

*Houses of Sixle, Ormsby, Catley, Bullington and Alvingham*, also published by the Lincoln Record Society (for 1920). That volume has been an immensely valuable resource for social historians ever since, and, such is the quality of this edition of Alvingham's cartulary that it promises to be so for the future.

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Steven Gunn, *The English People at War in the Reign of Henry VIII*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, ISBN 9780198802860, £35.

Based on the Ford lectures of 2015, Steven Gunn's study of the effects on the English of the near constant wars of the sixteenth century and their response to it sheds new light on a topic that, if not neglected, has been understudied, with historical enquiry dominated by studies of the Tudor court, government and above all the Reformation. The text itself is slim – 154 pages – and the remaining 143 pages comprise the endnotes (76 pages), bibliography (46) and index. The fact that almost half the book is supporting apparatus indicates formidable scholarship. This is not to say that the text is difficult; on the contrary, Gunn's prose is accessible, and flashes of humour (including at one point a nod to the lyrics of, appropriately enough, Elvis Costello's 'Oliver's Army'), illustrations and a number of tables also offer the reader some divertissement.

The first chapter is inevitably general, providing a brief run-through of the wars conducted by English monarchs, internally and externally, from 1475 to 1570. It shows – as it was presumably designed to do – just how frequently the English state undertook military activity in the period, by land and by sea (and the naval dimension receives its due throughout). Less persuasively Gunn labels the period from the English invasion of France in 1475 to the early Elizabethan period as 'the age of Henry VIII', and while it is understandable that Henry's reign itself needs to be put in context, the label seems a little disingenuous, potentially giving that century a unity that it does not deserve. Seven thematic chapters follow on a range of ways in which war affected the English people. All combine a mastery of detail with broader ideas and themes though inevitably some are more successful than others.

The chapter on towns and villages is, in fact, mostly a discussion of the increasingly heavy expenditure necessary in parish and urban communities on arms, armour and guns in order to equip troops for service and for defence, particularly in coastal communities. Here Gunn suggests the importance of war in the development of the civil parish and of urban oligarchy – in contrast to many historians who place these developments in the context of the Reformation. The chapter on the landed elite at war ranges widely from the practical issues to the mentalities of the nobility and gentry. It balances some evidence towards declining participation on the battlefield with the acknowledgement that many served at home in some capacity as more state-orientated service became more prominent and acceptable. 'Trade and tillage' is a strangely named chapter, as tillage barely appears, though trade and domestic (industrial) production are covered in a wealth of statistics and occasional anecdotes. 'Killing and dying' notes the paucity of sources for attitudes amongst the soldiers to the ultimate goal and ultimate risk of warfare, looks at the surprisingly low death rates amongst English armies and what happened to the wounded, amongst other factors such as motivation, mutinies and equipment. It is again filled with illuminating evidence and statistics. The responses of the English people to the Wars is the subject of the penultimate chapter, and it suggests they accepted, on the whole, the justifications offered in terms of the king's rights, defence of the realm and the nation's honour,

while usually begrudging the taxation required to succeed in any of these aims. The final chapter places England in the European context noting some similarities but more differences with the experiences of most other Western European populations; here Gunn combines an enviable breadth of reading with conciseness, and it provides a fitting conclusion to the book.

There are points when one wishes that Gunn, so in command of the detail, would express a little more opinion on the bigger picture. Chapter 2, for example, opens with the question 'how much did those wars engage [Henry's] subjects' (p. 17) and 14 pages later ends with nearly the same question, asking whether it 'reached deep into the communities of Henry's realm' (p. 30). One senses that the answers in the author's mind to these questions are 'a lot' and 'yes' respectively but here, and in places elsewhere within the work, while the painstakingly assembled evidence is suggestive, the answers and conclusions are rather implicit. Yet, as a piece of archivally based historical research, this is unsurpassable. The bibliography notes the use of 66 archives, in four countries. Gunn is – nearly uniquely among modern historians – equally at home amongst the complex archival collections of central government and the law courts at the National Archives, the undifferentiated morass of the British Library's Additional Manuscripts and antiquarian collections, and the family and local government material of the county record offices and private archives. The breadth of examples drawn from these, as well as from printed primary sources (which run to a formidable 16 pages in the bibliography), is virtually unparalleled in modern historical scholarship.

This study's origins as a series of lectures gives it structure and accessibility that balances the depth of scholarship that lies behind it. It is an important contribution to the study of the Henrician period and it will be essential reading for historians of sixteenth century England for the foreseeable future.

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Natalia Nowakowska, *King Sigismund of Poland and Martin Luther: The Reformation before Confessionalization*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, ISBN 9780198813453, £65.

In this highly original monograph, Natalia Nowakowska demonstrates how profound and geographically wide Luther's initial impact was by presenting a new narrative of the early Polish Reformation and a hypothesis that helps explain its apparent inconsistencies. This is the first research monograph since 1911 to consider the early Reformation in this major early modern European monarchy and Nowakowska skilfully places her research in a historiographical context determined by the largely outdated, politically driven narratives written under the Prussian partitions, the Stalinist regime and the Cold War. These highly inconsistent accounts claim that the early modern Polish monarchy was religiously tolerant to an exceptional degree and that the Reformation only gained traction in Poland in the late sixteenth century. And yet, as Nowakowska reminds us, in 1525 King Sigismund the Old established the first Protestant principality in Europe, Ducal Prussia, by secularising the Teutonic knights under the leadership of his nephew, Albrecht Hohenzollern. A year later, Sigismund executed 13 Lutheran rebels in Danzig in a show of strength that put his monarchy at the forefront of religious persecution in the 1520s. At the same time, Sigismund's administration might have been famous for the leniency it showed detained Lutherans despite many royal edicts against Lutheranism, but, as Nowakowska points out, other European rulers dealt with the early Reformation in a similar way. And while historians