

the Spurs, 1513," for instance, suffers the fate of many contemporary prints in this edition, being too small and too dark to distinguish any details. Second, the additional notes at the end of each chapter are largely unnecessary if one has a good dictionary. Many of the notes are definitions of terms, taken out of the *Oxford English Dictionary*. And third and most importantly, *Henry VIII and the Invasion of France* is too expensive and specialized to service any but the most specialized course in Early Modern England. However, if you do not yet possess a copy of Cruickshank's masterly study and cannot find a used one, buy it.

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**John Brewer.** *The Sinews of Power: War, Money, and the English State, 1688-1783.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988. Pp. xxii, 290. Paper, \$11.95.

In *The Sinews of Power: War, Money, and the English State, 1688-1783*, John Brewer traces the emergence of what he calls "the fiscal-military state" in a period "more famous for its praise of liberty."

The military successes of the English in the eighteenth century were made possible by the government's increased effectiveness in raising money. The "sinews of power" were the government's increasingly effective devices for enforcing the collection of revenue or raising money through loans and for administering those revenues and loans. The English successes depended less on the heroism of generals and admirals and their troops and tars than on the steady competence of clerks and bookkeepers, customs collectors, and excise officers. The English "heroes, if any there are, are clerks in offices."

The bureaucracy not only expanded in numbers but also increased in efficiency. Civil administrators became as professional as military officers. Responsibilities as well as procedures became more clearly defined. Standardized methods of bookkeeping were adopted.

Economic expansion alone did not provide enough additional revenues to support the growing military-fiscal machine. The increased revenue came less from economic expansion than from the imposition of new taxes and from increasing the rates of existing taxes. Excise taxes and import duties became more important than taxes on land.

Borrowing became easier as new sources of taxes, with a vast and conscientious bureaucracy to guarantee their collection, increased the confidence of creditors. The government's applying specific taxes to specific debts further increased their confidence. The national debt came to be considered inevitable, and the holders of public securities, who were guaranteed regular incomes, considered it a good thing. The "financial interest," with all of its power and knavery, was born.

The increased power of the state made it as potentially dangerous to Englishmen at home as it was immediately oppressive to people overseas. Authority was far more concerned about the fiscal needs of the state than with what were supposed to be the traditional rights of the people. In cases involving the excise, authority considered the suspect guilty until he could prove himself innocent, and usually the law denied him any appeal to a higher court.

One might wish that Brewer had done more on this repression, though that is peripheral to his real interest. He does not point out that such an approach to prosecution was not unusual in eighteenth-century England and its colonies. In spite of the claims of such complacent apologists as Sir William Blackstone, protections for suspects and defendants were very weak. Suspects were almost always considered guilty until they could prove themselves innocent.

The danger from the government as well as the potential loss from the imposition of new taxes made it essential for merchants and craftsmen to know what Parliament was up to before it even did it. Lobbyists became important not only to plead the positions of their employers

but also to provide their employers with information about what was going on. Clerks and doorkeepers of the House of Commons were hired to get information and to distribute propaganda.

With the increasing power of the state, therefore, there was a vast increase in the number of people who were engaged in economically unproductive work and whom, therefore, the economically productive workers had to support. That, as Brewer might have pointed out more explicitly, obviously left less of their own production for themselves.

In this intriguingly contemporary history, John Brewer traces the increasing power of—and the increasing danger from—a state that was more concerned with wealth and power than with rights. While the book is no doubt too specialized for any but the most advanced undergraduates, it should be very useful to graduate students with good backgrounds and to teachers on the high-school level and above.

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**Ann Hughes.** *The Causes of the English Civil War. British History in Perspective.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991. Pp. vii, 211. \$39.95.

**Paul Seaward.** *The Restoration, 1660-1688. British History in Perspective.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991. Pp. vii, 173. \$45.00.

**Jeremy Black.** *Robert Walpole and the Nature of Politics in Early Eighteenth-Century England. British History in Perspective.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990. Pp. viii, 147. \$39.95.

The proliferation of research and writings on British history over the past twenty-five years or so has increased the demand for works that help historians as well as students keep up with the latest scholarship and debates. The *British History in Perspective* series, edited by Jeremy Black of Durham University, offers concise books on general subjects that combine surveys of the latest literature with the perspectives gained from the author's research in the field. In spite of their similarities in theme and structure, each of the three titles under review presents a different approach to its subject and consequently would appeal to different audiences.

Ann Hughes, a lecturer at Manchester University, begins her analysis of the fierce debates over the causes of the English Civil War by pointing out how current politics have influenced interpretations. Hughes, identifying herself with what has been "sometimes pretentiously described as 'post-revisionism,'" guides us through the battlefield of Whigs, Marxists, and Revisionists with skill and tact. She presents conflicting points of view in enough detail to allow readers to make up their own minds while still putting forward her own interpretation. Far from wanting to close the case, she hopes that her book will arouse further controversy.

The first chapter explores the theories explaining the so-called functional breakdown of government: the monarchy's unsuccessful attempts to repair the structural defects in its financial and administrative systems. Hughes goes on to consider whether England fit the "general crisis of the seventeenth-century Europe" model and finds that the degree of centralization and of local elite participation in government sets England apart. Treating the Civil War as a British problem makes more sense to her since it was the animosities produced by Charles I's policies for Scotland and Ireland that sparked rebellion.

The second and third chapters deal with the question of whether society and politics were polarized or hierarchical and deferential. Historians have argued over the relative significance of wealth, religion, culture, and status in producing the cleavages leading to civil war. Hughes points out that the distinguishing characteristics of the different social groups were often