

Barrow states unequivocally that the company's commerce was, from the first, created, sustained, and expanded by force. However, he teases out difficult topics such as the extent of the company's power to govern in India at different periods in its history. He scrupulously outlines the extent of the company's unpopularity at home. (Its monopoly over trade with India and China was fiercely resented; the fact that it exported silver—thought to be essential to British wealth—was criticized; its import of exotic goods was said to promote luxury and undermine British industries.) He also asks key questions, not just about the company's own trajectory but also whether the company itself was an agent of change and whether it encouraged people to behave differently.

The history of the company informs many aspects of British and world history. For example, its textile trade was important to eighteenth-century Britain's imperial economy. Though it did not itself trade with Africa or the American colonies, Indian cloth was exported to Africa as part of the transatlantic slave trade. Barrow clearly explains contemporary economic theory and sets his history of the company firmly in context. He also gives a lucid account of the financial pressures that encouraged the company to wink at the illicit trade in opium with China.

Barrow is careful to signpost important historical debates about the company's history, while making his own position clear. For example, he supports the view that the company gradually transitioned into a colonial state during the second half of the eighteenth century. However, for those seeking a turning point, he advances the Regulating Act of 1773 (when the British Parliament intervened in the running of the company's Indian territories), as an event that marks the beginning of that trend.

While Barrow offers little scope for empathy with the aims of the company and those who worked for it, he gives an effective insight into the experience of serving in its army, which was beset by disease, divided ethnically between Indian recruits and British officers, and riven by jealousies (the three armies of the company's different presidencies or administrative areas in India were not joined in one army until 1895). The distinction between the company's troops and regular British forces serving in India was another source of tension. It is no surprise that the decisive factor in enabling company troops to gain the upper hand over Indian forces was the British Navy, which controlled the Indian Ocean.

Barrow also gives a perceptive account of the force of religion on the history of the company. Religion became an important issue after the 1790s when British Baptist missionaries entered Bengal. A fierce debate followed about whether the company had a responsibility to introduce Christianity into its territories, given that eager missionaries were likely to stir up rebellion among the company's Indian subjects. In his conclusion, Barrow sets out Victorian ideology with respect to British rule in India, which came into full force after the company was effectively closed in 1858.

If Barrow's account offers a rigorously impartial history of the company, his extracts from contemporary documents offer color. They vividly indicate the strong contradictions and passions elicited by British affairs in India, and underline the role of the company in helping to effect social change. Unfortunately, Barrow includes no documents that give an Indian perspective.

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DAVID BATES. *William the Conqueror*. The English Monarchs Series. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016. Pp. 596. \$40.00 (cloth).
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Probably every review of David Bates's *William the Conqueror* will begin, as this one does, by noting that there could be no better person to write what will, no doubt, be the standard scholarly biography of William for the next half century than Bates, author of, among other things, *Normandy before 1066* (1982), an earlier biography of William intended for a general audience (1989), and editor of all of William's post-1066 acts (1998). Superseding the biography by David C. Douglas (1964), Bates brings to the work a remarkably wide canvas of the latest scholarship not only on Normandy, England, and surrounding areas, but on developments in "socio-cultural history [over] the last four decades," including "histories of power, ritual, feud, socially constructed violence, and trust," with emphasis on "trust—sociologically defined—[as] in many ways the cement that binds" (12).

Bates quotes approvingly Douglas's "aims ... to eschew the controversies of the past; to bring French and English scholarship ... into closer relationship; and ... to base my study on the original testimony." These, he says, "might almost feature verbatim as the mission statement for this book" (2). It is, of course, not possible to eschew all controversies since many aspects of William's life and actions have been variously interpreted in the past. Thus, Bates argues persuasively, against a tradition that he traces back to Orderic Vitalis, that William did not suffer "social disadvantage" (21) because of his illegitimate birth; moreover, his father's reign was not the chaotic period it has often been portrayed as being, and the horrors of the early years of William's rule as duke have been exaggerated: turbulence was restricted primarily to the period between about 1040 and 1042, and even then "the previous political equilibrium was compromised rather than overthrown" (54). He concludes that William's marriage to Matilda of Flanders occurred in 1053, rather than the usually accepted date of about 1050, and he minimizes the degree of dispute with the papacy over the marriage. He has no doubt that Edward the Confessor offered the succession to the English throne to William in 1051.

One of the consistent themes of this work is that William was "uncompromisingly convinced that he had a right to succeed" to England (11) and that his ambition to do so was a factor in northern French politics for the decade and a half between Edward's promise and the Norman conquest of England. Bates attributes William's victory at Hastings "arguably" to "superior generalship, both at a tactical and strategic level" (234). It evinced the "intelligence and thorough preparation which meant that it was not until 1076, when he was approaching his fiftieth birthday, that William suffered any significant military setback" (247). All the same, he notes as another theme of the book "William's consistent readiness to treat enemies and opponents ruthlessly in a way that sometimes went beyond contemporary norms" (185). "In terms of the ongoing debate about the ethics of William's methods ... the scale of state-sponsored violence that all this involved is arguable deeply shocking" (322). That last statement, made in the context of the discussion of William's actions in England in 1068–70, including the harrying of the north, expresses Bates's more general conclusion about the consequences for individuals of many of William's actions, elsewhere described as "human misery" (140). In sum, "The mixture of fear, awe, trust, and acquiescence that he inspired was centrally important" to his rule (507).

The approach here is consistently chronological. In the context of the narrative Bates considers many thorny issues of the interpretation of sources, and there are illuminating discussions of many more points that are indicated above. For the reader wishing to follow the story of William's life from beginning to end, this is a breathtaking achievement. For the researcher wishing to consult the book on some particular point—and I am thinking here of, among others, the advanced undergraduates in my recent seminar on the Norman Conquest—the exclusively chronological method will cause problems. The book never stops to give a topic or theme an extensive discussion. If, as with Domesday Book, the date is known, no problem. Many important aspects of William's rule either are not securely dated or spread over many years, however. On such matters a researcher will need to use the index to find what Bates has to say; and the index, I regret to say, will sometimes be of little help. For a specific example, I took the paragraph in which Bates mentions "the famous royal writ which requir[ed] that ecclesiastical cases should

not be heard in the hundred courts” (384). The index has no entry for “hundred,” much less “hundred court.” It has no entry for “ecclesiastical” or “jurisdiction” or “courts.” The entry for “writs, English” lists only five references, none of them to this page. The entry for “church, English,” has fifteen undifferentiated references, again none of them to this page. In his edition of William’s acts, Bates dates this writ to 1071/5 × 1085. Short of reading through nearly two hundred pages of the book, how would one find this? A more global example is the tenurial upheaval that followed the Conquest in England as William replaced native lords, secular and ecclesiastical, with his French supporters. This subject comes up repeatedly, as one or another Frenchman gets an estate or a prelate; but Bates never stops to consider the phenomenon as a whole—the word “fief” is not in the index, and “feudal revolution, the” garners two references, both to Normandy. Indeed, the profound consequences of William’s conquest of England—for England, for Normandy, for France, and for the world as we know it—are not canvassed here. The section of the book entitled “The Long Term,” though it claims that “William’s conquest [was] a landmark in a long history and not a phenomenon that can be analyzed in a narrow isolation from it” (508), is less than six pages long. This is a biography, pure and simple.

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DAVID BUTCHER. *Medieval Lowestoft: The Origins and Growth of a Suffolk Coastal Community*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2016. Pp. 370. \$90.00 (cloth).
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With *Medieval Lowestoft: The Origins and Growth of a Suffolk Coastal Community*, David Butcher, a retired schoolteacher and lecturer in the Department of Continuing Studies at the University of East Anglia, has produced a solid contribution to English local history. Unlike his previous publications on early modern Lowestoft, however, for this book he had far less material to draw upon: no local records survive for Lowestoft before the mid- and late sixteenth century. To compensate, he offers very detailed analyses of the 1086 Domesday Book survey for Lowestoft and its neighbors in the half-hundred of Lothingland (much of it taken from another study previously published by Butcher) and the 1274 Hundred Roll for Lothingland, supplemented by data from the 1327 lay subsidy. He also employs, for example, the late medieval manorial records of nearby Akethorpe to get some idea of Lowestoft’s agricultural history; a 1618 manorial survey of Lowestoft to outline the settlement’s topography; bequests to the parish church in late medieval wills to comment on the church fabric and piety of its religious guilds; and the 1524–25 lay subsidy to explore the demography, occupational structure, and distribution of wealth in the late medieval town. He makes extensive use, moreover, of references in the printed calendars of the Close Rolls and Patent Rolls to discuss Lowestoft’s maritime trade and conflicts with its powerful neighboring port, Great Yarmouth. But he does not do much with the medieval archival material in The National Archives, much of it available online in abstracts or digital form, including certificates of Statute Merchant and Statute Staple, petitions, early Chancery proceedings, and ministers’ accounts.

Butcher’s book is especially valuable for its focus on a type of town rarely treated in the scholarly literature: a smaller town without official borough status, with an absentee lay lord, that prospered and grew in the later Middle Ages, when many other English towns were in decline. Much of Butcher’s argument revolves around showing Lowestoft’s increasing