

Like many local studies, this book is inevitably bounded by its (very rich) source material. Essex Quakers demonstrate interesting variations from the national picture, and Adrian Davies thoughtfully questions models of sectarian development on the basis of his research. Yet, as he himself concedes, his questions require further regional studies—a rather self-defeating conclusion, since Davies' book is more than adequate as it stands. Some of the local intimacy of his doctoral research has inevitably disappeared in the book, but in its place we have an authoritative account of the early Quaker movement and a strong argument for the importance of local efforts in its evolution. Quakers are notoriously well-documented, and there have been a number of impressive local studies in recent decades. It is a pleasure that this one has been published.

Trevor Cooper, ed. *The Journal of William Dowsing: Iconoclasm in East Anglia During the English Civil War*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2001. 551 pp. + 64 plates. \$90.00. Review by CHARLES W. A. PRIOR, QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY AT KINGSTON.

Readers who are familiar with William Dowsing will know that this is less a journal than a catalogue of the activities of an iconoclast in Suffolk and Cambridgeshire during 1643 and 1644. Those *unfamiliar* with the author, and who come to the book expecting to be introduced to a village Pepys, will encounter a sober and purposeful character. Dowsing (1596-1668), acting under the commission of the second Earl of Manchester, and flanked by a half dozen associates, conducted a thoroughly destructive tour of churches in two counties. His mission was to carry out the directive of the Parliamentary Ordinance, passed during August 1643, "that all Monuments of Superstition and Idolatry should be removed and abolished." The journal therefore recounts the dates, locations, and provides details of what was destroyed. While there

is little description of events, places, or people, and not a hangover in sight, the journal proves to be rich fund of detail on a variety of topics of importance to our period.

Yet it would not be so, were it not for the efforts of Dowsing's modern editor. On its own, the journal consists of 273 entries, many of them of sentence length; for example, the entry for January 23 reads: "We brake down 60 superstitious pictures; and broke in pieces the rayles; and gave order to pull down the steps." Occasionally Dowsing inserts more detail. During his late December visit to Pembroke at Cambridge, he met opposition from a group of Fellows who disputed Dowsing's interpretation of the Parliamentary Ordinance, and who argued that "the clargie had only to doe on ecclesiastical matters." Dowsing describes the ensuing debate in which each side reinforced its case by alleging scriptural proofs, and in the process reveals something of the schism that defined relations between English Protestants during the 1640s. Yet entries such as this are the exception, and so the journal is swaddled in pages of annotation, sixty-four photographs, sixteen appendices, twenty-two maps, twenty-seven tables and introduced by eleven essays. Indeed, the text and annotations of the journal itself comprise just one third of the volume.

The current edition is the first to reunite the Suffolk and Cambridgeshire segments of the journal. The reason for the division, as well as the original manuscript, have been lost; the journal survived in a number of eighteenth-century copies, the most reliable of which are used for the present text. Spelling is modernised and, while original italics and underlining are omitted, the original punctuation is retained. Each entry is numbered and meticulously annotated. Churchwarden's accounts, college registers and miscellaneous manuscripts furnish the bulk of the context, while Mr. Cooper and a number of his contributors have fleshed out the rest of the story by retracing Dowsing's steps in order to verify the accuracy of each entry; no small task, this involved visits to all of the 250 churches mentioned by Dowsing. Introductory essays by John Morrill, Robert Walker, John Blatchly, S. D. Sadler, as well as Mr. Cooper himself consider Dowsing's relation to the religious

upheavals of the 1640s, give details of his homes and associates, and assess the nature of iconoclasm elsewhere in the Eastern Association.

At times, the reader feels overwhelmed by minute detail: an appendix devoted to the selective mutilation of brasses, a Norfolk glazier's invoice, a ten word entry followed by eight pages of annotation, or a "frequency distribution" of pictures in Dowsing's churches, for example. At other times, the scholarly apparatus is of great value, as in the (all too brief) chapter in Dowsing's dispute with the Fellows of Peterhouse. In short, this edition has the potential to be many things to many readers, whether their interest lies in ecclesiastical architecture, the impact of Laudianism, the enforcement or parliamentary directives in the localities, or the surprising reading habits of a forty-seven year old yeoman farmer.

It is to these larger themes that John Morrill's excellent essay is devoted. Dowsing, we learn, was an enthusiastic collector of sermons, particularly Fast sermons preached before the Long Parliament. Morrill has hunted down Dowsing's now scattered library, and it is shown that in addition to sermons, he collected scriptural commentaries, controversial works, editions of Plutarch, Livy, Josephus, Polybius, as well as three copies of Foxe's *Actes and Monuments*. All of these he annotated in a manner common for the period: underlining, quarrelling and, most significantly, correcting mis-rendered passages of scripture. Both Morrill's essay and this edition as-a-whole reveal that Dowsing was no "puritan" zealot (although the term "puritan" is retained here), but rather a sober and committed believer in the necessity of reform based on scripture.

Indeed, the journal's central value is the insight it offers into the mind of a mid-century scripturalist, keen to challenge the legitimacy of the "visible" Church that was the legacy of the Laudian circle. For Dowsing—as for all of his comparably-literate contemporaries—the Church was only a "true" Church if it could be shown to have an uninterrupted connection with the ancient or "primitive" church. There were many who felt that aspects of doctrine and discipline that smacked of "humane invention" ought to

be removed as the signs of an institution fallen into corruption and “popery.” Others (like the Fellows of Peterhouse), whose libraries would have boasted the works of church Fathers and reports of the great synods, argued that images were an indifferent “help” to worship, and sought a pedigree for them in the ancient church. Seen in this light, Dowsing’s mission forms part of a long struggle to define and defend the Church of England, a theme that is emerging as the most dominant in the history of the seventeenth century. It is this fact that makes this edition worthwhile.

Michael Mendle, ed. *The Putney Debates of 1647: The Army, the Levellers, and the English State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. xii + 297 pp. + 1 illus. \$64.95. Review by MARK CHARLES FISSEL, AUGUSTA STATE UNIVERSITY.

In late October-early November 1647, with King Charles I defeated (for the moment at least) and Londoners clamoring for Parliament to disband its victorious (and expensive) army, officers and soldiers of that New Model Army gathered in St. Mary’s parish church, beside the Thames, at the bridgehead of Putney Bridge, southwest London. Contemporaries wrote little of the discussions that continued for several days in the sanctuary of Putney church.

Roughly 243 years later, the librarian of Worcester College Oxford mentioned to a historian that minutes of those meetings had lain undiscovered in a cupboard until recently. Would the historian like to have a look? That serendipitous find propagated an entire historiography, so much so that 350 years after the event, these once largely ignored proceedings of the Army Council and rank-and-file soldiers were now commemorated by a score of political groups, religious faiths, social activists, and more than a few historians.

One need only contemplate the diversity of the audiences at the various Putney commemoration events on both sides of the Atlantic, honoring what are now dubbed “the Putney Debates.” One finds socialists, Green Party members, Americans, Quakers,