Reading and shaping medieval cartularies. Multi-scribe manuscripts and their patterns of growth. A study of the earliest cartularies of Glasgow Cathedral and Lindores Abbey. By Joanna Tucker. (Studies in Celtic History, XLI). Pp. xiv + 318 incl. 7 figs, 19 tables and 9 colour plates. Woodbridge–Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 2020. £75. 978 1 78327 478 9

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Devoted to the scribing and codicology of just two Scottish cartularies (Glasgow's 'Registrum Vetus', and the 'Caprington' cartulary of Lindores), Joanna Tucker's meticulous survey is, on the surface of things, unlikely to appeal beyond the narrowest of scholarly constituencies. A great deal of it, although clearly expressed, and well illustrated both with photographs and codicological maps, can be read with about the same pleasure as a knitting pattern or the technical manual to an electric toaster. But this would be to ignore both the intelligence and the depth of perception that underpins so otherwise intensely technical an enquiry. In many older editions, not least those from Scotland and France, cartularies have too often been treated as mere repositories of 'fact': raw assemblies of charter materials that, for the purposes of an edition, require rearrangement, re-ranked in chronological sequence, or otherwise reduced to more 'useful' order. Treated thus as 'whole books', preserving 'copies' in many cases of documents otherwise lost, these manuscripts tend to be regarded as the product of a single campaign of composition, in essence as mere scriveners' work, later supplemented with 'haphazard', 'occasional' or 'unsystematic' additions. In reality, as Tucker so amply reveals, there is much more that can be learned from patterns of later accretion, provided that we pay attention to details. For some time now, the 'material turn' in manuscript studies, combined (in large part thanks to Patrick Geary) with a new emphasis upon historical 'memory', has alerted us to the fact that cartularies can be exercises in forgetting as much as in remembering: presenting a particular slant on the materials they preserve, and doing so as 'living' documentary assemblies, often unbound, in effect, as Tucker puts it, as 'shared spaces', almost as 'message-boards', for the religious communities, towns or families thus memorialised. In the particular documentary cultures here placed under Tucker's microscope, we discover that what are now rigidly bound books were originally, for two or more centuries, preserved as parchment quires, either unbound or only loosely held together, generously supplied with blank folios and regularly supplemented with new parchment gatherings, from the start intended for supplementation, as institutional memory itself evolved and expanded. Although a single scribe (Tucker's 'scribe 8' for Glasgow, at Lindores 'scribe 21') might write the bulk of the materials thus preserved, many others (fifty-nine scribes at Glasgow, a further thirty-four at Lindores), both early and late, were permitted to contribute additions, either as single documents or as more substantial gatherings. The duplication or repetition of particular texts within a manuscript can reveal not so much scribal error or forgetfulness, but deliberate recopying intended to guide the reader into a particular, indeed decidedly 'historical' understanding of the materials thus assembled. As this suggests, the scribes themselves were not mere copyists, but closely engaged both with the texts they were transcribing and with their anticipated readerships. Moreover, the materials thus assembled were intended neither as mere conveyancing formularies nor as repositories of evidence for the

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law courts, but as records that remained 'live' long after their first setting down. Here, and only partially signposted by the author, the fact that the Lindores scribes seem deliberately to have ignored or excluded various of their more important title deeds, not least an early release from subjection to Kelso Abbey (pp. 134–5, still surviving as an original, and cf. p. 184 for a better signposted instance) supplies yet further proof of the deliberation with which institutional or family memory remains a constructed process, never a simply mechanical assembly of 'facts'. The facts remain, of course, and are not to be dismissed (as is the tendency at the more post-modernist fringes of scholarship) as mere interpretative inventions. Cartulary editors must persevere in their efforts to sift the authentic from the forged, the reliable from the reworked, and the real from the merely wished-for. Codicology and palaeography must none the less be added to the skills of the diplomatist, as disciplines not so much ancillary but essential to historical enquiry. Rather like the cartularies it describes, this is not a book that should (or can) be read word by word. Its chapters i and v, however, and especially its five-page conclusion, offer important guidance to anyone involved in the use of charter materials. Along the way, there are several useful warnings, for instance not to date bindings by outward appearance alone (pp. 140–1, where the 'archaic' is in fact shown to be much more recent), nor to accept untested (pp. 38–9) the judgement of such things as 'French binding' by earlier editors themselves just as capable of invention or wishful thinking as any of the scribes whose work they have so usefully, yet often so misleadingly, brought to publication.

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National, local, family. History from Somerset's bishops' registers, 1264–1559. Somerset Record Society: extra series 2. Edited by Robert Dunning. (Somerset Record Society.) Pp. ix + 153. Bristol: 4word Limited, 2022. £21 (paper). 978 0 901732 50 7

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Surveying the registers of the fifteen bishops of Bath and Wells from 1264 to 1559, Robert Dunning pulls out plum after plum from what are often and complacently regarded as the routine leftovers of medieval English episcopal administration. The envy of anyone writing church history elsewhere in medieval Christendom, where even monastic visitation records are hard to come by, let alone full lists of ordinations or the registers' rich lumber of cause papers and royal mandates, in reality the English registers supply a uniquely detailed insight into the functioning of the medieval Church. Long into the nineteenth century, they remained scandalously neglected. A campaign of publication began only in 1872, with James Raine's edition for the Surtees Society of the earliest registrations from the archdiocese of York. From 1873, for the Rolls Series, Thomas Duffus Hardy followed suit with a complete Latin edition for Durham, joined, a decade later, by a far from definitive selection from the register of John Pecham, archbishop of Canterbury. Only in 1904 was the Canterbury and York Society established to extend this campaign nationwide, at first in collaboration with county record societies beginning with the registers of Lincoln and Hereford. Meanwhile, local efforts at Winchester (from 1896), Worcester (from 1897) and especially at Exeter (from 1889), have

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