RICHARD III AND BUCKINGHAM'S REBELLION.

The rebellion against Richard III which erupted throughout the southern counties of England in the autumn of 1483 was almost certainly the pivotal event of his short reign. The production of a single volume study of Buckingham's rebellion is fully justified by the momentous events of 1483. In the space of a few months, Richard survived the defections of servants from within the royal household, leading gentry figures from regional centres throughout the south of England, and of former confidants such as Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, all of whom had helped to secure the successful seizure of the throne only a few months earlier -in June 1483. The rebels failed in their attempts to replace Richard as king, yet the response of the crown in re-establishing control over the south, and Richard's failure to eliminate Henry Tudor's development as a rival claimant to the throne, ensured that the crushing of the rebellion only heralded deeper dynastic and security problems for the Ricardian regime. The rebellion is therefore the key event of Richard's reign, and Louise Gill's work is important since the national impact of the rebellion has not before been the subject of a separate published study.

One of the main difficulties with Gill's book, however, is that the rebellion itself is not investigated as vigorously as the title would suggest. The focus of the work is much stronger on the political culture of the gentry of southern England during the period 1471-1485. Detailed sections concerning the rebellion itself are restricted largely to a narrative discussion based on existing published works and a chief manuscript source: Richard III's first pardon roll, Public Record Office, C 67/51. The author states that the study is an attempt to analyse the political culture of the south of England, to balance the more numerous studies of Richard's northern affinity. Gentry networks were the key to the organisation and mobilisation of the rebels, and the author's determination to unveil the marital and social connections which linked rebels at a local level and within the royal household often detracts from detail and analysis of the rebellion itself, which occupies a chapter of twenty-three pages only. The book therefore offers a framework on to which the allegiances and loyalties of the rulers of southern England are projected. Nevertheless, it treads much of the same ground as Rosemary Horrox, *Richard III: A Study of Service* (Cambridge 1989), and does not depart from Horrox's conclusions about the importance of the 1483 rising as the turning point of the reign.

The course of the rebellion has been understood in detail for some time. A. E. Conway, 'The Maidstone Sector of Buckingham's Rebellion, October 18, 1483,' *Archaeologia Cantiana,* volume 37 (1925), still remains the best work on the regional rising in Kent. R. A. Griffiths and S. Thomas, *The Making of the Tudor Dynasty* (Gloucester 1985), provides detail on Henry Tudor's involvement in this first attempt to place him on the throne. Furthermore, Gill concedes in the bibliography to Chapter 5 that, 'Horrox, *Richard III,* Chapter 3, is far and away the leading work on the rebellion'. This suggests strongly that Gill's own book has a stronger emphasis on the relationships between the southern gentry and the crown, and that Buckingham's rebellion was the major event in modifying and developing those relationships during the last quarter of the fifteenth century.

The book is divided into analytical and chronological sections. The introduction and first chapter offer an abstract of the work, a short summary of the rebellion and a chronological investigation of the primary, printed and secondary sources used as a basis for the book. One of the most interesting sections of Gill's book investigates contemporary, near contemporary and antiquarian accounts of Buckingham's rebellion. What is not discussed directly, however, is the work of modern historians such as Rosemary Horrox and Charles Ross who have addressed the rebellion in great detail, and in the case of Horrox, in the context of a sophisticated study of Ricardian service networks and relationships. The second chapter, 'Kings, Lords and Landlords' looks in detail at the development of gentry networks and connections to the crown in the southern counties of England during the period of the 'Wars of the Roses'. This chapter investigates marriage connections in forging the links between lesser aristocratic and gentry families, ties through local office, and also the settling of disputes. Gill also weaves in Buckingham's extensive landholding in the south, as a way of linking him to the networks of county families and to those who rebelled in 1483 (although he was one of many absentee nobles who controlled important southern estates). The investigation of gentry control of the localities of southern England proceeds rapidly through service in the law and in estate administration, to those who served directly in the royal household of Edward IV - the core body of those who would rebel in 1483. The attempt to provide a background framework of regional connection between the families who rejected Richard III's rule in 1483, and the service of those same families at court and in the royal household is a worthy and necessary one for the scope of this book, and is developed skilfully. The third chapter examines how these gentry groups interacted throughout the political events of the 1460s and 70s, and confirms the accepted McFarlanite view that patronage, service and loyalty, as well as individual greed, drove the regional 'powers that be' in their search for greater wealth and influence. The question of an ideological adherence to principles of loyalty is not addressed. The following chapters (four to eight) respectively take a broadly chronological and narrative path through Richard's usurpation; the rebellion; the crown response to the rising; the growth of a real challenge to Richard's throne; and the Bosworth campaign. In this, the discussion follows closely that offered by Horrox in *Richard III: A Study of Service.* Greater focus is obviously given to the southern gentry and their role in Tudor's invasion, and in Richard's downfall, and much detail is provided by the pardon roll (PRO, C 67/51) and by warrants for the great seal (PRO class C 81).

It is only in the final, very brief, concluding chapter that any parallel is drawn between Richard III' s failure and Henry VII's success in establishing crown control over a significant part of the whole of England. This is unfortunate, since there are a number of parallels in the challenges faced by the two kings and in the nature of their responses to those problems. Of major importance was the defection of major figures within the household and a number of lesser household servants. Richard lost the loyalty of Edward IV's household servants in the nature of his usurpation, with the murders of Rivers, Grey and Hastings, and with the disappearance and murder of his nephews. Henry lost the tentative support of Ricardians brought into the regime in a conciliatory move to broaden the base of Tudor support after the appearance of the pretender Lambert Simnel and the Yorkshire risings of 1486 and 1487. Henry also was unable to maintain the allegiance of solidly Yorkist nobles such as Sir William Stanley and Lord Fitzwalter once Perkin Warbeck revived dormant Yorkist loyalties after 1492. The loss of Ricardian influence in southern England was countered by a transfer of northern loyalists into the administration of the southern counties. Henry VII faced a similar vacuum of authority in the North Riding of Yorkshire, and in the north generally, after Bosworth. The solutions sought by both kings to such problems of crown authority could usefully be compared, but this would give Gill's book a broader chronological sweep, and would make it more of a general analysis of late fifteenth century rebellion than clearly was intended.

The core theme of Gill's book is a sample study of fifty-five leaders of the rebellion, and this investigation is based on Richard III' s first pardon roll (PRO, C 67/51). By linking evidence of pardons to lists of known rebels from various sources, such as parliamentary attainders, Richard's proclamations, indictments and chronicle sources such as Polydore Vergil's *Anglica Historia,* some picture of the crown response to the rising is uncovered. Most of these pardons have been printed in the *Calendar of Patent Rolls.* Such documents are sparse in the detail they supply -listing the name, aliases and places of residence of those receiving pardon. Modern researchers have had to supply additional evidence to link those pardons to specific instances of rebellion or more general crimes. While many of those were certainly involved in Buckingham's rebellion, some of those listed on the roll probably received their pardons for crimes at the common law. Evidence of gentry association is used to connect those involved in the rebellion, but more direct and convincing evidence seems to have been overlooked in this work. This evidence is the crown demand for bonds for allegiance and good behaviour, frequently required as a condition of the grant of pardon. Although the practice was much more widespread under Henry VII, evidence does survive for Richard III' s use of bonds in the response to Buckingham's rebellion. Many of these bonds were imposed before the royal council, and for Richard's reign, many are extant among documents recording those who were compelled to appear under a financial penalty (PRO, class C 244, *corpus cum causa* writs). For example, William Berkeley of Beverstone was pardoned in March 1484, and his uncle Edward and brother-in-law, John, Lord Stourton, were bound under 1000 marks for his allegiance. Berkeley's defection to Henry Tudor caused the forfeiture of the bond (PRO, C 244/131/31). Other rebels, such as Richard Woodville and John Fogge were bound under 1000 marks for their allegiance before pardons were issued in January 1485 (PRO, C 244/136/130). Other pardons were granted without petition as Richard became more acutely insecure, as more southern gentry defected to Henry Tudor during late 1484. So although the discussion of the rebellion is based almost exclusively on evidence of pardons, an analysis of the use of royal pardon by Richard in the search for support is not really developed within the book. Was the widespread distribution of pardons by Richard after the rebellion evidence of his weakness as king (the need to appease those influential people involved), or was the issue of pardons an example of royal accommodation and conciliation towards former enemies, a policy seemingly employed by Henry VII in the North Riding after the risings of 1486 and 1487? Although Richard's imposition of the northern gentry into the administration of the southern counties in 1484 was ultimately calamitous, many southern gentry were pardoned by the crown before Bosworth. This might point to Richard's wish to develop the loyalty of the southern gentry families. As Rosemary Horrox pointed out, the rebellion obliged Richard to 'equate security with the use of his own associates' *(Richard III: A Study of Service,* p. 223). To rule the south Richard had to maintain greater control over his northern followers, who had suddenly been given much greater national responsibility, and this too may have created unwelcome pressure on Richard's personal and long-standing relationships which finally told at Bosworth, where many of his closest followers failed to fight for him. Also, since Richard had to try to move away from any reputation he had as primarily a northern king, the need to develop new associates within the south may also have been part of a developing policy of accommodation, which was curtailed abruptly by defeat at Bosworth.

Gill develops a general background of the ties and associations between the gentry of the south, and the defections of former servants of Edward IV within Richard's household. But against this study, there is no discussion of the significance and extent of an ideology of allegiance to the crown as an institution, rather than to the nobleman who occupied it. This would have been very useful, since Richard's power was firmly rooted in his personal control over the Neville lands and affinity in the north. Those who rose against Richard were, on the whole, supporters of his dead brother who hoped to see the Yorkist line continue in Edward V. Most interesting were those rebels - even some who were attainted - who eventually accommodated with the Ricardian regime, thus giving some tacit recognition of its legitimacy. This too, could have been compared usefully to Henry VII's efforts to impose his authority on the country after 1485, had it been within the scope of the book.

The book demonstrates an impressive grasp of the relationships and loyalties of the gentry of the southern counties at the end of Edward IV's reign. Yet this material is often presented as lists of names, all of which pre-suppose some knowledge of the subject matter. It is frequently difficult to keep up with the copious information corning from the page - especially in the first four chapters of the book. The occasional clumsy turn of phrase also stands out, but this does not really detract from these chapters, which must have been difficult to construct. There

are obvious difficulties in discovering and exploiting new manuscript material when based in Australia, as Dr Gill is. With this in mind, what is perhaps an over-reliance on a single source, albeit one which has not been fully analysed before, may have restricted opportunities to explore more deeply the wider material linking individuals to the rebellion. With Buckingham's rebellion presented as the pivotal event of the reign, and with so much space given to explaining the networks and relationships of the southern gentry which existed before 1483, further investigation of events after 1485, and the longer-term changes wrought by the southern risings of 1483, may have given the book greater balance. Nevertheless, this does not undermine what is a detailed overview of the involvement of the gentry of the southern counties in the turmoil of events during the period 1483-85, and one which, hopefully, heralds further investigations of Richard III's complex relationship with the south of England.

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