

Central Government and the Localities: Hampshire, 1649-1689. By Andrew M. Coleby. Cambridge University Press. 1987. xviii + 266 pp. £27.50

This book is especially welcome on two counts. Unlike most of the seventeenth-century county studies published since the 1950s, Dr Coleby has directed much of his work towards the period after 1660, and (again unlike many regional historians) he does not concentrate attention solely on his chosen county but is equally concerned with the central government, its attitude to local affairs, its determination, and its consequent effectiveness. In Dr Coleby's capable hands, therefore, 'central' and 'local' are matched in a way which surely reflects the reality of provincial life. Three major themes form the core of the book: the changing relationship between centre and locality; the divisions of attitude and approach both in the central government and amongst the local governors; and the manipulation of local feelings and institutions by the keener adherents of national causes. Dividing his study into three main sections — the Interregnum, the Restoration up to 1678, and the period of the Popish Plot up to 1688 — the author discusses in turn local office-holding, the enforcement of 'policy', and the relationship of Court and county. 'Policy' boils down to detailed analysis of measures for defence and internal security, finance, order and religious affairs. In this approach the inevitable loss of flexibility is perhaps outweighed by the gain in clarity, enhanced as it is by the readability of the text. Dr Coleby's conclusions are clear and unequivocal, if not always fully supported by the amount of evidence cited. He argues for 'striking continuity' in governmental concerns throughout the period. Local government during the Interregnum was chaotic, but was more effective after 1660 because Charles II's regime worked through the established local landowners on a recognisable basis of parliamentary statute: 'provincial consent and administrative effectiveness were not apparently alternatives'. Centralization grew after 1678 'on a narrower, more partisan basis of support'. A standing army was not an efficient instrument of central policy, and despite certain tensions the effective integration of Court and county depended more on the quality of communications provided by the parliamentary gentry and other links. Religion was the greatest complicating factor in the relationship between the centre and the localities. Of the value of these conclusions there can be no doubt, even if some are not unchallengeable. Although Hampshire, with its obvious strategic importance, attracted more governmental interest than many other areas and therefore may offer a distorted or untypical picture, Dr Coleby's study is a significant and important one, an enrichment of Restoration and regional studies which cannot fail to influence future work in the field.

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An Astrological Diary of the Seventeenth Century: Samuel Jeake of Rye 1652-1699. Edited by Michael Hunter and Annabel Gregory. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1988. £40

The motive and content of Jeake's diary are well explained by the title he gave it: *A Diary of the Actions & Accidents of my Life: Tending partly to observe & memorize the Providences therein manifested; & partly to investigate the Measure of Time in Astronomical Directions, and to determine the Astrall Causes, &c.* Compiled between 1666 and 1694, the diary's alleged purpose was to test the correlation between accident and celestial configuration. To this end, Jeake conscientiously recorded the day, date, hour and details of virtually every illness, 'material accident' and personal and business transaction from the time when, at five-to-six months old, he 'fell out of bed but had no hurt' (Saturday, 27.xi.1652) and 'voided a great worm downwards' (Friday, 3.xii.1652). An astrological diary kept by a non-conformist, provincial merchant during the turbulent years of the

late seventeenth century should be fascinating. Unfortunately, evidence that Jeake was a thinking man is wholly absent from his journal entries. He offers no personal reflection on either the religious or political events of the day. Indeed, there are only seven incidences in the diary where Jeake offers any opinion regarding the significance of a particular stellar configuration. His conclusions regarding the 'experiment', which one can only assume are contained in his unpublished *Astrological Experiments Exemplified*, are conspicuously absent (save the note on 31.vii.1678). Nevertheless, as a primary source, the diary contains a wealth of material for historians of medicine, economics, religion and astrology, as well as for biographers (Jeake lists the titles of 283 books he claims to have read). A general overview of Jeake and his times is offered in the preface; and a brief introduction to astrological terminology, a glossary of technical (mostly medical) terms and obsolete words and biographical sketches are supplied in the appendices. A second astrological diary, kept by Jeake during 1699, also has been included as an appendix.

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The Quakers and the English Legal System 1660-1688. By Craig W. Horle. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 1988. xv + 320 pp. \$34.95

Much of the older literature of Quakerism amounted to martyrology, a loyal celebration of ancestral sufferings. Certainly the Quakers suffered greatly, for they were despised the most and transgressed more laws than other sects. But one old assumption was that they deliberately courted punishment by their passivity in the face of authority. For instance, in *Puritanism in the Period of the Great Persecution* G.R. Cragg asserted that 'the absolutism which marked their witness at every point forbade any concessions for the sake of safety'; Quaker inflexibility set them apart from 'the more pliant policies of other nonconformists'. Horle's book, based upon a 1985 University of Maryland thesis, is dedicated to refuting this claim. As well as an intimacy with Quaker materials — he is co-editor of two volumes of *The Papers of William Penn* — he also has a deep familiarity with English legal processes, indebted here particularly to the work of J.S. Cockburn. His first chapter could well serve as a model introduction to the legal system for the general student. The core of the book is the demonstration that the Quakers gradually became reconciled to, and more sophisticated in, the use of legal evasions to soften the blows of persecution. The crucial moment was the founding of the Meeting for Sufferings in 1676. Thereafter they regularly took opinions from sympathetic lawyers: Appendix Two lists 44 consulted between 1660 and 1690. They include a number of senior law officers and judges; in itself evidence of division amongst the political élite about the wisdom of persecution. The Quakers came to deploy a host of legal devices: prolonging appeals in order to tie down informers, prosecuting informers for perjury, conveyancing goods to evade distraint, challenging mistakes in indictments, entering demurrers or writs of *habeas corpus* to remove cases into another jurisdiction, urging that oaths were not always bound to be put, and giving opinion that the recusancy laws could not be applied to Protestants. Even in the vicious early 1680s, these tactics sometimes met with success, and in 1683 they were partially systematised in Thomas Ellwood's *Caution to Constables*. In some disputed spheres, such as the validity of their marriages, the courts came decisively to settle in their favour. Horle's book is perhaps a little slow to reach its climax: chapter 2 considers government policy; chapter 3 tends toward the traditional mould of martyrology; the newest and best material comes in chapters 4, 5 and 6. But it is a rich and engaging book, meticulous and well-written. One omission is regrettable. Horle does not explicitly challenge Cragg's judgement cited above. This has consequence, for Cragg went on to argue that the Quakers indulged in