

PREFACE

The essays in this volume of *Fourteenth Century England* engage with many of the themes and subjects which make the period so attractive to scholars and the wider public alike. The authors reflect on issues of kingship and changing theories of power at a number of levels; they tackle questions concerning loyalty and rebellion; examine the role of law, both domestic and international; give consideration to the nature of memory – legal, historical and fabricated; and they address the relationship between the Plantagenets and the rulers of those nations and territories over which England claimed dominion.

In so doing, the essays draw on a vibrant array of new scholarship, some of which was published in earlier volumes of *FCE*, that is transforming our understanding of and approach to the later Middle Ages. They also take advantage of sources which are now much easier to access and which can be interrogated in new ways. The digital revolution has shaped the direction of a good deal of recent research both in terms of international collaborations and what individual scholars may study and how they conduct their studies. The establishment of major databases and digitized source collections has been a key feature of this process. In addition to opening new avenues of enquiry such resources have also prompted a return to more familiar subjects by allowing investigations to be carried out in wholly new ways. Prosopographical work using such materials and employing data analysis software in order to explore the relationships between members of various groups is only one example of this.

As with earlier volumes in this series, several contributions to this collection originated in papers sponsored by the Society for Fourteenth Century Studies at the International Medieval Congress (University of Leeds) and the Society of the White Hart at the International Conference on Medieval Studies (University of Western Michigan). Over many years, these meetings have helped shape broader scholarly agendas as well as individual research projects while maintaining a tradition of friendly collegiality. They have ensured that the fourteenth century, a period of intense and often brutal change, is a very welcoming one to study.

The editors are grateful to the other members of the board of *FCE* for their advice and help and to the contributors for their prompt and good-natured responses to queries. Finally, the importance of Boydell and Brewer in the promotion of and support for medieval studies in general and later medieval English history in particular should not be underestimated. The editors offer their thanks to Caroline Palmer, Rohais Landon, Rebecca Cribb and Megan Milan.

Fourteenth Century England XII, the next volume in the series, due for publication in 2022, will be edited by James Bothwell and Jeffrey Hamilton. Potential contributors may contact Dr Bothwell at the School of History, University of Leicester, Leicester, LE1 7RH (email: jsb16@leicester.ac.uk) or Professor Hamilton at the Center for Global Engagement, Baylor University, Waco, TX 76798-7012 (email: jeffrey_hamilton@baylor.edu).