nobody in my Sphere ever enjoy'd before" (108). Throughout the reign of Queen Anne, the triumvirate remained unbreakable. Harris admits that the private propulsions of the relationship remain a "mystery at the heart of success and failure" (xii). The best explanation she can offer is that, periodically, "Marlborough and his wife took Godolphin off to [their first home, Sarah's inheritance] St. Albans for … one of those intervals of complete seclusion, altogether without record, by which their partnership was renewed" (180).

The partnership was strained to the uttermost when, in July 1706, Sarah refused to attend the queen and then, on 10 October, wrote her "an incredibly arrogant and offensive letter" (193). Sarah was immediately replaced in the queen's affections by Abigail Hill, the queen's dresser, Sarah's poor relation, now the tory conduit to the queen. Abigail's favor was the agency that enabled the queen to diminish Marlborough's military authority and that secured Abigail's brother, John ("five bottle Jack"), the command of the Quebec expedition. Its troops were withdrawn from Marlborough's command with the express intention of making it weaker than the French. All the while, Sarah still demanded her restoration to the royal favor.

At last Marlborough personally compelled his wife to resign as the queen's chief attendant. Sarah held a public ball to celebrate her dismissal and she remained the cynosure of her party. At last, something is said about the sexual source of Sarah's power, albeit in a backhanded way. An enemy of the duchess marveled that, although Sarah was "past her meridian, her bloom was succeeded by so graceful an air that youth itself could scarce make her more desirable" (339).

In 1711, Marlborough captured Bouchain in the face of a far larger French army. In Parliament, even an enemy admitted that, "'tis to this man's conduct that we owe our sitting here in peace, [and] that France is so reduced to a necessity of desiring peace" (347). At the moment of victory, fate intervened to truncate the triumvirate. Marlborough was forced into exile. Godolphin, faithfully nursed by Sarah, died at St. Albans. Then the duchess of Marlborough joined her husband on the Continent. After eighteen months spent plotting the Hanoverian succession, the duke and duchess returned to England in triumph. They welcomed the new, Hanoverian, king. Knowing what he owed the duke, King George restored Marlborough to all his offices. Sarah took up with the opposition.

Harris's afterword takes us to October 1744. Then the dying duchess had the Marlborough-Godolphin correspondence read to her. Here was the record of how, "over a decade … they worked for the safety and prosperity of 'this island of Britain,' so that it could take its place as a European and a global power" (363). It seems that the reign of Queen Anne was not wintery after all! The duchess concluded that "never any two Men Deserved so well from their Country" as Marlborough and Godolphin (363). As always, Sarah had had the last word, an appropriate conclusion to a study that, despite its subtitle, is not so much about Marlborough and Godolphin per se (there is little detail about the military prowess of the one and less about the fiscal genius of the other) but that does address the greatest love triangle in British history.

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Leonie James. *"This Great Firebrand": William Laud and Scotland, 1617–1645*. Studies in Modern British Religious History 36. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2017. Pp. 195. $99.00 (cloth).
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"I think you have a plot to see whether I will be *universalis episcopus*, that you and your brethren may take occasion to call me Antichrist." William Laud's well-known effort at wit written to

Thomas Wentworth, Leonie James argues, speaks more closely to the archbishop's intentions than historians have recognized. Specifically, scholars such as Gordon Donaldson, John Morrill, and Hugh Trevor-Roper have missed Laud's surprisingly successful efforts to penetrate and reshape the Scottish church. In part, she notes, this has resulted from the scattered and fragmentary sources. In part, also, Laud proved a master at damage control and at dissociating himself from unpopular policies—with the result that modern historians have characteristically "succumbed to his spin" (112). James seeks to show that Laud's counterreform program, an ideological crusade undertaken with vast ambition and remarkable energy, extended to the north and lay at the core of his objectives, every bit as much as Ireland and England.

Laud's concern with Scotland started relatively early when he served as a minor figure in King James's1617 Scottish visit, itself a strenuous campaign to transform Scottish religious ceremony. If the Scottish project lay in abeyance thereafter (James chose not to pursue further with his Anglicizing objectives; Charles's early years were preoccupied with the revocation), the matter resurfaced in the summer of 1629. And from the early 1630s until just before the opening of the Long Parliament in late 1640, Laud actively and continuously intervened in Scottish affairs. Laud thus unexpectedly emerges a major figure in Scottish political and religious life, right through the Bishops' Wars when he served as a key advisor in negotiations with the Covenanters.

In part, Laud's success lay in his ability to connect with and work through sympathetic bishops such as John Maxwell, bishop of Ross, in Scotland and John Barmhall, bishop of Derry, in Ireland—sidelining the more Calvinist archbishops, John Spottiswoode of Saint Andrews and James Ussher of Armagh. Laud thereby succeeded in acting outside institutional structures or any formal legal authority; Laud manifestly regarded Spottiswoode as an inferior. The key to Laud's extraordinary power lay clearly enough in his close relationship with Charles, and thereby his ability to work through the royal prerogative. The prerogative of course, unlike any episcopal authority, could reach everywhere within the multiple Stewart realms. Laud's counterreform would then prove authoritarian no less in its implementation than in its result. Crucially, he shared the king's views and still more his sensibility. Both sought to clericalize and monarchize church organization, ceremony, iconography, and theology. Both envisioned a church at one socially engaged with governing the realm and with its power further buttressed through an immense endowment.

James reviews at length the creation of the new Scottish canons and the new prayer book during the 1630s. Laud's role looms at every stage. He would be fussing with the canons even during the final weeks before they were printed. The new directives worked to subvert the Presbyterian dimension of the Scottish church, not least with the implicit elimination of the General Assembly. At the same they were centrally concerned to restrain preaching and emphasize the sacraments—the much-proclaimed "beauty" of the sacred. James's discussion of the prayer book inevitably builds on Gordon Donaldson's authoritative *The Making of the Scottish Prayer Book of 1637* (1954). Her concern is directed less to the elements that emerged than to Laud's ongoing presence in the process. If the result was by no means "Laud's book," his role was considerable. In the end, James concludes, Laud proved capable of making "blatant and consequential changes during the drafting of both books" (110). To be sure, Laud (and Charles) ideally wanted to impose English canons and liturgy full stop. Yet if the archbishop did not achieve his full purpose, his involvement and impact remain unassailable. A modern reader may well find himself wondering to the extent to which the new order of the 1630s was Scottish at all.

Laud went on to play central role in the efforts to contain the Scottish Revolution, working closely with the marquis of Hamilton. The archbishop received detailed reports, unlike the king, and it would remain Laud's decision as to what might best be shared. In many respects, this arrangement simply continued earlier procedure, and provides a measure of the archbishop's extraordinary, arguably unique, status. If from early 1638 Laud realized the developing dangers to himself and worked cover his tracks, he nevertheless remained the indispensable link to the king.

The Scottish dimension would play a major role in Laud's downfall: unsurprisingly, Scottish charges against Laud were cast so as to appeal to the English parliament and the wider public. In the end, Laud's impeachment and trial were propelled by the 1643 Solemn League and Covenant, and yet, ironically, English sensibilities led to charges in which Scottish complaints played virtually no role at all.

The volume prompts a number of questions. If Laud's agenda were truly universal, extending to Anglophone churches abroad, foreign churches in London, even to the universities, what about the colonies? James altogether declines to discuss Laud's policies or even his attitude toward the churches in British North America. The study would also have profited significantly from the work of Jason Peacey about public culture and the emergence of the popular press during this period. Readers may wonder what James means when she speaks of "Anglo-Scottish forces in the early Long Parliament" (170).

Nevertheless, the volume does offer insight into the range of Laud and Charles's authoritarian program. Even if it does not recast the paradigm or reframe our understanding, it remains a competent, workman-like study. Laud may have had his limits, but Scotland was not one of them.

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J. L. Laynesmith. *Cecily, Duchess of York*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017. Pp. 288. $114 (cloth).
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Cecily Neville, duchess of York (1415–1495), is among the most significant yet elusive figures of fifteenth-century English history. Born in the year of the Battle of Agincourt, granddaughter of John of Gaunt, wife and widow of Richard, duke of York, mother of kings Edward IV and Richard III, grandmother of the ill-starred Edward V and of Henry VII's consort Elizabeth of York, witness to the sudden rise and violent downfall of sundry "great men," Cecily Neville was no mere survivor but an apparently uncrushable matriarch who not only maintained but even increased her elite status and immense wealth over the eighty years of her dramatic life. It is unsurprising that she has featured in narratives of that turbulent century ever since More and Shakespeare rehashed it for their own literary endeavors. Yet, despite her shadowy fame on the sidelines of political histories and plentiful attention from popular historians and novelists, and regardless of narrower scholarly studies of her piety and literary interests, Cecily's life has never till now earned extended attention in its own right. J. L. Laynesmith, a respected historian of English royal and noble women of the fifteenth century, has remedied that lack with a richly detailed book that avoids the temptation to retell the Wars of the Roses from the duchess's perspective and instead undertakes a scholarly reconstruction of Cecily's whole life.

Laynesmith's qualities as a scholar are evident on every page. In the twenty and more years since she first began to research Cecily's life, she has amassed archival evidence from libraries and record offices across England, supplemented with many published primary sources. While Cecily's widowhood is particularly well recorded, Laynesmith skillfully manages to produce plausible accounts of her infancy, early years, and childhood marriage by combining what pieces of evidence remain with other primary sources of the era. Her book is especially valuable for its reconstruction of Cecily's estate management, involvement in the wool trade, religious and literary patronage, and political involvement through the decades of her adult life. As Laynesmith remarks, while the detailed household ordinances that prescribed a pious daily routine for the elderly Cecily, along with her extensive will, have inspired many studies of her piety and