

engagement in the market economy and analyzed developments in Chancery (and other equity jurisdictions), where women exercised agency outside of the strictures imposed by common law. As Peck shows, all of the Bennet and Morewood women had recourse to law: they initiated litigation and responded to suits about jointure, dower, debt, and other matters relevant to the preservation of their own property and control. These suits involved sons and mothers, husbands and wives, sisters and brothers and uncles—and of course lawyers and brokers—in lengthy arguments about the proper apportionment of assets and estates. The range of claims, counterclaims, and demands advanced in these suits serve to highlight the dense network of relationships created by the emergence of this new Stuart elite.

Peck provides a compelling organization (and a helpful set of family trees) that enables the reader to understand this complex web of relationships. The narrative arc of the book is in part chronological, tracing the histories of each generation of these interconnected families, and partly thematic, with sections that follow the evolution of changing family fortunes from “money” and “marriage” to “murder” and “metropolis.” Throughout, Peck shows that the extension of elite wealth in this period not only fueled social but also gender change: these women used their wealth to pursue new opportunities and assert independence. This is a significant claim about progress and improvement for elite women in seventeenth-century England.

While Peck does recognize some limits to women’s freedom—caused especially by persistent efforts to arrange the marriages and control the fortunes of wealthy heiresses—in the end she convincingly depicts her subjects as important agents in a centuries-long struggle for women’s rights that continued well into the nineteenth century. Yet in highlighting this struggle, Peck also reveals some important tensions within the evolution of rights and liberty. After all, as she has shown, these women’s wealth was founded in a growing imperial trade and finance, and their agency—whether buying shares or drinking sugar-sweetened tea—was increasingly exercised through new opportunities that relied on the lack of freedom of others. In this way, Peck’s fully realized accounts of individual women and a new landed-commercial elite in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries may also have the potential to expand historians’ recent investigations into patterns of family wealth creation and the legacies of colonial slavery in Victorian Britain, such as the work of the Center for the Study of the Legacies of British Slave-ownership.

Julia Rudolph  
North Carolina State University  
[jerudolp@ncsu.edu](mailto:jerudolp@ncsu.edu)

CAROLE RAWCLIFFE, ed. *The Norwich Chamberlains’ Accounts, 1539–40 to 1544–45*. Norfolk Record Society 83. Norwich: Norfolk Record Society, 2019. Pp. 452. £25.00 (cloth).  
doi: 10.1017/jbr.2020.105

Carole Rawcliffe’s *The Norwich Chamberlains’ Accounts*, the new volume from the Norfolk Record Society makes the fascinating accounts of the sixteenth-century primary officials of Norwich accessible to a much wider audience than was possible before. In addition, the appendices give the indenture defining the extent of the chamberlains’ duties from 1449, the accounts for the costs of defense against and repairs after Kett’s Rebellion in 1549, and the inventory of the city’s possessions taken in 1552. These accounts cover an extremely turbulent period in the city’s history as the civic authorities grappled with the effects of the dissolution

and refounding of the cathedral church and the ongoing struggle to maintain and develop buildings, industry, and retail against the backdrop of constant royal demands for taxation, soldiers, and changes in social policy. In Norwich, the chamberlains had near-full responsibility for civic finance from the fifteenth century onward, with the result that their accounts give a detailed picture of the financial measures taken to meet obligations and respond to events. A wide range of historians will find useful evidence in the five years covered here: environmental management of the river Wensum and the many streams throughout the city; preparation for armed expeditions; and the maintenance, development, and management of trading areas are just three of the many themes illustrated here. They will also find generous cross-references to other relevant documents in the Norfolk Record Office and extremely useful explanatory footnotes.

Rawcliffe's introduction beautifully puts the city's struggles and the resulting documentation into a wider context of medieval urban governance and the collective decision-making processes of city elites. She shows how the position of the chamberlain developed out of the treasurership in the fifteenth century, and how the office came to have its responsibilities in the context of the varied responses of late medieval towns. For example, the Newcastle chamberlains' accounts for a slightly earlier period are largely concerned with coal tolls and some expenditure on repairs to infrastructure (C. M. Fraser, ed., *The Accounts of the chamberlains of Newcastle upon Tyne, 1508–1511*, 1987). In contrast, the full range of civic involvement can be traced in the accounts for Norwich, including the city's deep involvement in developing new commercial areas in the former Dominican priory complex known as Blackfriars. Rawcliffe also usefully contextualizes Norwich as a port and commercial center, and she provides a clear explanation of its religious landscape and how it was affected by the Reformation. The two maps of the city, one of the administrative divisions and one showing the religious institutions, help the reader to visualize the spatial dimensions of the chamberlains' interests, which then can be tracked in the detailed individual entries.

Robert Raynbald, chamberlain for most of this period, emerges as the archival and financial hero that mid-sixteenth century Norwich needed. He is the administrator who changed the accounting practices, added the rich supplementary detail to the main records, and energetically directed much of Norwich's civic life for much of the period covered here. The difference between the earlier accounts and Raynbald's accounts, which are much fuller and give much better details about places and people, is striking. His accounts are detailed about the spatial elements of the city, such as which stalls in the marketplace were repaired, the details of the repairs and alterations to the common chapel, and the maintenance of the preaching place—important evidence for the response to the Reformation—and the details of the conversion of the Blackfriars site into a civic amenity. His accounts also show the human side of city life, including the replacing of forgotten livery and disputed daggers in 1544, when the city was gathering and equipping a company of men to join the duke of Norfolk's expedition against France (271–73).

Perhaps the most striking element of these accounts is their variety, showing the range of activity urban elites managed, and the range of connections that linked Norwich to the rest of England and beyond. In 1542, for example, groups of Scots and Flemings, unfortunately not listed by name, were doing day labor for the city (210, 211). In the following year, some of the market stalls were rented to “strange butchers,” again unnamed, probably because they were not seen as a lasting part of the civic community (237). In contrast, generally inhabitants of Norwich are identified by name or by role such as the recorder, when they paid their rents, received payment for work, or otherwise interacted with the finances of the city. Advice was sought from the duke of Norfolk's household over kitchen alterations at the common hall (156). Messengers were paid for bringing letters from the king and Queen Catherine Parr as regent in 1543, probably related to taxation as the footnote makes clear (266–67). Women appear regularly in the accounts, helping with some of the building work—albeit for

lower wages, supplying materials, and paying for tenements. The women's prison also received repairs occasionally.

The date range of these accounts is particularly valuable, not just because the accounts reflect an important moment for Norwich itself, but because they also speak to wider trends in studying urban elites and urban space for clues as to how people lived and accommodated each other. The city's decision to adapt the Blackfriars site, chronicled through to completion here, was deeply unusual, and the account of it offers material that will help deepen our understandings of the ways in which religious space was repurposed and understood. References to the former usage of the rooms lasted well into the renovations, for example. Nationally, our understanding of the 1540s has been widely contested, and so these accounts may help answer questions about the impacts of the political and religious policies pursued by Henry VIII's court. I have referenced a tiny amount of the rich material to be found in the accounts, and I look forward to seeing others explore the many implications of the evidence presented in this volume.

Elizabeth Biggs   
 University of the West of England  
[elizabeth.biggs@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:elizabeth.biggs@uwe.ac.uk)

JONATHAN SCOTT. *How the Old World Ended: The Anglo-Dutch-American Revolution, 1500–1800*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019. Pp. 392. \$35.00 (cloth).  
 doi: 10.1017/jbr.2020.99

As political convulsions have shaken Great Britain's relationship with the world, historians have endeavored to explain its long position as a global economic leader. In *How the Old World Ended*, Jonathan Scott enters this discussion arguing that Britain became an industrial economic power because of its transnational connections. It was the British Isles' bond with the Dutch Republic and its settling of colonists in North America, he argues, that enabled the development of the institutions and innovations that fueled Britain's economic leap forward in the second half of the eighteenth century. To make this claim, he builds on scholarship over the last two decades that has charted Anglo-Dutch interaction in Europe and the Americas, and work on the long origins of the history of capitalism and its roots in Dutch commercial innovations. Scott's synthesis gathers together often disparate scholarship on economic, political, and cultural developments to show the long complex history of the emergence of modern capitalism from Anglo-Dutch origins. This story is well told, but Scott's focus on the North Sea and Britain's North American colonies means that his narrative leaves little room for a full discussion of the role of slavery in the creation of modern Britain.

Early in the seventeenth century, it was Dutch developments in fishing, agriculture, trade, and handicraft (especially textile production) that thrust the Dutch Republic to the forefront of European commercial and imperial expansion. With limited land for agriculture and an urban population, Dutch control of the herring fishery and the Baltic grain trade was essential for Dutch success, both freeing agriculture workers to labor in other sectors and helping to foster expertise in waterborne commerce. Located conveniently at the intersection of North Sea trade routes and river and canal connections to the Mediterranean, Dutch cities like Amsterdam became Europe's key entrepôts. Dutch merchants leveraged their geographic position through a series of financial innovations that further enabled the efficient pooling of capital