

more in common with their contemporary counterparts than scholars — often non-historically minded sociologists — have assumed. After a brief analysis of comments by and about teachers in pre-industrial England, Cressy cites from a 1980 journal article on the professionalism of contemporary teachers and concludes: "Teachers today display an insecurity of status, an anxiety about professional position, akin to that of their predecessors in early modern England" (149).

The articles by D.R. Hainsworth on estate stewards and by Ian Roy on army officers are less informed by theoretical considerations or by the questions raised by Prest in his Introduction than are the others in this volume. They do, however, oblige us to pay attention to two occupational groups that were undoubtedly important and are frequently neglected.

In general, the editor of this volume and the authors of the essays have performed a valuable service to scholars of early modern England by providing us with information of professional groups at least some of which have been fairly obscure and for placing the scholarship on these groups in a broader theoretical and historiographical context.

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James Pritchard — *Louis XV's Navy, 1748-1762. A Study of Organization and Administration*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987. Pp. xiv, 285.

The navy of Bourbon France has long been a neglected and little understood institution. The historiography of naval warfare in the age of sail, in fact, has been dominated by studies written from a British perspective, and French fleets, sailors and maritime organizations have generally only appeared as the unfortunate and usually inferior victims of the Royal Navy's fighting expertise.

Recent work by such scholars as P.W. Bamford and E.H. Jenkins has begun to even the balance, and this new contribution by James Pritchard will provide invaluable organizational and administrative underpinning for the ongoing process of reassessment. Pritchard is concerned neither with the sea campaigns themselves nor with the erratic strategic ideas which guided the navy in peace and war; rather he sets out to analyze how the French navy functioned as an institution and how its administrative structure affected its operational performance. Intensive archival research and a sound grasp of general scholarship on the Bourbon monarchy have enabled him to perform his task admirably, with the result that historians need no longer scratch their heads in puzzlement at the dismal battle performance of the naval arm of an outwardly impressive military state.

French naval policy in the mid-eighteenth century was hamstrung by a confused, almost baroque institutional framework. Political heads came and went with disruptive frequency, the various operational and administrative branches of the service overlapped in function and competed for control of poorly defined responsibilities, and the ramshackle procurement system not only failed to extract the necessary logistical and manpower requirements from the available pool of resources, but did serious damage to sources of supply in the process. An antiquated financial system doomed the navy to crises of liquidity and credit, denying it access to badly needed funds under the strain of war. Finally, French naval institutions themselves interacted with the crumbling administrative organs of Bourbon absolutism in such a manner as to render the pursuit of coherent policy functionally impossible.

Pritchard develops his case through a careful sequential analysis of each of the major components of the French naval organization: the secretaries of state, the central bureaux, the Officers of the Pen and the Sword, sea and land-based manpower, naval arsenals and the vessels they built and maintained, ordnance and stores procurement, and the financial structure within which the entire operation was forced to function. If there is a problem with this manner of treatment it is simply that it postpones consideration of financial practices until the end of the book, despite the fact that the

inability to mobilize and control funds, or even to budget rationally, lay at the centre of each of the individual problems tackled in the bulk of the text. Full comprehension of the author's case is thus denied the frustrated reader until he has digested a whole series of incomplete judgements, judgements conditioned by material denied him by an organizational structure better suited to a detective thriller than an historical monograph.

Overall, Pritchard's case is convincing, but his work is as much an example of the weaknesses of the institutional approach to history as it is a splendid example of the genre at its most sophisticated. Throughout the text individual failures are set against the dark background of a crumbling Bourbon state and an overwhelmingly strong enemy presence off the coast. Yet the author makes no systematic attempt to work either factor into his analysis. He proves conclusively that institutional shortcomings, particularly those of a financial nature, lay at the heart of the navy's poor performance in the crisis years of 1758-59, but his limited brief prevents him from understanding the relationship between these shortcomings and important external factors. Occasional references to the stultifying effects of general governmental failure and British naval might only serve to convince the reader that full understanding of the collapse of French maritime policy is only possible outside the confines of institutional analysis. If the administrative structure of the Bourbon navy impeded reform, the relative strengths of the state behind it and that state's major adversary ultimately rendered long-term progress impossible.

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G.D. Ramsay — *The Queen's Merchants and the Revolt of the Netherlands: The End of the Antwerp Mart, Vol. II*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986. Pp. 231.

This straightforward, closely focused, and solidly researched narrative by G.D. Ramsay is, as he says in his preface, the second volume of an "enquiry into the end of the Antwerp mart in English history." "English" should receive the emphasis because, despite the implications of the title, this book is really not an analysis of the Dutch Revolt, or an analysis of the multiple causes of the decline of the Antwerp mart in European history. Throughout the book, the author interweaves two processes: the economic and political. The longstanding trade in unfinished woolen cloths from England to the Low Countries, chiefly in the hands of the Company of Merchants Adventurers (the 'Queen's Merchants' of Ramsay's title), was crucially important to the English economy, increasingly so in the sixteenth century as the volume of this trade increased sharply. It was no less essential for the English monarchs who drew a healthy proportion of their budget from customs revenues generated by the trade. Thus, any interruption of Anglo-Netherlands trade had serious economic and political ramifications. Since such trade was twice interrupted in the 1560s, it is here that Ramsay focuses.

The 'Ancient Amity' inherited from the fifteenth century between the house of Burgundy (which by the 1560s meant Spain) and the English crown was a political alliance with economic shorings, institutionalized in an agreement called 'The Intercourse.' First formulated in 1496 and reaffirmed several times in the sixteenth century, the Intercourse gave the English Merchants Adventurers a privileged position at Antwerp, of no small moment as Antwerp became the dominant entrepot of northern Europe. So, if the lords of Antwerp, Philip, Elizabeth and her Merchants had so much to gain by continuing the 'Amity' and the Intercourse, why, Ramsay ponders, did things fall apart in the 1560s? Despite his concern to show the interconnections between economics and politics, his explanation is distinctly political in its coloring, and not simply, he asserts, because of the nature of the evidence that he employs (his argument leans heavily on dispatches of ambassadors and other political papers). He admits that "there were limits to political action set by social and