

## SOME QUERIES ON HISTORICAL DETAIL

A Report on *World Without End* a novel by Ken Follett, first draft

Commissioned from Geoffrey Hindley for 31 / 07 / 06

Submitted by email attachment 01 / 08 / 06

The Report has two sections

### I Some general points

II Points of detail noted by page numbered references


### Section I : Some general points:

-A] 'dukes' etc

Ken, a North Walian friend tells me that the sons of Cymru refer among themselves to our lot as Saesón nevertheless, to the best of my knowledge there never was an archbishop of Monmouth p. 505, (though there *was* an archbishop of Lichfield in the late 700s!). I suppose the archbishop can be granted on the grounds of poetic licence but a *duke* of Monmouth (e.g. p. 347) *does* have me a little worried as a medievalist and not by the anachronistic pre-echo of the title of Charles II's bastard.

On a simple fact of historical accuracy, I should point out that whereas the title was known on the continent – duke of Normandy, duke of Saxony, duke of Brittany etc

– up to 1337 the title of ‘duke’ was unknown among English aristocratic nomenclature. The first award was to Edward III’s eldest son (the Black Prince) as ‘duke’ of Cornwall (hitherto the duchy had been an earldom). The second ducal title was to Henry Grosmont elevated as ‘Duke of Lancaster’ in 1361. He too was of royal blood being in the direct male descent from Henry III’s son Edmund Crouchback. His father the second earl of course lost his head after his defeat at the battle of Boroughbridge. For more than 100 years (up to 1444 I believe) the title of duke was awarded only to members of the royal family descended in the male line. When Ralph envies the 17-year old Deric for becoming a duke at so young an age he is living outside his time.

Marriage into a ducal house would of course be a prestigious match for Odila. But so would marriage into one of the great families like the Clares – could the family be the immensely powerful ‘earls’ of Monmouth whose domains could comprise a network of fiefs acquired by alliance and intermarriage with some great Welsh Norman family? 

B] Oxford University’s standing. ‘*According to the Italian merchants, all the best mathematicians were Arabs. ...*’ main reference P. 505

I think his Italian informants were rather out of date. By the 1330s the most advanced maths in the western hemisphere, such as the quantification of qualities was being done in Europe not in the Muslim world and specifically at Oxford. As I think you know, the Mertonian mathematicians such as Richard Swyneshed (later revered by Leibniz as the ‘Great Calculator’), and William Heytesbury were pioneering the maths of acceleration and kinematics while Thomas Bradwardine expounded on the possibility of infinite division of the continuum. (In 1349, in his fifties, he was briefly Abp of Canterbury dying in office of the Black Death.)

The Mertonians’ work was about as accessible to the average non-scientific intelligence as the minutiae of particle physics are to our generation. Galileo was almost certainly influenced by their work; their books were among the first published with the advent of printing and ran into many editions. The Mertonians featured in numerous long biographical entries in the great German 18<sup>th</sup> century *Allgemeines Lexikon* and I once

spent a happy afternoon in the Bodleian noting the articles – notes that, regrettably, went missing in one of our house moves.

In other fields, notably optics and the studies of light by the great Robert Grosseteste, who developed the works of the 11<sup>th</sup> century Arab Alhazen, Oxford led Europe. Roger Bacon, another Franciscan at Oxford, is of course still rated highly as one of the first to champion the virtues of experimentation as well as being reputed for practical inventions such as spectacles. That other great Oxonian William of Ockham at the court of Emperor Ludwig IV (years ago I visited a little night club known as *Die Nachteule*, in Munich's Ockhamstrasse), was one of the first to speculate on the possibility of a multiplicity of universes.

In short, in its first two centuries Oxford was fertile in early scientific theory and practice and was not the den of antiquated superstitions people like to imagine ✓

— but Bacon was jailed.

C] Domes in late medieval Europe, particularly Florence

'Architecturally the Renaissance is always taken to begin in 1418 with Brunelleschi's dome of Florence Cathedral. This is slightly odd because the dome owes virtually nothing to classical architecture and a great deal to Gothic. ...' *Western Architecture* by Ian Sutton (Thames and Hudson, 1999; reprinted with revisions 2001) Ian tells me that no one is really sure how Brunelleschi achieved the structure. Perhaps he owed something to ideas mooted by Merthin among his Florentine opposite numbers years before? Apparently ... 'The basic shape of the dome had already been settled in the 14<sup>th</sup> century ... the problem that preoccupied the building committee was how to ... avoid ruinously expensive scaffolding. Brunelleschi solved this, as well as inventing new hoisting machines ...'

Incidentally, the Cathedral's dome was the first such structure in Florence. It is a fascinating fact that a fresco from 1368 shows the cathedral at Florence much as we see it today – and with a dome on it – 50 years before the structure was in fact raised. Double check

D] I wonder whether, given the sub-plot re Thomas Langley and the death warrant signed by Isabel for the murder of her husband, the book should have something more by way of

allusion to the rumours of Edward II's survival – especially as Alison Weir has a fair amount to say about it in her recent *Isabella She-Wolf of France, Queen of England* (Jonathan Cape, 2005).

What follows may be a useful *aide memoire* should you want to revisit this plot line. ✓

It seems that some time in 1337 a Genoese priest Manuele de Fieschi a notary to Pope John XXII sent Ed III a long undated letter in Latin that contained 'a startling, and very convincing account of how the king's father had escaped from Berkeley Castle' Among other things de Fieschi claims he heard it from the "confession of your father". The account tells how he escaped from Berkeley Castle in disguise, having killed the sleeping porter. The knights detailed to kill Edward heard about the escape and "fearing the indignation of the Queen, for fear of their lives ... put the porter in a chest ... His heart having been removed they presented body and heart to the queen as if those of her husband" ...Ed II made good his escape to Corfe Castle where he was housed secretly for a year by 'Lord Thomas' the castellan ... His travels take him back and forth to England in the disguise of a hermit. For a time he was kept secretly, even by the pope [John XXII].

The letter is authentic as a document; but opinions differ as to the accuracy of its account. Weir does not commit herself but finds strong arguments in favour – not least that it contains details of Ed's movements before his death/murder? Details that are recorded in the Chamber accounts but known only to a select few. Weir pp 282-285. On pp 362-63 Weir recounts the reports that a William le Galeys (i.e. 'the Welshman' from Edward 'of Caernarvon'?) was presented to Ed III then at Koblenz as claiming to be his father. This 'le Galeys' was with the king at the time of his coronation as imperial vicar in Cologne... and the account continues with very suggestive circumstantial details. The story was known at the time to members of the establishment and you have probably already discounted it. But since, as indicated above, it is once more in the domain of popular history (surfacing on Radio 4 earlier this year, or late last thanks to Weir), I thought it worth jogging your judgement for a possible rethink.

## Section II : Points of detail

P. 15 I like the idea of the church putting on this All Hallows 'musical' with sound effects, though I've not heard of this form of medieval church drama before.

'Pandemonium' is John Milton's coinage I believe ✖

P.42 wool *buyers* from Lucca? – I've always thought of Lucca as a silk centre and Peter Spufford confirms - by the early 1300s 'Lucca already established as dominant silk weaving city of western Europe' (Sp. 248) Luccan bankers were major financiers for the wool trade but are you sure wool *merchants* from the city visited England

P.48 and elsewhere – cooking with oil. Was it general at this time, or rather an advanced taste? – Spufford has '... by the 1360s Englishmen already going south in search of oil .. .' (p.304).

P.53 'a fresh coat of paint for the cathedral interior' a turn of phrase that suggests the interior was decorated only with a single colour wash. Would it be better to say something like 'new paintwork for the cathedral... '?

P.55 'incorporation of Oxford into a 'company or university' by royal permission to set exams and award degrees...? I don't understand this. the word *universitas* merely meant a place where everything is taught – at first Oxford like Paris, Bologna and the rest was, to the best of my knowledge called a '*studium generale*, a place of general study, and a 'degree' was merely a licence to teach. – a point I made at the University of Bochum when I gave them my lecture *Der Einfluss Oxfords im Mittelalter*.'

In the new DNB the biog of Robert Grosseteste, the university's first chancellor, says 'The constitution of the university had been laid down by the papal legate who in 1214 drew up the terms on which the schools of Oxford would reopen after the Interdict (1210-14). The masters were to have a chancellor appointed annually by the bishop of Lincoln. The university in general enjoyed royal favours and received charters of privileges against the town of Oxford, for example in 1328 Edward III had granted custody of the

assize of bread and ale to the university's chancellor jointly with the town mayor – after the Saint Scholastica's day rioting of 1355 he received sole custody – but I don't think it can be said that it was incorporated into a 'company' by royal permission to set exams and award degrees. Pretty soon the regent masters were electing their own chancellor who among other things conferred 'licences' that is degrees. Inception as a master at age twenty one was normal and the university's ruling body was dominated by such 'juveniles' as Archbishop Arundel of Canterbury dubbed them. There were monastic foundations among the colleges and the Franciscan friars were a major presence, but most of the early colleges started life as lodging houses or halls run by teaching masters.

P.59 'Edward II deposed by parliament'

'in Jan. 1327 Ed. refused to attend the parliament summoned in his name. ...Articles were drawn up, and the Abp of Canterbury announced that by the consent of the magnates, clergy and people Edward was no longer king. A deputation was sent to Kenilworth.[It included knights and burgesses as well as bishops and magnates] ... In a highly confused state Ed. appears to have resigned the throne, on condition that his son should succeed him'. (Prestwich, pp 98 and 129).

P.84 Blackamoors – my old OED gives 1547 as earliest use of word. When reading for my book on Caxton's England I came across mention of an affray involving a black drummer from a Venetian galley that had put in at Southampton, but I think just the adjective was used. Incidentally were African languages really written down at this time? And why do you not mention, in this fairly extensive catalogue of tongues, the language of the Empire – German?

P. 125 histories often did start with the creation, but I didn't know they ended with the Day of Judgement! The great Bede of course didn't Geoffrey of Monmouth doesn't nor Joinville, nor Villehardouin, nor Froissart, nor does Polychronicon a 'universal history' from the creation to his own times by Ranulf Higden, a west of England man (d.1360s)

P. 126 I don't find 'herbiary' (though bestiary of course does exist) 'herbal' is what is needed here I'd say.

P.127 and P.141 : I always understood the chapter house was originally the place where the monks convened for the reading of a chapter from the Rule of St Benedict – as you say – only rarely from the scriptures – a term, in my experience, used only of the Bible (including of course the Apocrypha) – i.e. the Holy Scriptures and not of any other religious texts)

I think a 'meeting of the chapter' in a formal sense was one convened for the discussion of special business. .

P. 130 The hostility of the university of Paris to the anti-religious implications of Aristotelianism was of course matched in the Muslim world from the mid 13<sup>th</sup> century onwards with the resurgence of fundamentalist Islam in the Arab world. Is it not true to say that Islamic intellectual development never subsequently really broke free of the religious establishment despite the glories of twelfth century thinkers

P.131 In general, trading with Italians was hardly a new idea in the 1330s. They had been displacing Flemish merchants in the English market for more than 50 years by that time.

[P.141, spelling should be **charismatic** OED gives 1880 for first use]

P.164 We also almost certainly learnt the art of distilling from the Arabs

P.171 'she's eighteen, so she's only a child'

I'm not sure that the legal age of majority was quite so clear cut. Ed III was crowned 1327 aged 15; asserted himself as independent ruler 1330 aged 18; though I admit royal majority was always as much a political as a legal matter. (also see P.297)

[PP 212-13, 14 Not a historical point this, but I rather lost track of whether Sim could actually swim at all or not very well.]

P. 218 the earliest ref my old OED gives for the word stretcher in the sense of invalid 'conveyance' is for the year 1845 in a citation that suggests by its wording that the device was recent.

P.221 'beer barrel' ? As I've always understood it beer – i.e. hop flavoured ale - was introduced to England only in the 1410s, from Holland. There was a lot of huffing and puffing about this *foreign* muck which had to be flavoured to conceal its weakness or pollution with other ingredients. This sort of Tunbridge Wells talk was still going on at the time of Henry VIII. In fact '*real* ale' has been unavailable for about five centuries I guess!

P.229 'pieces of a child's puzzle' – is the allusion here to jig-saw puzzles? First examples 18<sup>th</sup> c. I think. Perhaps there was an equivalent in the m.a.; but I don't know of one and in fact, not being well up on the history of childhood, I'm not sure such things existed at that time.

P.245, P. 932, PP. 1040s and elsewhere, coffins were virtually unheard of among the poor before 1600s. All but the village elite would have been buried in a coarse shroud I believe.

P.265 'terce' the morning 'service' – I'm not sure this is the right word. It is more a question of singing responses appointed for the hour, whereas for your lapsed Methodist consultant a 'service' is a programme involving hymns, prayers, lessons, sermon etc. – I



think the morning 'office', would be more accurate. A Catholic priest would be able to tell you the best word to use.

P.295 'Norman law compelled ....' ? Why *Norman* law in the 1340s – we are in England aren't we?

(P.297 age of majority see note to p. 171)

P.342 according to the OED 'coffer dam' appears first in print in 1736 – does this matter? ✖

347



(A)

P.368 here you are explaining the composition of the house of lords but (quite rightly at this period in my view) make no reference to dukes, but there should be a reference if the rank held more than one member (which, between 1337 and 1361 it did not) and members other than of royal blood [Incidentally at this time only those Lords who received a royal summons to attend, participated in the deliberations of 'the Lords']

P.413 here you speak of the leopard as a spotted lion .... Later P. 822 you refer, in passing, to the heraldic 'leopard' without, I think, explaining that this in fact designates a lion 'passant regardant' – do you think you should clarify or just refer to the 'lions' of England.

P. 465 *rolling* (i.e. 'trundling') a drum? See note for P.1449, below

P. 505 Arab mathematicians, see general point [B]

P. 507 – a woman lacing high boots ?

P. 512 Spufford . has sugar priced at a skilled man's day wage for a pound (say 500 gm) at about this time

P.532 I presume these were shear scissors, since pivoted scissors (the ones that the word immediately conjures up) were, I'm pretty certain, unknown before the 16<sup>th</sup> century and only became common in the 18<sup>th</sup>

P.600 – 603 This sequence strikes me as highly improbable in the degree of intimacy it displays between women of widely spaced social classes. And then it seems we have a nobleman plotting with merchants/villagers to stage evidence so as to entrap another member of the ruling class. I know we're in the world of fiction, but .. do you have any 'chapter and verse' to back it up. The nearest I can get is Margery Kemp berating the bishop of Lincoln – and any other nob she took exception to – but she was a townswoman of prosperous standing

P.621 'rode' literal for 'rowed'

P.628 – Could one, would one buy cider in the metrop? .....ale more like I'd have thought.

P.642 given medieval attitudes to nature – ugh nasty stuff was a common response à la Adam of Usk crossing the Alps I seem to remember, [Chaucer with his birds with open eyes etc rather sophisticated] – I'd be surprised if paddling by the seaside was a common boyhood pastime

P. 683 I came across women guild members in preparing my Business Ladies paper for Kalamazoo (and later Regensburg) – but a woman becoming an alderman when she was *not* a guildswoman would seem to be raising the ante a bit.

[PP 688 –699 a lot of duplication to be sorted out]

P.717 - a statue 'like Hercules'. At this time and in this social milieu would not 'Samson' or 'Gideon' be more likely?

P.735 Being flayed alive a 'traditional punishment' for the sacrilege of robbing churches; in whose tradition? I'm afraid I've not heard of this. Do you have chapter and verse. It seems unlikely to me, even for a church that burnt heretics alive. The crossbowman who fired the mortal bolt into the shoulder of King Richard I at the siege of Chalus was, I believe, done to death in this way – precisely because it was an extraordinary mode of execution.

As to punishments for the sacrilegious robbing of church property I found this record for Wells Cathedral from the Historical Manuscripts Commission, for the year 1349 a list of men convicted of sacrilege incurred the punishment of three-fold castigation around the market place of Monatacute, and around the church of Martok, in the usual manner, naked, except their breeches.' (Source James Wayland Joyce, *The Doom of Sacrilege and the results of church Spoliation* (1886). Embarrassing certainly, painful too, but not as inconvenient as being flayed!.

P. 736 could I suggest 'tapster' for the somewhat anachronistic 'barmaid' ? One of the many 15<sup>th</sup> century continuations of the Canterbury Tales has the Pardoner make a pass at a tapster who shows him the room where 'she sleep naked each night'. He gets what he wants that afternoon but has to pay for it...

P.738 At this time Gascony was of course under the English not the French crown, though Philip IV attempted to confiscate it. Edward's sovereignty there was confirmed at the treaty of Brétigny in 1360.

P. 799 'Hugh Despenser' shouldn't this be Edward le Despenser? Both Hughs were executed back in 1326.

P. 807 who at this time was the 'King of Rome', Emperor Louis (Ludwig) IV (d. Oct. 1347) who would at some stage I suppose have been King of the Romans The kingdom of Majorca (or the Balearics) was annexed permanently to Aragon in 1343/49?

P. 816 'furor franciscus'. This is a new one on me; was it coined in the crusades meaning 'Frankish' rather than French

P. 822 a bishop wielding a sword – by convention martial clergy wielded a mace which, in theory, did not shed blood (!). Presumably these 'leopards' are heraldic lions passant regardant – should that be made clear?

P. 844 we have someone crossing the Ponte Vecchio which, having been built only 2 years previously, cannot be old! A neat conundrum of nomenclature Tardis style!

P. 845 There were no domes in Florence prior to Brunelleschi/Ghiberti's Duomo see general point [C]

P. 856 'fiefdom' apparently a non-technical term derived from 'fief' and first use, per OED, 16<sup>th</sup> century – the usual medieval term was a knight's fee

P.874 How many cathedrals were there in Paris?

P. 892 the system of the staple would have been important to wool merchants

P. 908 your parish guild seems not to concern itself much either with the religious life of the community or with education; the provision of lights for the church and of primary schooling were important concerns for medieval 'social' guilds. They were also of course active in friendly society functions. Bridge building was, conventionally, an area of rich man's piety and philanthropy; chapels were quite often built on, or at the approaches to, a bridge. (Incidentally, the guild of Corpus Christi in Cambridge had Henry, duke of Lancaster, as alderman in 1352 – he was succeeded in the office by John of Gaunt)

P.915 I suppose it's Merthin (Ralph was out hunting) who's aghast at the 14-year-old being pregnant, but why? It was surely not that unusual in the 14<sup>th</sup> century

P.925 As I understand it, urine tests are still an important element in diagnosis, even if 'monkish-physicians' went in for them

P. 928 and passim, 'Muslim' very now, something like Mahomettan better for the 14<sup>th</sup> century?

P. 962 in many great churches there was a screen between nave and chancel

P. 976 and 1030 etc. barmaid / tapster

P. 1022 'office' of prime perhaps better

P 1096 'Statute' not 'Ordinance' of Labourers

P 1159 'a gold salver painted with a depiction of the Feeding of the 5000'

I've never heard of gold being used as a support for painting

P 1169 check whether deputies were appointed

P 1179 and P 1183 I do not think widows were subject to the king in matters of marriage post Magna Carta. Clause VIII : 'No widow shall be compelled to marry, so long as she prefers to live without a husband; provided always that she give security not to marry without our consent, if she hold of us, or without the consent of the lord of whom she holds, if she hold of another.' So far as I know this was not nullified by any subsequent legislation. Though it is true that the crown was liable to oblige her to swear not to marry without licence before her dower was assigned to her in chancery.

P 1197 'a bound volume of blank vellum' ? very much a luxury item I would think

P 1210 'bouncing like a football' – I think the bladder was quite often packed with wool or some such to help retain its shape – I'm not sure it would bounce in the way we expect of a modern football – but I'm no expert on early football

P 1213 rights of aristocratic widows in second marriage; see above pp 1179,1183

P 1214 marriage: 'the most intimate relationship possible between two human beings': my reading in the area of intimate human relationships in the middle ages is limited. I'm not sure how much there is to read. At the time I doubt whether people rated intimate relations between human beings as of particular importance – the intimate relationship that counted was surely the soul's relationship to God.

In Chaucer of course, Margery Kempe and some Paston letters one finds clear indications of close affection, but even so the expression of such very modern concepts by medieval mouths makes me uneasy.

P.1216 Since her mother is still living I don't think Odila could be a royal ward and so I don't think the king could compel her marriage on any legal grounds. All in all, while a king could make life very unpleasant for women, for anybody, who gainsaid his will he could not with any legal sanction, so far as I know, enforce compliance

Incidentally, I'm sure that many people at the time did have a real and often spiritual sense of their dealings with God in the scheme of things. In the last decades of the 14<sup>th</sup> century with the emergence of Wycliffe's translations of biblical texts and the growth of Lollard conventicles who read them in secret at increasing risk, it seems pretty obvious to me that many ordinary people were genuinely religious in a way that, I suppose, is unacceptable today. The defiant last word statements by Lollards at the stake express brave contempt for aspects of church convention, but it is equally clear that they not only had a lively sense of the rightness of their own beliefs but also believed firmly in their salvation in the life to come.

P 1224 heirs to the late duke of Monmouth – see my other comments on this character

P 1241 I know that latrines were built – in the fifteenth century there were public ones by London Bridge – but I did not know they were tiled.

P 1243 the type of the cranes could perhaps be mentioned

P 1246 ‘...like a book she could pick up at any time she pleased, even when she had not looked at it for a year’. This suggests a habitual and casual access to books that would be rare outside clerical circles, and, in any case out of character, surely, for someone who, I think, has a general contempt for book learning

P. 1274 - ‘undershorts’ do these differ from the famous ‘underdrawers’  
And if we have UNDER drawers what are drawers? Actually, according to the OED, drawers are ‘a garment for the lower part of the body and legs; now usually restricted to under hose worn next the skin.’ !

P. 1285 I think the Ordinance of Labourers is more correctly the Statute of Labourers (as at P.1331)

P. 1289 a spark would have had to fly a bloody long way to reach the ceiling –

P.1289 Why is this charette drawn by chargers, i.e. warhorses?

p. 1310 Was a leg iron so constructed that it COULD be snapped on?

*How else?*

P. 1327 when were ‘quarter sessions’ instituted? ‘It was not until 1368 that the judicial powers [of the justices of the peace] were placed firmly on a statutory basis’ (McKisack p.202). From 1388, I think, they sat four times a year.

P.1334 I am pretty sure he would say either I am Alderman Merthin of Kingsbridge OR My name is Merthin of Kingsbridge and I am alderman there

p. 1337, would a jury be involved in the trial of a serf?

P. 1366 the guild must come up with its own candidate for the bishopric – I'm not sure what this means

P.1368 'the boys were playing football' By my understanding, a medieval football match amounted virtually to unarmed combat between two sides of indeterminate size fighting to force the ball over a goal or line at one end of the village street – or even in another village. The charming image of urchins kicking a ball about with varying degrees of ball control is I am sure anachronistic.

p.1420 line 3 up from the bottom 'beer' I think should be 'ale'

P. 1425 double check copyhold *Clarify .*

P. 1444 senior guild member checking weights and measures *Clarify .*

P.1448 'beer' reference

P. 1449 we are just now (29 July) staying with our daughter Sophie in Eskdalemuir, Scotland, and the town had a town drummer in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Were such characters, town or village known in the middle ages and if so I wonder what type of drum they would have had? The big bass drum we are familiar with seems to have come into Europe army music as part of Turkish military music in the 14<sup>th</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> cent. I'm not sure it would have filtered down to village level.(Of course the big vogue for such 'Turkish music' came in the 18<sup>th</sup> century). The standard drum in the European middle ages, was to the best of my knowledge was the small tabor of the pipe and tabor 'one-man band' combination. By about 1300, I think, the nakers small waist-slung kettle drums also learned from the Turks, were coming in. You see minstrels playing them in manuscript marginalia.



*Miscellaneous points of vocabulary.* What seem to be anachronistic usages: 'decade' (P.489) first used and in a technical sense in the 15<sup>th</sup> century'; 'the progressive element' (p.131) surely a glaringly anachronistic turn of phrase; 'adolescent'(p.131) which sounds to me like an author wishing to convey the sense of 'teenager' but rightly holding back- elsewhere you use 'youngster', why not here? . 'in absentia' a Latinism sure, but was it in technical usage as early as this? 'Muslim' for Mahomettan grates on a medievalist but this is clearly an authorial policy decision and nothing to do with me

McKechnie, *Magna Carta: A commentary* ... (Maclehose, Glasgow, 1914)

Kay McKisack, *The Fourteenth Century, 1307 – 1399* (Oxford, 1959)

Michael Prestwich, *The Three Edwards: War and State in England (1272-1377)* (Methuen, 1981)

Ian Sutton, *Western Architecture* (Thames and Hudson, 1999; reprinted with revisions 2001)

Alison Weir, *Isabella She-Wolf of France, Queen of England* (Jonathan Cape, 2005)

Peter Spufford, *Power and Profit: The Merchant in Medieval Europe* (Thames and Hudson, 2002)

Dear Ken,

Herewith the follow up to your queries.

P.42 – why not the city of Prato? The famous Merchant of Prato, Francesco di Marco Datini never went further north than Avignon himself (returning to Prato in 1381), but he imported much English wool and with other Pratese (if that's the right word) would have relied on agents to check the quality of the clip and place orders. Do not forget that the wool so purchased may have had to pass through the king of England's staple. Iris Origo's beautiful book *The Merchant of Prato* based on the Datini archive of some 140,000 letters, and other documents, is a marvellous read, if you don't know it. My copy is the revised version of 1963 (Peregrine Books) but there's bound to be a more recent edition.

P.218 Ingenious of you to see those stone carrying devices as stretchers. I suppose if I had to give them a name I'd call them 'stone hods'. But primitive though they are in structural terms I imagine, being made for heavy duty work on prestigious building sites, they'd be too expensive for large scale manufacture merely to carry dead or wounded people! I seem to remember fairly recent television pics of crowds in some Persian or Arab city following the corpse of a holy man which was being transported in a shroud roped to a carrying pole. The memory's dim and in any case even if reliable not much use, because I believe the use of coffins is contrary to good Muslim practice.

P.735 Enough said, I think, on the subject of flaying !

P.1096 – you may be right, though McKisack seems to refer only to the 1351 *Statute*. She uses the word 'Ordinance' only for the famous Ordinances of 1311 urged by the Lords Ordainers

P.1197 – the case of the vellum notebook:

To be frank, I only queried this because I thought the *concept* of such a convenient item of stationery in the 14<sup>th</sup> century something of a novelty and therefore a luxury. But, of course, clerics/writers had been using scraps of vellum/parchment for notes since the 8<sup>th</sup> century so why not have a few sheets stitched together? I believe parchment is from sheep or goat skin and vellum a heavier material made from calf skin. I phoned a specialist in early paper manufacture who gave us a talk a year or two back. He could see no reason why some one should not have had such a notebook made – though, of course, paper would have been the more luxurious *material* of the two in the mid 1300s. (Did you know, by the way, that though the West learnt the technique of paper manufacture [from China] via the Arabs, by the early 1400s Italian exports had virtually displaced Arab manufacturers product in their home market! Surely a classic case of advancing western technological superiority.)

P.1243 The crane would I suppose, be essentially a derrick with a rope running over a pulley and hauled in either by a manual winch or a treadmill. It seems that builders tended to mount their hoisting apparatus on scaffolding cantilevered from the walls on beams thrust into what are sometimes called 'put – log' holes. I'm posting a couple

of photocopies from books on my shelves – the quality of my b/w copies from colour prints is rather poor but I think the principle of the thing are legible.

P.1310 I've no idea how leg irons were made, but not, I imagine, with some kind of spring lock mechanism as is suggested by the word 'snap'. One way, I suppose, would be to loop the two ends of a chain shackle one round each leg, and secure each with a bolt through the links, splay hammered to make it un-dislodgeable.