

reviews (a practice uniformly followed throughout for books). For a few entries, usually foreign, only the author and work appear when abstracts were not available. Although the Preface sets out the general process Urban set up in culling the materials from around the world, his rationale for determining length of annotations is not given.

My sense of this volume is that the Milton community should be greatly appreciative of how much labor Urban has saved them in researching the greatest poet in English. And to the point, the index is especially useful and impressive in the labor it took Duquesne's indexer to cull and arrange the annotations by number under each author listed. The listings of poems and prose under Milton's name are arranged so that it is easy to locate the entries under the various heads. Of the poems, dozens of entries occur under the names of the epics and major poems (e.g., *Lycidas* has 122 entries); and prose entries are plentiful (*Areopagitica* has 82 entries). If one wishes to find all of the annotations touching on Milton's view of, say, "Antinomianism," "Arianism," or "Arminianism," there in the index under his name they are listed as the first three of many topical arrangements of subject matter.

Ewart Oakeshott. *European Weapons and Armour From the Renaissance to the Industrial Revolution*. Rochester, NY: The Boydell Press, 2012. Xviii + 288 pp. + c. illus. \$28.45. Review by EDWARD M. FURGOL, MONTGOMERY COLLEGE-ROCKVILLE, MD.

Oakeshott has written an engaging book of great use to scholars and students of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The book demystifies the material culture of an important aspect of the military and tournament activities of early modern European.

The book is not a monograph, nor is it textbook; instead it is a reflection of decades of study of the written and physical record of an essential component of European history. The author's expertise is in swords, and they certainly predominate in the book, accounting for six of the fourteen chapters. However, he also addresses other weapons—handguns, staff weapons, and other edged weapons—in four other chapters. The discussion of matchlocks and wheel locks is particularly instructive, but the absence of any treatment of flintlocks

is an unfortunate omission, and entirely belies the “*to the Industrial Revolution*” reference in the subtitle.

The strength of the book lies in its analysis of edged weapons generally, and swords specifically, as well as about armor and helmets. As one reads the portions on l'arme blanche/white weapons/edged weapons, one gains a greater appreciation as to why they retained high status, which reflected on the soldiers equipped with them. Many have encountered men who “trailed the pike,” and here we learn why they marched in that fashion and the reason for its prestige. Likewise the four chapters on armor and helmets explain much that is normally ignored or hidden. His linking of changes in the appearance of armor to men's fashions (especially before 1600) is particularly useful. Likewise his discussion of the development of tournament armor and helmets, which came to predominate the field of full armor from ca. 1560, serves historians well. The bulk of the book dwells, appropriately enough given the author's background, on swords. In those six chapters one can readily follow the alternations of blade and hilt design across the period, and in different countries. Here one encounters a depth of knowledge that would literally take a lifetime to replicate. One aspect that should have received greater attention is the weight of the objects that Oakeshott discusses. That information would have allowed the readers to gain a greater appreciation of the huge demands on human strength in fighting either in war or on the tournament field. Alternatively, he constantly refers to collections where one can see the artifacts. (Perhaps the Higgins Armory in Worcester, Massachusetts, is the only substantial collection overlooked.) For those seeking greater understanding by viewing actual examples the book's illustrations deliver a real service. Oakeshott has a decided aesthetic prejudice against munition armors, which means that assemblages of artifacts, such as that in the Graz Arsenal, hold no interest for him. That may also explain his total omission of horse armor or barding, which served a strictly functional purpose only relieved by the heraldic surcoats that sometimes covered it.

The book has many sound attributes. It is extremely well illustrated, both with the author's drawings and photographs that truly illuminate the text. As Oakeshott states several times, an image provides a far better basis of discussion than a cascade of words. Lamentably, there

is one image missing that for those lacking a detailed knowledge of armor would have proved a godsend; that is an illustration diagramming the pieces of a suit of armor. Oakeshott, despite his expertise in swords, provides precisely that type of image for them. In the case of armor it is annoying to have recourse to other sources to follow the author. His provision of a timeline that links arms and armor makers to events, rulers and culture is a good addition. While a great depth of learning sustains the work, there are no footnotes. Each chapter has a bibliography, which makes finding sources for a particular topic easy. The quality of writing, save for the necessary profusion of technical terms makes the book highly accessible and stimulating.

Why is a thirty year old book important? It represents the culmination of nearly half a century of thorough study into the subject by a collector still considered one of the leaders in the field. Its new availability in paperback makes it affordable. If you do not live near one of the great collections (for instance, the Royal Armouries, The Wallace Collection, The Oakeshott Institute in Minneapolis, MN, Higgins or the Metropolitan Museum of Art, or the Viennese Hofburg), you will have a reliable reference with this book.

Given the subject, the book has an obvious audience in students of military history. As one the depth of material impressed me so much that I will suggest this book as additional reading for my students. The references to the connections between fashion and armor designs, as well as his comparisons of armor wearers in paintings with pieces of armor, suggested that art and costume historians would also find the book a useful standby. Likewise his discussion of owners and makers of armor provide useful information for court and industrial historians. Literary historians, who may lack much background in this aspect of material culture, will find the author's illustrations beneficial. While other books may survey the same material, many may have a more derivative origin as opposed to Oakeshott's expert eye informed by years of study. If one had room for only a single book on the subject, this volume should be it.