

CAROLINE M. BARRON and LAURA WRIGHT, eds. *The London Jubilee Book, 1376–1387: An Edition of Trinity College Cambridge MS O.3.11, folios 133–157*. London Record Society 55. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2021. Pp. 150. \$70.00 (cloth).

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In March 1387, during a contentious period in the city's history, a crowd gathered outside London's Guildhall to witness the burning of a book at a time when book burnings were rare. The book, later known as the *Jubilee Book*, represented the promise of a new type of civic government—more equitable, perhaps more democratic, and more inclusive of those men who held the rights of citizenship but were rarely allowed to hold positions of prestige because they belonged to occupational guilds that were deemed lesser. Caroline Barron's remarkable discovery of a copy of the burnt *Jubilee Book* tucked away in the back folia of a manuscript housed at Trinity College, Cambridge is now front and center in a new edition that she and Laura Wright have transcribed and edited for the London Record Society, *The London Jubilee Book, 1376–1387: An Edition of Trinity College Cambridge MS O.3.11, folios 133–157*. They elegantly highlight the *Jubilee Book's* linguistic particularities, ideological perspective, and various influences from antecedent civic records.


Barron and Wright's transcription of the *Jubilee Book* is preceded by two illuminating and clearly written introductions, the first by Barron and the second by Wright. Both provide readers with the crucial context, both historical and linguistic, for understanding the book's creation during London's most turbulent decades in the late fourteenth century. Barron explains how the making of this *Book of Ordinances*, as it was originally known, reflected attempts to reform civic elections, impose transparency, and eliminate favoritism, all to quell political unrest and factionalism. Prior to Barron's discovery of this late fifteenth-century copy, some scholars assumed that the book's controversial contents included ordinances aimed squarely at the victualling trades. As Barron points out, this was evidently not the case, and the continued existence of the *Jubilee Book* was likely distasteful to officials for several reasons—for example, that the civic oaths in the text outlined certain duties or obligations that were deemed untenable and that the book itself was written in English.

Barron's argument that because the book was written in English it was an object worthy of scorn or suspicion is compelling, given that civic governments in England tended to be more conservative than their mainland European counterparts, who had adapted the vernacular for everyday business much earlier than did London. Wright's analysis of the English language and paleography of this *Jubilee Book* copy dates it to the late fifteenth century, though the source text was likely composed in the late 1370s. Wright also postulates that the famous Hammond scribe—so-named for the scholar Eleanor Hammond, who identified a particular medieval hand in many manuscripts—was likely responsible for producing the fifteenth-century copy. Provided, for good measure, are tables that compare the differences between the *Jubilee Book* and other London records that contain similar material.

Of exceptional interest is a table revealing how the *Jubilee Book's* oaths were modified to reflect the political concerns of London's officials in the late fourteenth century. There has been some recent work on the importance of civic oaths (Christian D. Liddy, *Contesting the City: The Politics of Citizenship in English Towns, 1250–1530* [2017]) and a wide-ranging study Bristol's oaths (James Lee, “Ye Shall Disturbe noe Mans Right: Oath-Taking and Oath-Breaking in Late Medieval and Early Modern Bristol,” *Urban History* 34, no. 1 [2007]: 27–38), but, for the most part, oath-taking in English towns has been understudied. Barron argues that the *Jubilee Book* was primarily a book of oaths, and the inclusion of this table helps visualize how the language of civic responsibility and duty changed over time. Naturally, the oaths in the *Jubilee Book* were written in English—the language, it seems, of a more forward-looking government that saw a broader inclusion (though still limited, by current standards) of its citizens in positions of power.

Barron and Wright's editorial decision to present a transcription of the *Jubilee Book* that mirrors the manuscript's formatting and rubrication is expertly executed, and the result allows readers to appreciate the codicology of the manuscript without having access to the original (which, thankfully, has been digitized). For students of Middle English or those unfamiliar with the type of content found in these types of civic compilations—sometimes called *customals*—Barron and Wright's annotation of the *Jubilee Book* in modern English is a welcome aid for those who may find this text difficult to read.

Barron and Wright's edition of the *Jubilee Book* is a major addition to the London Record Society's expansive collection of primary sources that shed light on the economic, social, and political life of London's inhabitants in the medieval and modern eras. Their edition is also extremely important and continues a long and storied tradition of scholars producing easy-to-read editions of London's civic records that goes back to the mid-nineteenth century with H. T. Riley's editions of the city's medieval customals. Unlike many English cities, which have perhaps one or two customals in their archives or have had their civic records damaged or lost over time, the London Metropolitan Archives retains over a dozen customals and civic registers, some of which are available in printed editions. This, however, in no way lessens the importance of this publication of one of London's shortest-lived legal texts. The *Jubilee Book*, though it adapts ordinances and oaths from older works in London's archives, is an important (and until recently, missing) piece of the puzzle in understanding the political turmoil of the fourteenth century. Histories of medieval London can no longer be written without referencing the *Jubilee Book*, and Barron and Wright have made it effortless for future scholars to do so.

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CHARLOTTE BERRY. *The Margins of Late Medieval London, 1430–1540*. New Historical Perspectives. London: Royal Historical Society, Institute of Historical Research, University of London Press, 2022. Pp. 350. \$55.00 (cloth).
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Charlotte Berry's *The Margins of Late Medieval London* is a study of the geographical and social margins of late medieval London, focusing mostly on the parishes of St. Botolph Aldgate, St. Botolph Bishopsgate, and St. Botolph Aldersgate and the people who lived there. Berry argues that these neighborhoods were diverse and important, and she offers a fluid and nuanced account of social marginality, contending that all Londoners had to work to maintain their reputations but that social precarity was more commonly experienced by those with fewer resources to begin with, such as women, the poor, and foreign immigrants. She does not focus on marginalized groups, such as prostitutes, beggars, criminals, or vagrants, but attends to social negotiations in general in extramural neighborhoods. The overall picture is one of lively suburban life already predating the rapid early modern expansion of London.

The first chapter provides a useful overview of these extramural neighborhoods. With their more open landscapes, including undeveloped marshy areas and important roads and waterways, they could be home to large, fine houses as well as small, cheap dwellings, and were natural settings for pastures, gardens, inns, breweries, foundries, bowling alleys (greens), and other things that took up more space than could easily be accommodated within the city walls. In this late medieval period, extramural neighborhoods were also the homes of several religious houses with their own legal privileges, resulting in spaces that sometimes