

## PREFACE

A decade has passed since the publication of volume one of *Fourteenth Century England*. The editor of that first volume, Nigel Saul, stated at the time that during the preceding few decades, the fourteenth century had suffered a degree of neglect by comparison with both the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, each of which already boasted their own (usually biennial) journals. That we have now reached volume six in this series is in itself testimony to the remedying of that deficiency, but even more striking evidence is the number and quality of the contributions which continue to be submitted to the editors for inclusion: without the drip-feed of a regular, dedicated conference to call upon, this is quite impressive. It certainly suggests that research into fourteenth-century England is alive and well at universities and other centres of research, whether in Britain, the USA or elsewhere.

The original editorial team of Nigel Saul, Mark Ormrod and Chris Given-Wilson remains unchanged, with the addition four years ago of Jeff Hamilton. So do the aims of the journal: we are interested in publishing high-quality research into any aspect of English history during the 'long' fourteenth century. As noted above, we do not rely on the proceedings of a specific conference, although many of the papers which appear in *Fourteenth Century England* began their lives as papers delivered at either the Leeds IMC (at which the editors organise a number of sessions each year) or the Kalamazoo ICMS (where the Society of the White Hart organises similar sessions). We make no attempt to 'theme' volumes, preferring to present whatever is good in current research into the period, acting thereby as a channel for the dissemination of ideas, trends and debates.

This eclecticism is reflected in the current volume. Several of the articles discuss aspects of warfare (a topic hard to avoid in the fourteenth century). Graham St John examines the relationship between personal devotion on campaign and the appalling destruction which so often seemed to accompany it; Rory Cox analyses the writings of two major fourteenth-century theorists, John of Legnano and John Wyclif, on the right of self-defence; Adrian Bell takes the earl of Arundel's naval campaign of 1387 as a case study in the relative merits of narrative and documentary sources; and David Green investigates the evidence for that elusive but important phenomenon, the growth of national identity in England and France. Related to these studies is Susan Foran's chapter on one of the most famous chivalric texts of the century, John Barbour's *Bruce*, not just from the point of view of what it tells us about war but also about the deeper political message as received at the court of Robert II of Scotland in the mid-1370s. Politics and the court also form the backdrop to the chapters by Penny

Lawne and Jessica Lutkin, which take two prominent but neglected members of the English royal family – Edmund of Woodstock, son of Edward I, and Philippa de Coucy, daughter of Edward III, respectively – in each case shedding new and important light on their careers. Courts, politicians and their agents are viewed very differently in the Anglo-Norman poem edited and analysed by Diana Tyson in her chapter, which takes as its *leitmotif* the idea that power corrupts all those with whom it comes to reside. Finally, Paula Arthur reminds us that plague, like war, is something which it is very difficult to ignore in any volume of essays on the fourteenth century: basing her evidence on the magnificent series of records from the bishop of Winchester's Hampshire estates, she demonstrates that the Black Death was not just every bit as devastating in its effects as is usually assumed, but may actually have been rather more so.

As has become customary in volumes of *Fourteenth Century England*, the authors whose work is presented here range from younger scholars at the outset of their careers to more established scholars with a strong track record of research behind them. This was the aim of the series when it was inaugurated ten years ago, and it remains so; the editors would like to thank the staff of the Boydell Press, especially Richard Barber and Caroline Palmer, for continuing to make it possible, and Annie Jackson for her meticulous and deeply-informed copy-editing of this volume.

Chris Given-Wilson  
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