any essay on servants, despite McBride’s relatively thorough discussion of the changing role and gender makeup of household servants in her introduction. Yet the book provides so much worthy food for thought that it would be merely ill-mannered to quibble over minor ingredients in the recipe.


When Henry, Prince of Wales, was interred in Westminster Abbey in December 1612, his funeral procession necessitated two thousand black-robed mourners to accompany his chariot, carrying the coffin and effigy beneath a canopy littered with arms and heraldry. George Wither recalled this “antique curious rite” in his *Prince Henries Obsequies,* asking, “What needed all that Cerimonious show?” The answer came quickly: “it shew’d that though he wanted breath, / Yet he should ride in triumphant over death.” Upon reading Anthony Miller’s *Roman Triumphs and Early Modern English Culture,* one can appreciate a further reason for Henry’s funeral triumph. Originating in Roman ceremonial displays of military and imperial vigour, triumphs serve as liminal ceremonies, marking the boundaries between peace and war, civil and military rule, and life and death. As their emphasis shifted increasingly toward the figure and achievements of the emperor himself, these ceremonies were adapted for occasions beyond military victories, such as the funeral of Augustus. In their Hapsburg and later English incarnations, triumphs signaled a culture’s descent from Rome, even as their purposes expanded beyond the traditional display of power. Miller offers evidence throughout this book that the English adapted Roman triumphs to serve an ever-widening range of purposes, including “exhortation, criticism, consolation, justification or prophecy” (15).
Historical sweep and literary variety are the twin strengths of *Roman Triumphs and Early Modern English Culture*. Miller's narrative argument begins, naturally, with Roman displays of the spoils of war and conquest, before it surveys a range of later “cognate ceremonies” such as royal entries and civic festivities. Yet this is a literary, not a historical, study. Miller treats triumphs not as a ceremonial or an enacted genre, to borrow his words, but as “a discourse that can incorporate, or be incorporated by, those and other genres” such as tragedy, epic, and romance (5). His subject is English adaptations of triumphant discourse from the Armada to the Protectorate, from the traditional victorious entry to the seemingly paradoxical triumphs of peace or of martyrdom.

Triumph was exceptionally versatile in its new, Christian contexts: Du Bartas adapted it to praise Faith, his female triumphator in *Triomphe de la Foi* (1574) who wins without physical weapons. After her followed Elizabeth and her watershed Armada triumphs, however reluctant the queen was to adopt this role. It was England’s next reluctant warrior-king James who proved decisively how versatile triumphs could be. James used them to celebrate peace rather than war, and reunited rather than conquered kingdoms. His son Henry’s death led ultimately to a civil war whose victors and losers used triumphs to celebrate, to console, to regroup, and ever to acknowledge the divine will in human affairs. During the Protectorate, Cromwell’s modesty and austerity contributed to the final realignment Miller identifies, in which “the only secure military triumphs are founded on religious faith and ethical virtue.”

*Roman Triumphs and Early Modern English Culture* interweaves historical sources with a marvelous array of both widely- and lesser-known literary representations of triumph, arguing that “the Roman triumph in early modern England fashions a . . . juncture between historical events and literary representations” (5). Its chapters alternate between sustained critiques of major authors from Marlowe to Milton, and literary-historical treatments of periods from the Armada to the Commonwealth. In the literary-
critical chapters, Miller’s readings of triumphs in judiciously selected canonical texts penetrate to the very essence of triumphs and their cultural transmission. To cite one example, when Miller finds in Tamburlaine’s triumphs an elegiac quality, a nostalgia for antiquity characterizing all post-Roman triumphs, one appreciates the power of ceremony over time itself. Post-Roman triumphs celebrate recent events in an ancient ceremony whose very longevity collapses past, present, and even future together. Miller’s early chapter on humanist transmission provides another very fine analysis, this time of Petrarch’s translation of triumph into the literary forms of the *Triumphi*: “in their poetic permanence they . . . guarantee the perpetuation of fame more certainly than any fugitive ceremony” (56). Triumphs are performed for spectators well beyond their immediate audiences; by encouraging imitations of its celebrants, this ceremony sows the seeds of future achievements.

In his more broadly historical chapters, Miller draws together a spectrum of early modern texts to illuminate the range of triumphant discourse. In his discussion of the civil war, this versatility extends to the *forms* of triumph: many wartime triumphs were conducted in print rather than in actual performance, as the conditions of war made stagings impracticable. Miller adroitly draws together such rarely-discussed authors as Robert Pricket and Alexander Hume, whose unappreciated Scots poem *The Triumph of the Lord, After the Manner of Men* (1599) achieves “a seemingly effortless and unselfconscious naturalization of triumphal topoi” (75). After this reflective reading, the categorical exclusion of early modern texts from this study’s bibliography in favour of classical texts is puzzling. Nonetheless, readers are very well served by Miller’s comprehensive endnotes.

History courses through the veins of Miller’s literary study, whose only fault is its brevity. A concluding chapter looking toward the Restoration and summarizing some of the author’s findings, might have closed his book more decisively. Yet Miller has also built a foundation for future scholarship by leaving this future unwritten. *Roman Triumphs and Early Modern English Culture* will
be of interest and profit to scholars of Marlowe, Spenser, Shakespeare, Marvell, and Milton; to cultural historians of public ceremony and festivity; and to all engaged in the *translatio* of Roman to later cultures and empires.


Anyone interested in the “history of history books” (1) will find Dan Woolf’s fine study a treasury of information and insight. So too will those interested more broadly in the world of the “big” book (for that is what most of the volumes considered here are—thick quartos and lavish folios), in the commercial underpinnings of scholarly publishing, and in the sociocultural milieu of “history.” Indeed, while the matter of *Reading History in Early Modern England* coheres, the title seriously understates the volume’s scope. Even as the professed subject is well covered, Woolf’s other interests collectively outweigh it. His methods match the catholicity of his matter: an initial foray into genre history and a continuing interest in the material framework of history book production are joined to exemplary narratives and efforts at quantification. Opinions about the relative success of these varied approaches will naturally vary, but all will be grateful for the generous allotment of illustrations.

The nearly seventy pages of Chapter One, “The Death of the Chronicle,” take their time, as did the demise adverted to in the title. Woolf argues that by the end of the sixteenth century the chronicle had ceded pride of place amongst treatments of past time to humanist-influenced histories, but had also, in its slow terminal decline, shaped or spawned other modalities and genres, ranging from almanacs and newsbooks to history plays and verse, and the personal chronicles of diaries and journals. This supple model of transformation, rather like the fissile changes of radioactive elements, is exceptionally illuminating. Perhaps most usefully, it