

at international conferences held by the European Network for Country House and Estate Research. The introduction leads on to some valuable work providing insights into landed growth and decline, with occasional fascinating detail. Each chapter ends with a helpful bibliography. The Danish estate is shown to have been a tool of communication with owners stamping their domination through use of markers such as architectural patterns, and plaques inside churches – a scene familiar to those who know the British landscape. There is a repetitive consideration of the different sorts of landowners interwoven with many statistics. Jonathan Finch goes on to discuss regional variations in estate creation in England, with detailed discussion of data confirming the complexity of estate returns. The subsequent chapter considers Swedish manors but involves too many tables containing confusing data. The lengthy conclusion begins to make things clearer but introduces yet more detail. A chapter on the ‘Dukeries’ (an extinct English term) reviews the organisation and operation of capital farms in the area that bridges Scandinavia and Germany and brings in more complex terminology and definitions.

The later parts of the book feel like a different proposition. A chapter on the nobility in south-west Germany uses an incident in a church in 1918 to introduce an exploration of the influence of the lower nobility and includes an interesting section on land division prior to Napoleon, subsequent landowner/peasant tensions and finally Nazi reorganisation. This is followed by an exploration of Dutch estate growth and decline, which at the same time explores and explains the changing Dutch economy. The final main chapter is a fascinating review of how the religious Reformation of the sixteenth century gave Denmark a strong grip on Norwegian estates, and how the instigation of an absolute monarchy in the seventeenth century created a new nobility and had a profound effect on estates. Finch concludes with ‘a new agenda’ for estate studies. He acknowledges the similarities among the noble elite and their landed properties in the different countries and identifies gaps that need to be filled. Here he sees the need for a global context.

The editors agree that terminological differences in the countries under consideration could lead to confusion – and they do, in several places. There are also a few mistakes in the use of the English language, some questionable definitions and a number of contradictions. The illustrations are superb and help to explain the high price of the volume.

Provincial Society and Empire: the Cumbrian Counties and the East Indies, 1680–1829

**K. J. Saville-Smith, Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, 2018,
xvi + 296 pp., £65, 9781783272815**

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The interests of London merchants and national political elites, we are assured, drove British rule in India. Kay Saville-Smith (who lives in New Zealand but completed her doctorate at Lancaster University) begs to differ. Using the modern county of Cumbria as her case study, she has pieced together the biographical fragments of more than four hundred men and women from that area who had identifiable links to the East Indies. From the analysis of her data she suggests that we need to recognise that the provinces were heavily involved with projects involving the East Indies,

and that this in turn reflected stronger links between the provincial and the global than is usually assumed.

Saville-Smith's method and argument are basically as follows. Digital research techniques have made it possible to locate the names and addresses of individuals who had contact with the East Indies between about 1680 and 1829. This research was a complex and time-consuming business, in which the key was to track down every 'archival trace', however minor, and then to collate the references in order to establish biographies. In this way, she tracked down 421 Cumbrian men and women, as well as various Cumbrian kinship networks. Allowing for the problems within her data, she argues that in her chosen period around four hundred Cumbrians were directly involved in the East India trade, the East India Company itself, or in East Indies sojourns.

Having assembled her data, Saville-Smith is not content purely with reconstructing straightforward kinship networks. She asks questions about why Cumbrians went to the East Indies, how they got there, and whether they returned. There is some fascinating material here, beginning with the linkages established in Cumbria's remarkable collection of schools (where scholars met future East Indian contacts), moving on to the riches they hoped to acquire (which made taking the risk worthwhile), to the kinship and friendship networks built up over four or five generations.

These various networks enabled newcomers to the East to link up with other people from similar backgrounds, but it was still not an easy decision to take when a man left Cumbria to seek his fortune. As she concludes, 'ambivalence was at the heart of Cumbrians' encounters with the East Indies' (p. 95). The problem was, of course, that while time spent in the East Indies might bring great wealth, it could also bring debt and disgrace – as well as, worst of all, premature death, which would mean no return home. It was considered worth the risk: 'for middling Cumbrians, accumulating a fortune in the East Indies was an ambitious aspiration, but not a fantastical one' (p. 71). Many returned to Cumbria, and those who had done well in the East Indies put much of their wealth into the local community, investing in tourism, the extractive industries, infrastructure development and agricultural improvement. They built houses and they renovated and restored others. They participated in local government, became patrons, contributed to charities, and slotted back into Cumbrian society – at a higher financial level than the one from which they had departed.

This is an impressive piece of work, using modern techniques to create Saville-Smith's database and then interrogating it carefully and without pushing her findings too far. The emphasis of her book is on Cumbrians and the East Indies, but the implication of her findings is that local and regional studies are likely to find similar patterns, and that in turn should change the perspective we have on how the Empire was viewed from the provinces, not simply from London.

Tudor and Early Stuart Parks of Hertfordshire **Anne Rowe, Hatfield, Hertfordshire University Press, 2019, 290 pp.,** **£18.99, 9781912260119**

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For those scholars interested in the history of deer parks, Anne Rowe's work will already be well known, with her 2009 volume on Hertfordshire's medieval parks one of the most detailed county-based surveys carried out to date. This new book is the natural successor to this earlier work and