

book fails to convince. That, ‘in the name of the great Jehovah and the Continental Congress’ (as Ethan Allen might have said), is too much to swallow.

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*The wonder of the north. Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal.* By Mark Newman. Pp. xii + 394 incl. 253 colour and black-and-white figs. Rochester, NY–Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2015 (in association with National Trust). £35. 978 1 84383 883 8 JEH (67) 2016; doi:10.1017/S0022046916000397

This sumptuously and comprehensively illustrated history of the Fountains estate, by its archaeological advisor, is essentially an account of its post-Dissolution development as one of the great eighteenth-century landscapes, but within it there is new material on the abbey precinct itself, and on the ways in which the monastic past was deployed by later generations. The chapter on the abbey succinctly records the state of current knowledge, supported by a useful appendix showing the development of the site and listing all work done on the site by succeeding abbots. As an archaeologist the author is especially good on the extensive range of industrial buildings around the precinct, reminding us of the importance of the Cistercians as technological innovators. Another important insight relates to the summit chapel at How Hill, located in the parkland to the east of the abbey. Built in the first half of the fourteenth century the chapel later became a site of local pilgrimage, offering the pilgrim a religious landscape with views of the abbey, Ripon Minster and, in the distance, the towers of York Minster. Recent study of the immediate landscape has revealed the creation of a winding path strewn with ‘natural’ obstacles leading up to the chapel, recalling the difficulties placed before the Christian pilgrim. The author suggests that it has no equivalent in England, though I imagine the approach to Glastonbury Tor might qualify. The post-Dissolution account makes no reference to the brief but abortive plan to make Fountains the seat of a new bishopric, though the continuing use of How Hill chapel into the 1550s is noted. Otherwise the Tudor story is largely one of dismantling, with no resident owner until the building of Fountains Hall in about 1600, while the early seventeenth century is marked by disputes between the owners and their neighbours at Studley, the Mallorie family. The marriage of a Mallorie heiress to the lawyer George Aislabie in 1662, and the subsequent, if rocky, rise in the family fortunes meant that, by the 1720s, work had begun at Studley on creating a landscape garden. The purchase of the Fountains estate in 1767 enabled William Aislabie to incorporate the abbey into his plans and to create much of the landscape that visitors see today. This involved structural and aesthetic improvements to the abbey precinct which, from that date, became a favoured destination for visitors, and for painters of the picturesque. The nineteenth century saw a ‘re-wilding’ of the abbey in the spirit of medievalism, and the first serious archaeology was undertaken in 1848 by J.R. Walbran. These developments placed Fountains in the national consciousness and the coming of the railways made visiting easier, with entrance fees being charged from 1847. Shortly after that the estate passed to George Robinson, later marquess of Ripon, whose distinguished political career survived his conversion to Catholicism in 1874. In the early twentieth

century the fact that Fountains was owned by a Catholic family raised some unrealistic hopes among aristocratic Catholics for a restoration of monastic life there, ironically under Benedictine rule. Some land was secured in 1946 but the plan was opposed by the Protestant Alliance, which petitioned Downing Street. Eventually public ownership became the only practical solution to managing the estate, leading eventually to today's World Heritage Site, perhaps a fitting if unwitting accolade to the internationalism of the Cistercian Order.

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*Religion and national identity. Governing Scottish Presbyterianism in the eighteenth century.*

By Alistair Mutch. Pp. xviii + 264 incl. 3 figs and 24 tables. Edinburgh:

Edinburgh University Press, 2015. £70. 978 0 7486 9915 5

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This is an insightful and wonderfully researched book on the development of the practice of accountability in the Church of Scotland. Governance practices in the Kirk – record-keeping, accounting, inspections – have rarely been examined in such depth. Scholarship on the Kirk in the eighteenth century has focused more on its theological and ecclesiological disputations at a national level. Mutch instead has mined the rich treasure trove of session records in the Scottish archives to produce a detailed account of the mundane procedures of Presbyterian governance in local parishes. His microhistorical case studies are penetrating and evocative examinations of the administrative squabbles which arose as a result of the Church's commitment to auditing its members. These practices – outlined in, but which sometimes deviated from, procedural manuals written at the turn of the eighteenth century – were distinctive to Scotland, Mutch argues, and differed from those of the Church of England, whose functionaries seemed to spend more of their time getting drunk in the pub. The book makes some interesting suggestions about the wider impact of these practices on the development of the accounting profession in Scotland and in the United States. I am less impressed, however, by the author's – or publisher's – attempt to package this book as a study of national identity. It is no such thing. For a start, as Mutch himself acknowledges, the book's focus is mainly restricted to five Kirk presbyteries in the Lowlands; it has very little to say on the Highlands or dissenters, and talks only about men. In fact the book has almost nothing to say about national identity (or the voluminous literature concerned with it) as a concept or a construct and spends just over five pages talking about it. The book's conclusions regarding the enduring impact of governing practices on the Scottish character are slim and speculative. Indeed, the book's contents barely relate at all to the book's title. The book has clearly been marketed in such a way so as to render it appealing to a wide readership. The result is a misleading cover against which it would be unfair to judge the bulk of the book's contents, which are worthwhile in their own right for their insights into the life of the rural Kirk parish.

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