

central question, but also presents a fascinating perspective on the turbulent and rapidly changing intellectual climate in the Dutch Republic at the dawn of the Enlightenment, often represented by well-known names like Spinoza and Koerbagh. In doing so, Hollewand's vivid textual portrait of the downfall of one of the most enigmatic scholars of his day is perhaps even more striking than his fascinating likeness nowadays in the Rijksmuseum.

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Finding Individuality. Linda Clark, ed.

The Fifteenth Century 17. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2020. xiv + 154 pp. \$99.

The Fifteenth Century is a long-running series that features current research on late medieval and Renaissance history from authors at all career stages, based for the most part on presentations at the yearly Fifteenth Century Conference. This carefully edited volume brings together eight essays loosely linked by their focus on the biography or personality of a central figure or figures in British history. It will be of particular interest to specialists in legal history, the War of the Roses, and the monarchy.

The first three chapters focus on kings. Chris Given-Wilson reveals how royal wills from Edward III (1312–77) to Edward IV (1442–83) reflect their authors' personal and political agendas. Although kings' postmortem wishes were regularly thwarted by financial limitations and ambitious heirs, royal wills are a valuable source for political, legal, and religious history. In the second essay, Samuel Lane convincingly argues that Henry V (1386–1422) was an artful propagandist by analyzing his letters to the City of London alongside chronicles and medieval ideas about legitimate taxation and warfare. In order to fund his campaigns, Henry twisted the truth about events in France, depicting himself as a victorious, pious, peace-loving king. Modern historians, Lane suggests, have too credulously accepted Henry V's self-promotion. Next, Anne F. Sutton provides an authoritative account of Richard III's (1452–85) relationship to Irish lords and towns. Richard's ancestral ties to Ireland inspired a solicitous approach to the lordship, and he may have planned to support Irish incorporation before his reign was cut short.

The next two chapters consider a queen, Margaret of Anjou (1430–82). Anthony Gross imaginatively reinterprets Margaret's early life and later psychology, arguing that her complex self-image originated in an upbringing in the court of Naples rather than in Anjou, as is generally thought. He concludes that Margaret absorbed the misogyny and crusader ideals of Antoine de la Sale (ca. 1385–1460), her brother's tutor. Alice Raw challenges recent interpretations of contemporary reactions to Margaret in arguing that she did not attract criticism because she fell short of a

model of ideal queenship, because there was no such model. Instead, contemporaries objected to any political actor standing in for the king. Gendered attacks on Margaret reflect anxieties about Henry VI's (1421–71) absence from political life, rather than objections to unqueenly behavior.

The final three chapters examine lawyers and litigants. S. J. Payling analyzes the murders of three lawyers and MPs who were killed because their opponents in land disputes perceived the victims' legal and political power as an insurmountable threat. His findings suggest that the Crown and gentry accepted violent action as a last resort in irreconcilable disputes. Violence and legal action were also recourses for late medieval townsmen, as David Grummitt demonstrates in his chapter on conflicts between the citizenry and monastic houses of Canterbury, in particular the Rosier riot of 1500 led by the lawyer and MP William Atwode. Grummitt develops an image of a citizenry united by a shared civic identity, mobilized by lawyerly leaders in pursuit of the town's interests. In the final chapter, Deborah Youngs examines the nature of litigation brought before the king's council by women under Henry VII (1457–1509). Youngs argues that the Star Chamber was particularly attractive to women due to its broad jurisdiction, speed, and willingness to waive the laws of coverture. By analyzing female plaintiffs' legal strategies and self-presentation, Youngs shows how determined and savvy Tudor women could be as they pursued redress.

Together, these essays illustrate many of the methods and sources available to historians interested in "finding individuality" in fifteenth-century Britain. The volume does, however, focus narrowly on royals and the gentry. Late medieval and early modern records are rich in detail about nonelite individuals like Alice Steward, a husbandman's wife who laid a case before the king's council (136), but they appear only fleetingly in Grummitt's and Youngs's essays, and nowhere else in the collection. The authors and editors are to be commended for whetting readers' appetites for further explorations of the fascinating characters of fifteenth-century Britain.

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Fellowship and Freedom: The Merchant Adventurers and the Restructuring of English Commerce, 1582–1700. Thomas Leng.

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020. xii + 344 pp. \$85.

Thomas Leng's new book is a rigorous and detailed look at the Company of Merchant Adventurers during a critical transition in commercial life, from the early modern world of corporate organization to the incipient world of capitalist free trade. The Merchant Adventurers was one of the earliest companies in England and one of the largest and most powerful, with exclusive privileges to trade in broadcloth to the Netherlands.