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Gordon, George and Brian Dicks, eds. *Scottish Urban History*. Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1983. Pp. x, 281. Tables, maps, index. £14.00

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of the illustrations are not of a higher quality. The study focuses on buildings which are still standing, and it is therefore difficult to understand why the authors have included blurred and poorly-composed photographs. Furthermore, the text contains a number of minor errors. Contrary to the caption accompanying the drawing by the Toronto architect John Chewett, for example, the Newcastle District Court House was not constructed in Hamilton, but in Hamilton Township. Errors such as this may cause some annoyance to the reader, but they do not alter the fact that *Early Canadian Court Houses* is a noteworthy study. This book undoubtedly will appeal to a wide range of readers, including heritage preservationists and urban historians, and hopefully it will contribute to a greater awareness of Canada's architectural heritage.

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Gordon, George and Brian Dicks, eds. *Scottish Urban History*. Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1983. Pp. x, 281. Tables, maps, index. £14.00.

Urban history made a slow start in Scotland but it has caught up a good deal in recent years. The work of Sydney Checkland, A.J. Youngson and Ian Adams is well known, Adams having essayed an ambitious survey volume, *The Making of Urban Scotland*, in 1978. However, Gordon and Dicks are right to claim that much remains to be done before Scottish urban history is squarely on the map, and this wide-ranging collection of essays is an appropriate way forward at this stage. Much the same strategy, of course, has been adopted by Artibise and Stelter in their efforts to promote Canadian urban history.

Like all things Caledonian, Scotland's urban history is bound to fascinate a Canadian readership. However, Canadian and Scottish cities are like chalk and cheese. Scottish culture crossed the Atlantic readily enough, but Scottish legal institutions were mostly left behind. Scottish migrants, much like the French Canadians, had to toe the English legal line once British North America began to assume its present shape and identity after the American War of Independence. Cities are, to a degree, cultural artifacts but land law seems to have been the main creator of Scotland's distinctive, high-density, urban form. In this volume and elsewhere, R.G. Rodger argues that Scotland's unique feuing system drove up the price of urban land and, in combination with low effective demand for housing, generated the tenement block. In Canada, the tenement system emerged in a distinct form only in Quebec, and it is the Montreal 'duplex' which echoes the cottage flats and larger apartment houses of Scotland's cities. Another contributing factor, urban fortifi-

cation, was also more a feature of Lower than of Upper Canada; it was, after all, a Louis who quipped that so much stone had been put into a Canadian citadel that it must surely be visible from Europe. Canadian and Scottish urban history have one thing in common, however. As we discovered at the Guelph conference in 1982, American urban historians know little about Canada whereas Canadians are expected to be fully cognisant of developments south of the border. Much the same relationship exists between Scottish urban history and that of its more populous southern neighbour. Canadians will be on the Scottish side in this British contest of the histories.

It is difficult to resist drawing parallels between *Scottish Urban History* and *The Usable Urban Past* and *Shaping the Urban Landscape*. Like Canada's, Scotland's early urbanisation has generally been dismissed as backward or insignificant. The answer is to draw on new evidence or to extrapolate from broader historical developments. In "The Scottish Medieval Town: A Search for Origins," B. Dicks joins an important European trend when he draws on accumulating archaeological evidence to suggest that towns existed in Scotland before they appear in the written record in the twelfth century. He also points out, convincingly, that even the rudimentary forms of exchange which existed in early medieval Scotland would have required a degree of urban concentration. R.C. Fox narrows the focus to pre-industrial Stirling. He provides a comprehensive portrait of the town between 1550 and 1700, with particular emphasis on morphogenesis in the Conzenian tradition, once again towards the top of the agenda among British geographers. Even more original is R.G. Rodger's identification of a continuous Scottish urban planning tradition stretching from the twelfth to the nineteenth centuries under the aegis of the Dean of Guild Courts. One might question whether rudimentary activities such as the oversight of property boundaries constitute urban planning, but the continuity of Scottish urban management established by Rodger merits Europe-wide attention. However, Scotland's minor status as a historical problem, even more peripheral to Europe than it is to Britain, makes such a diffusion unlikely. The unexpected dynamism and technical competence of pre-industrial Scotland are also reflected in T.M. Devine's study of urban merchants in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Attacking the implausible over-simplification whereby Scottish agriculture was revolutionised while urban enterprise stagnated, Devine aligns himself with the increasingly influential view that urban and rural economies cannot be considered separately — a stance which commends itself particularly, of course, to Canadian urban historians.

The articles devoted to the industrial period are, inevitably perhaps, less innovative. J.G. Robb and G. Gordon write about nineteenth century residential differentiation, in Glasgow and Edinburgh respectively. Gordon's delineation of status areas in the capital is a variation on a familiar theme of his, but it supports Robb's conclusion, derived from his

study of the Gorbals, that a significant degree of residential integration of the social classes survived until very late in the nineteenth century. A.A. Maclaren's discussion of the Aberdeen bourgeoisie between 1830 and 1850 contributes to that inexhaustible topic, the interaction between class and religion in Victorian Scotland, but does not add fundamentally to his widely-cited monograph. Hume's study of the impact of transport on Scottish towns in the nineteenth century rounds up some disparate material effectively enough but contains no surprises, except in that the peculiarities of Scottish urban structures are largely effaced. J. Butt's study of working-class housing 1900–1950, on the other hand, stresses divergences from the English pattern, even in the public sector. Using material derived from a systematic analysis of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee and Aberdeen, Butt establishes strong continuities between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in terms of housing quality, despite increasing public involvement in the building and financing of urban housing after the First World War. Above all, the tenement system survived a number of attempts to break it down, preparing the way for a spate of high-rise building in the 1950s and 1960s. Butt thus brings his readers to the very threshold of contemporary urban Scotland without disrupting one of the book's major continuities.

Of course, this batch of essays is far from exhaustive, and we may look forward to further collections from the same editors. On the whole, their formula works well, with geographers and historians addressing themselves to compatible questions but setting up an interesting methodological counterpoint. In a future volume, perhaps, architectural historians and political scientists might be allowed a place, with social history perspectives developed at greater length. However, as Artibise and Stelter have shown, there is plenty of room to correct the balance once an enterprise of this type is under way. Gordon and Dicks deserve our encouragement in their valiant effort to make a world readership take Scottish urban history more seriously at last.

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Gottfried, Robert S. *Bury St. Edmunds and the Urban Crisis: 1290–1539.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982. Pp. xvi, 313.

Any historian is the prisoner of his sources, and none more so than the medievalist. In *Bury St. Edmunds and the Urban Crisis: 1290–1539* Robert S. Gottfried explains that he originally intended to recreate the nature and texture of the lives of the inhabitants of this prosperous East Anglian regional centre during the late Middle Ages. As so often happens in medieval studies, the sources here tell tantalizingly little of people, and propel the scholar inexorably toward institutions. But Gottfried has skillfully extracted far more than one might expect from the irregular and sometimes hazy data available.

Gottfried sets out first to delineate the geographic, economic and political parameters of Bury life. He then goes on to work at an assessment of population size and trends, based partly on the rentals of St. Edmunds Abbey and royal subsidy lists, and partly on wills. He follows this with a closer study of the economic structure and functioning of Bury and its region, and a look at the character and careers of some of its elite. Overarching and infusing all this is the perennial struggle for economic and political power between the city and the great Abbey of St. Edmunds.

Whether individuals or institutions, the lords of medieval cities by their very nature had to be conservative: their rights and powers rested on traditional obligations, and they had little to gain from expansion or change and much to fear from civic political development. St. Edmunds had given Bury its initial importance, and made it a focus of commerce and concourse for a wide area. But the very prosperity it brought made increasingly independent burgesses impatient of tutelage and less dependent on the Abbey as a market. Gottfried's excellent topographic study of the town shows the progressive desertion of buildings nearest to the Abbey, and the decay of the Old Market near its gates in favour of the newer Great Market, mirroring this decrease in subservience. This is complemented by a lucid explanation of Bury's position as a regional market and the rise of its importance as minor metropolis of a leading cloth producing region, quite apart from its relation to the Abbey.

Gottfried uses a combination of quantitative and deductive method to analyze his material. The quantification, with illustrative graphs and tables, makes for considerable elucidation and precision in dealing with the changing patterns of the wool and cloth trade of the town, and of the relative wealth of Bury and its inhabitants. It is somewhat less satisfying in the author's study of Bury's demography. Gottfried argues that Bury's population, repeatedly devastated by the plague and other epidemics in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, also suffered from drastically reduced fertility rates and survived only through sustained immigration. This is a fairly familiar picture for late medieval towns, but the degree of fertility reduction for which Gottfried argues is startling. Gottfried draws his evidence largely from wills, and he assumes that all a testator's surviving children will be mentioned in his will. Based on this data, he finds less than half of all testators leaving even one son, and an average of only 37 per cent leaving a daughter, with something under a quarter leaving more than one child. English medieval wills are far from complete guides to family size, however. Daughters were normally given a "portion" at marriage, and often received no further inheritance; the discrepancy in the sex ratio Gottfried gives surely reflects this. Similarly,