



# *The Archaeological Journal*

## Book Reviews



**LADY ANN CLIFFORD: CULTURE, PATRONAGE AND GENDER IN 17<sup>TH</sup>-CENTURY BRITAIN.** Edited by KAREN HEARN and LYNNE HULSE. Pp. Viii and 139, Illus 106. Yorkshire Archaeological Society (Occasional Paper, 7), 2009. Price: £20.00. ISBN 1 9035 6475 1.

This publication consists of eight essays, six of which were delivered at a conference on the theme of Lady Anne Clifford's cultural patronage and held at Tate Britain in March 2004. The stimulus for this conference was the display at Tate Britain of the Great Triptych of Lady Anne Clifford, which was originally held in Appleby Castle, Cumbria. Lady Anne Clifford (her maiden name) was born in 1590 and died in 1676. The last twenty-six years of her life were spent on her extensive properties in the north-west of England, but she had a long and hard struggle to inherit these estates, her father having left them in the male line to his brother on his death in 1605. She was a remarkable woman, and the study of her life is undergoing a 'revival'. This is demonstrated, not only by the publication of this book, but also by the University of Huddersfield's research project on her 'Great Books of Record', as well as the creation of 'Lady Anne's Way', a heritage walk which runs for one hundred miles from Skipton to Penrith.

The chapters are mostly structured around the theme of the Great Triptych, with Karen Hearn providing the opening essay. She analyzes the structure of the paintings, the pictures and visual material that it contains, and the date it was painted. This is all very good, but it left one longing for a definitive publication including full transcripts of the inscriptions composed by Lady Anne, which form an essential element of the whole composition. This would have helped with Katherine Acheson's fascinating examination of Lady Anne's writing style presented in Chapter 8. Hearn concludes that the form and content of the Great Triptych was deliberately archaic. This opening essay is then supported by subsequent chapters which address various elements visible within the pictures. So on musical instruments, Lynn Hulse considers the musical training that Lady Anne received and her role as a patron of musicians. While both her husbands maintained musical establishments, there is no record of Lady Anne's role as a patron and her patronage in her later years seems to be for local and itinerant musicians. On books, which figure prominently, Heidi Hackel makes the claim that Lady Anne left 'perhaps the most various and sustained evidence of an early modern English woman's encounters with books' (p. 99), including annotations. Stephen Orgel concentrates on one of Lady Anne's books, *A Mirror for Magistrates* (1610). His conclusions include the nature of Renaissance printing, the principle objective being dissemination, not replication, so less of a change from manuscript culture than we might expect.

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Two essays address Lady Anne's extensive building activities. Adam White considers her church monuments in detail. He concludes that she lacked any interest in the visual arts for their own sake, and that she only saw architecture as a means for display and commemoration. In contrast, John Goodall directly addresses the problem of Lady Anne as a major patron of architecture and just how idiosyncratic she was. He finds that she was about medieval noble continuity rather than revival. Elizabeth Chew considers the use made of material culture by Lady Anne. This included not only her interest in collecting 'curiosities', but also family-related material, the portraits she commissioned, gift giving, and even her support of the local economies in the purchase of household supplies.

This publication can thus be recommended as an introduction to Lady Anne Clifford and her complex of activities. She emerges as a survivor, rather than a pioneer, which given the times she lived in is hardly surprising. The Yorkshire Archaeological Society are to be strongly commended for this publication.

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