disease, for the rest of the day. Christopher was a powerful intercessor (little sign of his use by travellers). Notable brasses including the saint are those of the Stathums of Morley, Derbyshire, Joan Lady Cromwell (d. 1479); other media of representation mentioned. Illustrations.

Philip Riden, 'The Hardwicks of Hardwick Hall in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries', *Derbyshire Archaeological Journal*, volume 130, 2010, pages 142–78.

Roger Hardwick (died 1497) had a large family of at least twelve children by Nicola Barley, but apparently did little to enlarge the family estates. The article provides full details of the fifteenth-century family, with pedigrees, but inevitably has most to say about Bess of Hardwick (1521/2–1608).

Lynda Rollason, 'Medieval mortuary rolls: prayers for the dead and travel in Medieval England', *Northern History*, volume 48, number 2, September 2011, pages 187–223.

The rolls, sometimes illustrated, conveyed the news of the death of a religious and asked for prayers for his soul. The roll studied in detail is that asking for prayers for Prior William Ebchester (resigned 1456, died 1462/3) and Prior Burnby (died 1464) of Durham Cathedral Priory, sent out by Prior Richard Bell (1464–78/9); many other examples discussed. They were carried by a *breviator* (a layman) under the supervision of the almoner (the list of men probably permanently employed by Durham includes five in the Yorkist period). The make-up and reception of the rolls are discussed, the journeys, choice of route (637 houses visited all over England for this particular roll), availability of maps, as well as the speed of dispatch of such rolls and the mortuary briefs which were also carried. Maps, illustrations, list of Durham documents and transcripts from the almoner's accounts.

Kathryn M. Rudy, 'Dirty books: quantifying patterns of use in medieval manuscripts using a densitometer', *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art*, volume 2, issues 1–2, 2010, pages 1–26.

The densitometer measures the darkness of a reflecting surface and was used by the author to measure the wear of medieval manuscripts caused by bare-fingered handling of the pages. Approximately 200 manuscripts were looked at, and a selected number of case studies is included in this article. They show which pages people handled (fingered, kissed) most and how they held their books. Generally speaking, the evidence shows that late fifteenth-century owners of books of hours in the Low Countries had a penchant for the Penitential Psalms (see A.F. Sutton and Livia Visser-Fuchs, *The Hours of Richard III*, Stroud 1996, pp. 24–27, 48), prayers with indulgences attached to them (like 'Richard III's Prayer', *ibid.*, pp. 67–78), the more indulgences the better, and did indeed prefer the texts and the folios added for themselves (as in Richard III's hours, ff. 1, 181–184v). It is also clear that owners had a tendency always to hold the book in the same way and that cropping a manuscript (as happened in the case of Richard III's hours) removes this kind of fascinating evidence. The author ends on a plea for researchers not to use digital images all the time, but also study the physical objects closely – and to be allowed to do so by libraries and keepers.

E.D. Spindler, 'Youth and old age in late medieval London', *The London Journal*, volume 36, number 1, March 2011, pages 1–22.

A study which claims disadvantages were consequent on both youth and old age (only men are included) not individual circumstances. The data are provided by litigation between masters and apprentices and the exonerations from jury service.

R.N. Swanson, 'Printing for purgatory: indulgences and related documents in England, 1476 to 1536', *Journal of the Early Book Society*, volume 14, 2011, pages 115–44.

The author reiterates the importance of the jobbing work (printing indulgences, etc) for printers' survival. These documents included letters of confraternity; flyers announcing privileges offered by an institution, and devotional aids such as woodcuts. Discusses profitability, expenses, logistics of production and circulation as well as the possibility of fraud and the need for validation.

Daniel Wakelin, 'Caxton's exemplar for *The Chronicles of England*', *Journal of the Early Book Society*, volume 14, 2011, pages 75–114.

Author argues that Huntington Library manuscript, HM 136, is the exemplar for the chronicle known as *The Brut* printed by Caxton and called by him *The Chronicles of England*. Careful description of the minute marks made on the manuscript to guide the compositor to avoid damaging a loaned exemplar. Care was

taken to avoid word-splitting over page breaks and widows; divergences between manuscript and printed texts are found to be generally slight, the larger divergences being attributable to Caxton's editorial methods of standardising chapters and clarifying identities of persons. The source(s) for Caxton's continuation of the chronicle 1419–61 remains unknown.

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