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Thomas Frederick Tout (1855-1929)

Refashioning history for the twentieth century

Edited by Caroline M. Barron and Joel T. Rosenthal



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Abbreviations

<i>Bodl. Quart. Record</i>	<i>Bodleian Quarterly Record</i>
<i>Cambrian Medieval Celtic Stud.</i>	<i>Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies</i>
CCR	<i>Calendar of Close Rolls</i>
<i>Chaucer Rev.</i>	<i>The Chaucer Review</i>
CPR	<i>Calendar of Patent Rolls</i>
<i>Cult. and Soc. History</i>	<i>Cultural and Social History</i>
DNB	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
<i>Econ. History Rev.</i>	<i>Economic History Review</i>
<i>Econ. Jour.</i>	<i>Economic Journal</i>
<i>Eng. Hist. Rev.</i>	<i>English Historical Review</i>
HA	Historical Association
<i>Hist. Research</i>	<i>Historical Research/Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research</i>
<i>Jour. Archaeol. Soc. Chester and N. Wales</i>	<i>Journal of the Archaeological Society for Chester and North Wales</i>
<i>Jour. Brit. Stud.</i>	<i>Journal of British Studies</i>
JRL	John Rylands Library, Manchester
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>
<i>Philological Quart.</i>	<i>Philological Quarterly</i>
<i>Proc. Brit. Academy</i>	<i>Proceedings of the British Academy</i>
<i>Proc. Royal Soc. of London</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Royal Society of London</i>
RBRC	Roderic Bowen Research Centre
RTI	reflectance transformation imaging
RHS	Royal Historical Society
SHL	Senate House Library
TNA	The National Archives of the UK

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JOHN D. MILNER (d. 2016) was principal director of the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) until his retirement in 2009. He was a Manchester history graduate and maintained his research interests, particularly following his retirement. He published a number of papers on late medieval political history. At the time of his death his major project was a political study of Thomas, duke of Clarence, Henry IV's second son.

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MATT RAVEN has recently been awarded his PhD at the University of Hull for his thesis 'The earls of Edward III, 1330–1360: aristocratic power in mid-fourteenth century England'. He held a Scouloudi Doctoral Junior Research Fellowship at the Institute of Historical Research in 2017–8.

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TOM SHARP read history at Oxford University (Jesus College, 1951–4) and gained a first-class degree but chose to make his career in the civil service (Board of Trade/Department of Trade and Industry). His work dealt mainly with international trade but included four years as commercial counsellor at the British embassy in Washington and later as one of the lead civil servants in the privatization of British Telecom. He gained a CBE for his service in 1987. In retirement he was elected as a Liberal Democrat to Surrey County Council and Guildford Borough Council.

PETER SLEE catalogued the papers of T. F. Tout with a British Academy Thank Offering to Britain Research Grant at the department of history at the University of Manchester. He is now vice-chancellor of Leeds Beckett University.

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HENRY SUMMERSON was employed from 1993 to 2006 as a research editor for what became the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, dealing with British history before 1600; and he continued to work for it as an associate research editor between 2006 and 2018. He had also worked extensively on the history of north-west England and on crime and law enforcement in thirteenth-century England.

Introduction

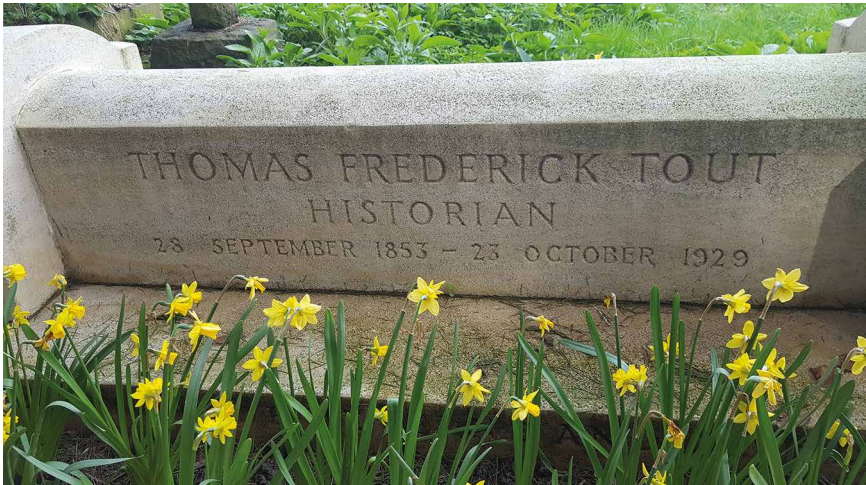
Caroline M. Barron

The grave site of Thomas Frederick Tout, who died in 1929, is not to be found in Manchester, as one might have expected, but in the graveyard of Hampstead parish church in London. I often passed the tomb when walking from my home to Hampstead underground station and was struck by its somewhat forlorn appearance, made gloomier by the overbearing cedar tree which shed its needles in great profusion onto the grave. Tout's work had been crucial to me in my own doctoral research but if his grave was neglected, what of his reputation as a historian? I shared these musings some years later with Joel Rosenthal, who had also been accustomed to reflect on Tout's tomb as he walked around Hampstead as a Fulbright scholar in London in the early 1960s. Recently we both agreed that the time was ripe to reconsider Tout's reputation and legacy. Clearly he had been a towering presence in the historical world of the early twentieth century; what was his significance a hundred years later? We decided to see if we could gather some historians together to reflect on Tout's career and to assess his continuing reputation. So, we approached Professor Lawrence Goldman, the then director of the Institute of Historical Research, and found that he was not only encouraging but enthusiastic.¹

Joel and I were not sure whether our interest in Tout was peculiar to us or was more widespread. We put out a call for papers and were delighted and, to be honest, perhaps a little surprised by the response. We found that we were not alone: fourteen papers were offered and we were able to put together a two-day conference on 9 and 10 June 2017, which we called 'Thomas Tout: refashioning history in the twentieth century'. Forty people came to the conference; and we found that Tout's reputation was very much alive and well and that his work was still of interest and worth challenging and interrogating. Moreover, Tout's grandson Tom Sharp, a son of Tout's daughter Margaret, was also very much alive and well and he spoke to us in

¹ Joel Rosenthal and I are both very grateful to Professor Goldman and all the staff of the Institute of Historical Research, University of London, for their support of the conference and their assistance with this publication.

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Tout's gravestone at St. John-at-Hampstead (author's photographs).

Hampstead parish church about his grandfather and the latter's reputation within the family before we went on to visit the grave, where Tom had had the tombstone beautifully cleaned and restored.

Almost all the papers which were read at the conference are printed in this volume.² Some of these papers provide further details and assessment of aspects of Tout's career which are relatively well known, such as his time as a professor first at St. David's College, Lampeter, and then at the University of Manchester. Less well known, perhaps, are Tout's activities as a correspondent with the young men whom he had taught who were called to fight in France; and his unexpected interest in the lives and writing of Geoffrey Chaucer and Thomas Hoccleve. A number of essays reassess two of Tout's most enduring contributions to historical scholarship: his delineation of a 'middle party' which emerged amidst the conflicts of Edward II's reign; and his towering work on the administration of royal government in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. That Tout's work is still the starting point for scholars working in these areas is testimony to its enduring value.

Further essays tackle other aspects of Tout's immensely energetic and purposeful career: his important role in the formation and development of the nascent Historical Association and his less significant tenure of the presidency of the Royal Historical Society. Tout also played an important role in the British Academy, but that essay remains to be written. Many of these essays touch on his prodigious number of contributions to the new *Dictionary of National Biography*; and that same dogged scholarship enabled him to undertake a lecture tour of the United States in the year before his death, when he gave thirty lectures culminating in an address to the Medieval Academy of America.³ It would be good to know more of the itinerary and lecture topics of this remarkable tour.⁴

The cumulative impact of these essays is to emphasize Tout's extraordinary energy and productivity: his scholarship was wide as well as deep (and we refer to, but hardly focus on, his unflagging production of text books for school rooms). He seems to have been able to undertake public service activities alongside his research in the archives and the writing of books,

² Mark Ormrod read a paper on 'Tout and the politics of royal seals' which is not included here.

³ Tout's address was delivered to the third annual meeting of the Medieval Academy of America in Boston on 29 April 1928. His address was later published: T. F. Tout, 'Literature and learning in the English civil service in the fourteenth century', *Speculum*, iv (1929), 365–89.

⁴ Some of Tout's correspondence relating to his tour of the US and his time at the Huntington Library is to be found at the Huntington Library, San Marino, California, HM 30546 and HM 44103.

lectures and articles. As Tom Sharp's essay suggests, the life of a professor a hundred years ago included household servants and, probably, research assistants: it is unlikely that Tout often had to do the washing-up or take his children to school or undertake a weekly shopping expedition, let alone do the laundry. But even allowing for these 'freedoms', Tout's output was, surely, exceptional, even for his time? A brief look at the entries in COPAC (the consolidated catalogue of over 100 major UK and Irish libraries) demonstrates this vividly. This list is compiled to show which libraries contain particular books. Different editions of the same book are recorded separately and so this swells Tout's count, but even so it is remarkable: COPAC records 401 separate volumes written by Tout to be found in the catalogues of libraries in the United Kingdom, whereas Joel Rosenthal clocks up fifty-eight entries and I can muster only thirty-four. Among Tout's publications there are a considerable number of school text books, such as *A History of England to the Death of Edward VII* (1910) or *A History of England for Use in Middle Forms in Schools* (1890) or *A First Book of British History* (1903).⁵ All of these were updated for several new editions. Tout's volume count is, admittedly, also swollen by the custom, in his day, of printing lectures as separate publications. But it is these lectures which demonstrate most clearly the range of his scholarly curiosity: *Medieval Town Planning* (1917); *The Place of Thomas of Canterbury in History: a Centenary Study* (1921); *London and Westminster in the Fourteenth Century: the Beginnings of a Modern Capital* (1924); *Medieval Forgers and Forgeries* (1918–29); *The Study of Medieval Chronicles* (1922); *France and England: Their Relations in the Middle Ages and Now* (1922); and his deep interest in Welsh history and literature has been mentioned in a number of the essays in this volume. It may be that a hundred years after his death (almost) Tout is most often remembered for his work on the reign of Edward II and for his great study of the administration of royal government before 1400, but his other perceptive sallies into less well-trodden fields should not be forgotten. He was an impressive and successful general historian as well as a pioneer in archival research.

Much recent medieval research has focused on religion, whether the institutional religion of the monasteries, the everyday practice of the faith in the parishes or the ecstatic individualism of the mystics. There is none of this to be found in Tout's work. It is true that most of the administrators of royal government about whom he wrote (like William Moulsoe) were churchmen, but it was not their spiritual activities (in many cases

⁵ Many of these text books were written in collaboration with his good friend from Oxford, Frederick York Powell.

not very pronounced) which interested Tout but rather their literate and organizational skills. This leads one to reflect on Tout's own religious beliefs and practices. He was baptized in the Anglican parish church of St. Michael in Stockwell and attended the Church of England grammar school of St. Olave in Southwark. He believed strongly that universities should reach out to those outside their walls and he was a tireless worker for the WEA and for the Ancoats settlement in Manchester.⁶ In 1908 he read a paper on 'The Church and the new universities' to the Church congress held at Manchester, which suggests a lively interest in the role of the Church in the life of students.⁷ It would appear that when living in Mauldeth Road in Manchester he attended the parish church of St. Chad and he later wrote a preface for a booklet published when the parish celebrated its quarter-century in 1925.⁸ Ralph Griffiths has noted Tout's 'liberal Anglican faith' and Henry Summerson has drawn attention to Tout's broad-church outlook and admiration for Protestant martyrs and Welsh preachers. It is not surprising, therefore, to find him attending the parish church in Hampstead, renting a pew, contributing a modest sum to the church funds and seeing that his sons were confirmed. His funeral, however, was full of pomp and ceremony with bell-ringing and a full choir. The reporter for the *Manchester Guardian* noted that a group of children gathered on the pavement to look through the railings at the flowers heaped on the grave. 'Perhaps', he mused, 'in later years they may realize its significance, and feel glad that they were there'.⁹

None of us who gathered at the conference in June 2017 had ever known Tout. In our sharing of our perceptions of him as a teacher, a 'project manager', a family man, a researcher and a writer, he began to move off the pages of his many books and became 'a living person'. Just as the leaves and pine needles have now been removed from his grave to reveal the stone and its inscriptions, so these focused historical enquiries have reaffirmed the relevance of his scholarship. It now seems clear that, in many different ways, Tout did indeed refashion the study of history in the twentieth century but, more than that, his methods, range and published work remain of significance also for the twenty-first century.

⁶ See M. Tout, 'T. F. Tout as a citizen', in *The Collected Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout* (3 vols., Manchester, 1932-4), i. 27-38.

⁷ *The Church and the New Universities: Paper read at the Church Congress, Manchester, October 1908* (Derby, 1908).

⁸ *St Chad's Church, Ladyburn, Manchester: a Brief Account of the Church and Parish 1900-1925* (Blackburn, 1925).

⁹ Report of the funeral reprinted from the *Manchester Guardian* in *The Hampstead Parish Church Magazine* (Dec. 1929), pp. 5-6; see p. 310 below.

I. Tout as a teacher and university statesman

I. The early years and Wales's history

Ralph A. Griffiths

The life and career of T. F. Tout are universally perceived to be synonymous with Manchester and its university and with the emergence and study of administrative history in Britain. Yet Tout did not move to Manchester until 1890, when he was thirty-five years old; and it would be more than another decade before he identified the structure, functioning and personnel of state administration in medieval England as the major field of his research and writing during the remaining twenty-five years of his life. His earlier years were bound to be of crucial importance in the making of an inspiring teacher, an innovative historian and an educational and academic strategist, based (as he was) first in the small, Anglican St. David's College at Lampeter in west Wales and then at Owens College, which was transformed in 1904 into the University of Manchester. Moreover, his early years were of pioneering significance in the modern study of Wales's history, a significance that is generally underrated. The following selected themes – the connection with Oxford, the nature of Tout's early writings and their audiences and his interest in Wales and its history – have been noticed in several accounts of his personal and professional development, yet they warrant some adjustment of detail and a measure of re-interpretation.

Oxford, and Balliol College in particular, should come first. From a family of modest means – his grandfather and father were licensed victuallers of wine, spirits and bottled beer in premises (the Dorset Arms) off the Clapham Road in south London – the young Tout needed a scholarship to enable him to begin his university studies in January 1875.¹

At Balliol he fell under the spell of the college chaplain and regius professor of modern history since 1866, William Stubbs, three of whose four famous

¹ The National Archives of the UK, Census Returns of England and Wales, 1851, HO1 07/1573 fo. 502. The business was evidently successful and when the later historian was baptized in 1855, his father, Thomas Edward Tout, was described as 'gentleman' (London Metropolitan Archives, Register of Baptism, P85/MIC, item 001). His mother, Anne Charlotte (*née* Finch), offered private tuition, especially in music, while Tout was a teenager (TNA, Census Returns, 1871, RG 10/680, fo. 26 p. 13). I am grateful to Dr. R. S. Thomas for locating these census and baptism records.

volumes on the constitutional history of medieval England were completed while Tout was an undergraduate.² His admiration for Stubbs was life-long and it is an exaggeration to say that as his own studies progressed he reacted against Stubbs's *Constitutional History*: rather, the pupil identified a number of potential avenues for development suggested or implied by the master's writings. The reservations he had arose from what Tout later described as the tyranny of Stubbs's four volumes in the Oxford history syllabus (and in the syllabuses of other universities) three decades after the great work was completed.³

Tout's first-class degree in modern history in 1877 was followed two years later by a degree in *literae humaniores* (in ancient history and literature and philosophy) taught by the moral and political philosopher T. H. Green, who thought highly of the young graduate but whose death in 1882 at the age of forty-six deprived Tout of an influential mentor.⁴

After graduation, and in his spare time from tutoring, he studied Anglo-Saxon and Icelandic, presumably with the radical Scandinavian scholar and historian F. York Powell, with whom Tout later formed a close association. All three academic strands and personalities – along with his own liberal Anglican faith and a love of travel – gave him an unusual breadth of historical knowledge, a historian's sense of place and a remarkable facility for languages. These qualities were to mark his approach to the study of history thereafter. Oxford's revised syllabus in modern history, with its emphasis on the sweep of English history, a shorter foreign period and a comparative reading of specified, published, original sources, was the foundation of the teaching career which Tout began in 1881, when he was twenty-six; but at both Lampeter and Manchester he added a slant of his own which encouraged his pupils to embrace a wider historical context and to investigate original and other sources for themselves and to write about them. The Balliol circle also planted the seeds in Tout of an earnest

² W. Stubbs, *Select Charters and Other Illustrations of English Constitutional History* (Oxford, 1870) was followed by *The Constitutional History of England in its Origin and Development* (3 vols., Oxford, 1874–8).

³ Tout called it 'the excessive cult of his great book' (cited in J. G. Edwards, *William Stubbs* (London, 1952), p. 10). Contrast this assessment to M. T. Clanchy, 'Inventing thirteenth-century England: Stubbs, Tout, Powicke – now what?', in *Thirteenth-Century England V*, ed. P. R. Coss and S. D. Lloyd (Woodbridge, 1995), pp. 1–20, at pp. 4–7.

⁴ A. Vincent, 'Green, Thomas Hill (1836–1882)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and B. Harrison (60 vols., Oxford, 2004), xxiii. 535–9. A. G. Little, one of Tout's colleagues at Manchester, later testified to the relationship between Tout and Green (A. G. Little, 'Professor Tout', *History*, xiv (1929–30), 313–24, at p. 313). For Green's influence on Oxford historians including Tout, see J. Kirby, *Historians and the Church of England: Religion and Historical Scholarship, 1870–1920* (Oxford, 2016), p. 38.

Figure 1.1. A Balliol group, c.1875–6. Tout is in the middle of the back row (Sharp family photograph).



concern for education and the social responsibilities of an active citizenship well beyond college and university and into schools and the community at large, something which was allowed free rein at Lampeter and especially at Manchester.⁵

The Oxford years were also crucial to his intellectual development by virtue of the enduring friendships which he made among contemporaries and teachers who were drawn from socially diverse and generally better-off backgrounds. His obituarists testify to his capacity for friendship and his extraordinary generosity of spirit, which was sustained throughout his life.⁶ While he was at Lampeter several Oxford contemporaries – literary and philosophical scholars as well as historians – were employed at the new

⁵ For the Oxford years, see the ‘Memoir’ by Tout’s former pupil, F. M. Powicke, in *Proceedings of the British Academy*, xv (1929), 491–518, reprinted in *The Collected Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout* (3 vols., Manchester, 1932–4), i, 1–24.

⁶ See V. H. Galbraith ‘Thomas Frederick Tout’, rev. by P. R. H. Slee, in *ODNB* <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/36539>> [accessed 10 Jan. 2019].

colleges established not far away at Aberystwyth (in 1872) and at Cardiff and Bangor (in 1883–4). For example, at Cardiff two Balliol contemporaries were successively professor of English language and literature and of history, W. P. Ker (1883–9) and C. E. Vaughan (from 1889), the latter a close friend of Tout and T. H. Green's cousin.⁷ Many of these friendships were long-lasting, among them with the Oxford-trained historian J. E. Lloyd, who was at Aberystwyth from 1885 and then at Bangor from 1892; and the philosopher Henry Jones, a Glasgow graduate whom he met when Jones was at Aberystwyth and then at Bangor about the same time.⁸

Meanwhile, Tout continued to maintain a *piéd-à-terre* in Oxford, not least for his reading and writing regimes during vacations from Lampeter: from 1883 until he moved to Manchester seven years later, Tout held a visiting fellowship at Pembroke College. When he arrived at Lampeter in 1881, the college was small and Anglican, its buildings and residential character akin to those of an Oxford college. It awarded its own degrees in divinity and the arts affiliated to both Oxford and Cambridge.⁹ Tout may have been already familiar with the place. He might have encountered its graduates at Oxford, where Lampeter's pass degree could gain them admission, and Stubbs's student reading parties sometimes went to St. David's when they were not in the Lake District. Moreover, Tout's father's extended family were scattered in villages in the vicinity of Bridgwater and the Quantocks, near the north Somerset coast opposite south Wales; indeed, during his first vacation at Lampeter Tout stayed in the locality with another Balliol friend, Walter Scott, the classics fellow at Merton College.¹⁰

In the 1880s Lampeter entered a lively intellectual phase to which Tout massively contributed. There, he was able to extend his Oxford-based connections to include a group of young scholars who likewise became lifelong

⁷ S. B. Chrimes, *University College, Cardiff: a Centenary History, 1883–1983* (Cardiff, [1983]), pp. 227–8, 249.

⁸ JRL, Papers of T. F. Tout, 1/1216 (Vaughan's letters to Tout date between at least 1889 and 1921). Tout's voluminous correspondence records early friendships that often lasted for decades. See also H. Pryce, *J. E. Lloyd and the Creation of Welsh History: Renewing a Nation's Past* (Cardiff, 2011), p. 96. Although close contact with Jones does not seem to have been maintained after he moved to St. Andrews and then Glasgow in the early 1890s, he provided a testimonial for Tout when the latter applied for the chair of history at Owens College; so did W. P. Ker (JRL, Tout Papers, 1/616, 720 and 721; 1/636/5).

⁹ See W. Gibson's chapter in this book, 'Thomas Frederick Tout at Lampeter: the making of a historian'; and D. T. W. Price, 'T. F. Tout: the Lampeter years', *Trivium*, xv (1980), 73–81; and for context, D. T. W. Price, *A History of Saint David's University College, Lampeter* (2 vols., Cardiff, 1977, 1990), i. 134–74.

¹⁰ TNA, Census Returns, 1881, RG1 1/2371 fo.8 4. Scott moved to the University of Sydney in 1885. For Stubbs's reading parties, see *The History of the University of Oxford*, vi, *Nineteenth-Century Oxford, Part 1*, ed. M. G. Brock and M. C. Curthoys (Oxford, 1997), p. 285.

friends. They included Hastings Rashdall, historian of universities, who taught classics at Lampeter and with whom Tout visited the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris on occasion; and John Owen, who taught Welsh and later became bishop of St. David's. The college was an early champion at rugby – not a negligible fact for the recruitment of students even for the priesthood – and it was rugby that drew the young sportsman and later social historian G. G. Coulton to Lampeter from the neighbouring grammar school at Llandovery, where he was a master from 1885. Thus began another lasting association for Tout. It was exhilarating company and on occasion the historians could be found together at the Bibliothèque Nationale and the British Museum in London. On a visit to the Museum in 1887 only one of the group had his library ticket with him and it required the honeyed words of Tout (the ticket-holder) for them to gain admission.¹¹

The developing railway system in a rapidly industrializing south Wales transformed the college's relationship with Wales – as was happening to Owens College in the Manchester region in the same way, though on a larger scale. Indeed, the Manchester to Milford Haven Railway Company had taken the line through Lampeter and Aberystwyth in 1866–7, so that Tout must surely have known a good deal about Manchester by the time he moved there in 1890. Although St. David's and Owens Colleges had much in common, not least in the broad social origins of their students, Manchester proved the more attractive because it was non-sectarian (as opposed to being narrowly Anglican), it admitted women (and Tout married his former pupil, Mary Johnstone from Stockport, in 1895) and the admittedly fraught discussions about an independent University of Manchester seemed likely to be more successful than those between Lampeter and the proposed University of Wales – in both of which Tout eagerly involved himself.¹² To begin with he continued in the shadow of his eminent predecessor, A. W. Ward, who had been professor of history since 1866 and continued to occupy a chair of history after he became principal of Owens College (1890–

¹¹ P. E. Matheson, *The Life of Hastings Rashdall D. D.* (Oxford and London, 1928), pp. 40–3, 55, 96, 130, 223; E. E. Owen, *The Early Life of Bishop Owen, a Son of Lleyn* (Llandysul, 1958), pp. 38, 50, 64; G. G. Coulton, *Fourscore Years: an Autobiography* (Cambridge, 1945), pp. 182–3. For the rugby prowess of Lampeter and Llandovery in the 1880s, see S. Walters, *The Fighting Parsons: the Role of St. David's College Lampeter in the Early Development of Rugby Football in Wales* (Lampeter, 2016), pp. 18–25, 50–1.

¹² As early as 1883 Tout was prepared publicly to champion the standard of instruction at Lampeter, which 'should be placed side by side with the new Cardiff and Bangor Colleges as a constituent member of the proposed Welsh University, that will owe its origin to an extension of our BA Charter' (T. F. Tout, 'Professor Tout on Lampeter College', *The Pembroke Herald and General Advertiser*, 14 Sept. 1883, p. 4).

7).¹³ With the experience of Lampeter and faced with new opportunities in Manchester, Tout grew in self-confidence as a teacher and academic. If in later years he described himself as ‘quaintly provincial’, he probably did so with a certain pride and not in a pejorative, metropolitan sense.

Tout’s writings in the 1880s often originated in lectures given at Lampeter, as well as in towns elsewhere in Wales and to local antiquarian and historical societies, including the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, the London-based fellowship of lawyers, politicians, intellectuals, civil servants and businessmen with Welsh connections. For instance, in the summer of 1889 he was invited to lecture on the Normans in Wales to the Cambrian Archaeological Association and also in the following winter at the town of Aberaeron on the Cardiganshire coast to raise funds for the public library.¹⁴ In Manchester, too, he took the opportunity to develop relationships with archaeological and historical societies in Lancashire, Cheshire and north Wales. He had barely settled in Manchester before he addressed the Liverpool Welsh National Society on ‘Wales under the Stuarts’, a talk which was published in the society’s *Transactions* for 1891–2.¹⁵

His approach to teaching and writing was conditioned by his Oxford experience and also by the circumstances in which he found himself. He was appointed at Lampeter as professor of English literature and modern languages and although he soon turned himself into the professor of history, both medieval and modern, he continued to teach classes in French and German, political economy, law and philosophy.¹⁶ He quickly absorbed new perspectives on the study of history in a different country. Moreover, in his time Lampeter had the largest library in Wales. At its core was the personal library of the college’s founder, Thomas Burgess, bishop of St. David’s (*d.* 1837); this was augmented by gifted official publications like the Rolls Series and incunabula and manuscripts from the surgeon and bibliophile Thomas Phillips, which Tout, as the college’s librarian, encouraged his pupils to use while he made headway with cataloguing. The Civil War and later tracts

¹³ P. R. H. Slee, *Learning and a Liberal Education: the Study of Modern History in the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge and Manchester, 1800–1914* (Manchester, 1986), ch. 8, “Freedom, a *sine qua non* for success”: Tout and Manchester, 1890–1914”, at pp. 154–5, which mainly concentrates on the years after Ward’s retirement. A. G. Little, who became his colleague in 1902, noted that not until 1903 did he have a ‘free hand to carry out his own ideas’ (Little, ‘Professor Tout’, pp. 316–8).

¹⁴ JRL, T. F. Tout Papers, 1/546 and 1019. He began to review for the society’s journal, *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, in 1888, presumably after meeting its editor, the engineer-turned-archaeologist J. Romilly Allen, with whom Tout corresponded over the next 20 years (T. F. Tout Papers 1/17/1–3).

¹⁵ T. F. Tout, ‘Wales under the Stuarts’, *Trans. Liverpool Welsh Nat. Soc.* (1891–2), 24–41.

¹⁶ See Price, ‘Tout: the Lampeter years’, p. 80, n. 4, for the changes in the title of his chair.

in the collections brought Tout's friend and contemporary Charles Firth to Lampeter on several occasions to examine the graduating classes and, it must be said, to divert duplicates among the celebrated tracts for his own use.¹⁷ Tout worked energetically during term-time in this library; the vacations were spent at Pembroke College or, when he was at home in London, at the British Museum. Indeed, while still an undergraduate he had applied for a reader's ticket to the Museum, showing – to judge by the seniority of others who applied for tickets at the same time – an unnatural enthusiasm for specialist reading.¹⁸

When not teaching a growing number of students according to a new history syllabus introduced at Lampeter in 1883 and another at Owens College ten years later, he was developing his own historical interests (which were largely medieval) and turning extra-mural lectures into publishable papers. His contributions to the genre of historical dictionaries – later more grandly called 'companions' or 'encyclopaedias' – were intended for a popular yet scholarly audience. Ever the reliable contributor, between 1884 and 1910 he collaborated with Oxford, Lampeter and Manchester friends and colleagues to meet the needs of audiences identified by publishers such as Cassell and Longman. These contributions began with *The Dictionary of English History*, edited in 1884 by Sidney Low, one of Tout's Balliol contemporaries and a talented journalist; and in 1887 *Celebrities of the Century, Being a Dictionary of Men and Women of the Nineteenth Century*, edited by Lloyd C. Sanders, another Oxford graduate in history of Tout's generation.¹⁹ Both were soon to be dwarfed by the long-running *Dictionary of National Biography*, whose assistant editor from 1883 was another of his Balliol friends, Sidney Lee. Tout contributed 240 essays to this remarkable enterprise, from the second volume in 1885 until the last in 1900. Half of these essays were written while Tout was still at Lampeter; and as many as thirty were considered to merit inclusion in the revised *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* published in 2004.²⁰

¹⁷ *A Catalogue of the Tract Collection of Saint David's University College, Lampeter*, ed. B. L. James (London, 1975). For the contents of the library, including a range of European literature since c.1470 and travel accounts from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, see *The Founders' Library University of Wales, Lampeter: Bibliographical and Contextual Studies: Essays in Memory of Robin Rider*, ed. W. Marx (Lampeter, 1997) (= *Trivium*, xxix and xxx).

¹⁸ London, Brit. Lib., Additional Manuscript 45748 (2 vols., Applications for admission to the Reading Room, 1872–9), ii, fos. 136–7 (1876).

¹⁹ *The Dictionary of English History*, ed. S. J. Low and F. S. Pulling (London, New York and Toronto, 1884); *Celebrities of the Century*, ed. L. C. Sanders (London, 1887); both books were published by Cassell. Tout and Sir Sidney Low proved lifelong correspondents (JRL, T. F. Tout Papers, 1/733).

²⁰ See H. Summerson's chapter 'T. F. Tout and *The Dictionary of National Biography*' in this volume.

What is striking about his essays in these works – on modern as well as medieval subjects, Welsh and Scottish as well as English – is the nature of his paragraphs on sources which often went beyond describing the scaffolding of an essay to criticize prevailing interpretations and to suggest avenues for further construction. For example, in *The Dictionary of English History*, which despite its title was also designed to embrace Scotland, Ireland, Wales and the colonies, Tout contributed a number of entries, including a lengthy and brave piece on Wales which sought to distinguish and demolish the myths and legends which often passed for history in the late nineteenth century.

His remarkable versatility is reflected in two of his more substantial contributions to *Celebrities of the Century*: the essays on William IV and George IV. He encouraged his colleague at Lampeter, Hastings Rashdall, to write on universities, a piece which ten years later grew into the latter's three-volume history of European universities. Tout helped to see this through the press and maintained a close connection with Rashdall over the following decades.²¹

Lord Acton identified Tout as the preferred author of a chapter in the first volume of the *Cambridge Modern History* published in 1902 on, surprisingly perhaps, the German kingdoms during the Renaissance, probably on the strength of Tout's command of languages and his textbook *The Empire and the Papacy 918–1273*, which had been published in 1898. Tout's chapter was accompanied by an extensive bibliography which was especially strong on original authorities in several languages.²² The demands of teaching and, it must be said, the need to eke out a meagre professorial salary chimed with a clamour from the new intermediate and secondary schools created in England and Wales by the Education Acts from 1870 to 1902 for textbooks on English history, which was rapidly gaining in popularity. F. York Powell, soon to be the regius professor at Oxford, was the first to turn to Tout, whom he persuaded in 1888 to continue Powell's own *History of England* from 1509, where he had left it, to the 1880s.²³ Powell's comments on Tout's

²¹ JRL, T. F. Tout Papers 1/998/1–18, letters from Hastings Rashdall, 1880s–1890s.

²² T. F. Tout, 'Germany and the Empire', in *The Renaissance*, ed. A. W. Ward, G. W. Prothero and S. Leathes (Cambridge Modern History, 14 vols., Cambridge, 1902–12), i. 288–328, with the bibliography – the second longest in the volume – at pp. 734–44; T. F. Tout, *The Empire and the Papacy, 918–1273* (New York, 1898). For Acton's choice of most contributors, see Ward et al., *Cambridge Modern History*, i. v.

²³ For the collaboration with Powell, see their correspondence between 1889 and 1902 in JRL, T. F. Tout Papers, 1/959 (with a later note (no. 43) on their association by Tout's daughter, Margaret Sharp). Tout's volumes were *A History of England. Part II: From the Accession of Henry VIII to the Revolution of 1689* (London, 1898) and *Part III: From William and Mary to the Present Time* (London, 1890). For the educational context, see D. Cannadine, J. Keating

drafts betray the older (but friendly) man's historical prejudices. He found the account of colonial New England and its admirers 'very unlovely ... I agree with him who wished that instead of the P[ilgrim] F[athers] landing on Plymouth Rock, Plymouth Rock had landed on them'. While some of York Powell's views on the virtues of Britain, its constitution and its people might have been acceptable to Tout, his outburst on the latter's words on Rousseau is likely to have taken the writer aback: 'For God's sake, let us not be mealy-mouthed over J. J. Rousseau, *le prophète du faux* ... the eighteenth-century Mahdi, the begetter of more follies than can be counted, the most absurd of teachers'. And on Tout's optimistic assessment of nineteenth-century progress in 'art, hygiene, and morality etc.', Powell suggested leaving out religion: 'It is as if one said progress in superstition or mania or measles ... It is far more important to be clean than what is called "godly"'.²⁴ An offshoot of his work for Powell was his *A Short Analysis of English History*, published in 1891 and completed on the cusp of his move from Lampeter to Manchester. It showed his facility for the broad generalization alongside the depth and detail required by the Powell project.²⁵

Tout's textbooks on medieval and modern British (rather than merely English) history were knowledgeable, precise and produced with remarkable speed and in multiple editions, considering his other activities at Manchester – too rapidly for some: his *Advanced History of Great Britain* from the earliest times to the death of Edward VII, published by Longman in 1906, was thought to need 'careful revision' because of its 'signs of haste'. He might not have disagreed, for in a new preface to Book II of his *A History of Great Britain* a few years later he apologized for adding to the number of textbooks on British history but wrote disarmingly that he had been 'encouraged by many ladies and gentlemen actively engaged in school work' to produce a more thorough, detailed and consecutive narrative. He might also have been reassured when it became the first history of Britain to be translated into Tamil and be adopted in schools throughout India.²⁶ Tout's

and N. Sheldon, *The Right Kind of History: Teaching of the Past in Twentieth-Century England* (Basingstoke, 2011), pp. 18–23.

²⁴ O. Elton, *Frederick York Powell: a Life and a Selection from his Letters and Occasional Writings* (2 vols., Oxford, 1906), i. 94 (York Powell to his friend, J. M. MacKay, 16 Feb. 1888), 249 (to Tout, 29 Sept. 1897) and 270–1 (to Tout, 24 and 26 Aug. 1899).

²⁵ Tout may also have been prompted by the phenomenal success during the 1880s of J. R. Green's *A Short History of the English People* (London, 1874 and later editions).

²⁶ T. F. Tout, *A First Book of British History* (London, 1903); *A History of Great Britain* (London, 1902); and *An Advanced History of Great Britain* (London, 1906, with the quotation from the edition revised in 1911 and published in 1913); for Mary Tout's description of these confusing titles, see *Collected Papers of T. F. Tout*, i. 207. The critical judgement is noted in Cannadine, Keating and Sheldon, *The Right Kind of History*, pp. 44–5.

vision of ‘a community of historians’, embracing schools and universities and the wider public, culminated in his prominent role in the formation of the Historical Association in 1906 and as its second president.²⁷

Tout’s research interests reveal a strong sense of his historic environment: at Lampeter this encompassed Wales’s history, to which was added the history of the north-west after he moved to Manchester. Moreover, his Oxford training, his close relations with colleagues in other disciplines in two small institutions and the catholic nature of his teaching made him alert to a diversity of approaches to the study of history: comparative development, languages and literature, etymology and topography, to which Manchester added palaeography and Celtic studies; he even dabbled in historical map-making that was pioneer work as far as the depiction of medieval Wales was concerned. His research writings during the first twenty years of his career had a strong focus on Wales. When he arrived at Manchester his public reputation as both a philologist and a historian had preceded him. In 1891 he was invited to address the Liverpool Welsh National Society, though he was (unnecessarily) embarrassed to be introduced as a Welsh philologist and preferred to offer some thoughts on what Lampeter had meant to him as a historian:

I lived nine years in Wales and I naturally took a great interest in my fellow men and in Welsh life; and I devoted a good many of my spare moments to the study of Welsh history. There are two ways of looking at the history of a country like Wales, that is to say, a country which has for many purposes a separate and very well-marked history of its own, and also a country which is a member of a larger whole. These two ways must never be lost sight of, for any view which limits itself to the one without taking account of the other is necessarily incomplete and misleading ... I think that a great deal of harm has been done by separating these two aspects of Welsh history.

This was a scholarly principle to which he adhered throughout his career. For good measure, and to leave his audience in no doubt as to the importance of history, he concluded by drawing on his experience of religious controversies in a Wales that would shortly focus on disestablishment of the Anglican Church: ‘I think the historian has a special mission to warn people to look at history as it was, and not to seek to pick out of history any facts which seem to make for a particular view, to be prominently paraded without regard to all the rest’.²⁸

²⁷ H. Butterfield, *The Historical Association, 1906–1956* (London, 1957), pp. 10–14. See also R. A. Humphreys, *The Royal Historical Society, 1868–1968* (London, 1969), pp. 188–9.

²⁸ Tout, ‘Wales under the Stuart kings’, *Trans. of the Liverpool Welsh Nat. Soc.* (1892), 24–41, pp. 24, 41.

At Lampeter his friendship with John Owen, who was professor of Welsh and classics, made him aware of the literary renaissance and political assertiveness in late nineteenth-century Wales and its religious disputes. He explored some of the historical foundations of these movements. Nor can there be any doubt that while at Lampeter he added a sound knowledge of Welsh language and literature to his portfolio of languages – even if he is not known to have spoken or written in Welsh. He was one of the first academic historians to draw attention to the value of contemporary Welsh poetry as a historical source; and when he contemplated moving from Lampeter to Manchester in 1890 no less a scholar than John (later Sir John) Rhys, professor of Celtic at Oxford, provided a supportive testimonial.²⁹ He was even able to hold his own in discussions with J. E. Lloyd on the meaning and significance of Welsh place names – supported, he admitted on one occasion, by advice from his cook at Manchester, who came from Wales. Indeed, in February 1911 he was invited to speak at the Welsh summer school at Llangollen on Welsh history, organized by the notable barrister and politician Thomas Marchant Williams on behalf of the Society for the Utilization of the Welsh Language.³⁰

One of his earliest publications was based on a series of public lectures at Carmarthen in 1884 on the early history of the Welsh Church, a subject that was beginning to enliven the religious and national debate. These lectures were reprinted in the *Carmarthen Journal* in 1884. Another of his fearless interventions, in 1888, was a lecture on ‘Owain Glyn Dŵr and his times’ in preparation for his essay in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. The published lecture, with a full bibliography and list of sources, showed an extraordinary objectivity so that it remained the most dependable account of Glyn Dŵr’s revolt for the next fifty years and may be regarded as a prospectus for future work. Tout’s forthright, scholarly approach retains a certain charm and is redolent of his later writings: he eschewed (he said) ‘all legends and so called traditions and confine ourselves almost as a lawyer might do, to strictly contemporary and first hand authorities. This may make our sketch a little fainter, but we can be sure that however much later workers may fill in our outlines they will not have anything to rub out’. And so it proved. His stirring conclusion is echoed in popular books even today:

²⁹ Tout and Owen corresponded frequently and at length in the decades after Tout moved to Manchester (JRL, T. F. Tout Papers, 1/1055). For the Rhys recommendation, see T. F. Tout Papers 1/1020.

³⁰ Bangor University, J. E. Lloyd Papers, file 315/504, letter from Tout to Lloyd, 9 Sept. (c. 1920); JRL, T. F. Tout Papers 1/1299a, invitation to Tout from Sir T. Marchant Williams, 27 Feb. 1911 (sent on behalf of Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg [Society for the Welsh Language]).

Welsh history is not, as some would have us think, a mere record of failure ... We shall realise this when we connect the career of Owain of Glyndyvrwy with the new birth of Welsh national life ... He had won for his country the respect of his enemies. He had won for himself a name which will always make the heart of a true Welsh man beat more quickly.³¹

The Anglo-Norman conquest of Wales, culminating in Edward I's settlement, was bound to attract his attention. His first scholarly paper, published by the Cymmrodorion Society of London, was on the formation of the medieval Welsh shires, their relationship to pre-Norman society and the later March of Wales and the transformation of both by Henry VIII's Acts of Union. He showed this to be a complex process in which Edward I played an important but by no means an overriding part. In this seminal essay, which still retains its significance, Tout showed an awareness of how Welsh local and regional history interacted with institutions of English origin; several notable historians later took their cue from his conclusions.³² One should also add that in this essay he took account of the relationship between Cheshire, Flintshire and the borderland, a subject to which he and his Manchester colleague James Tait and his daughter Margaret Sharp would return years later.

There are indications that by the early 1890s Tout was groping towards a major study of Edward I's reign. A popular and concise biography of the king appeared in 1893 in Macmillan's 'Twelve English Statesmen' series: its separate chapters on Wales, Scotland, the crusader king and continental relationships reflect the broad contextual approach which he rated important in the study of British history.³³ A particular study of Edward's relations with his nobles followed, fortified by continuing contributions on Welsh princes and Marcher lords for the *Dictionary of National Biography*. His paper 'The earldoms under Edward I', presented to the Royal Historical Society in 1894, has proved a seminal starting point for the most recent detailed examination of the subject, despite the reservations about the

³¹ T. F. Tout, *Owain Glyndwr and his Times* (Chester, 1889), pp. 3, 4 and (for the quotations) p. 22. This lecture was first delivered to the Cardiff Cambrian Society and then at Lampeter in 1888–9 and was periodically revised and amplified to suit other audiences elsewhere in Wales and north-west England as well as being published as a booklet in 1889. For the last of his assessments, see 'Owain Glyndwr and his times', *Jour. Archaeol. Soc. Chester and N. Wales*, vi (1897), 79–111.

³² T. F. Tout, 'The Welsh shires: a study in constitutional history', *Y Cymmrodor*, ix (1888), 201–26, repr. in Tout, *Collected Papers*, ii, 1–20; with comment by H. Pryce, 'Medieval Welsh history in the Victorian age', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Stud.*, lxxi (2006), 1–28.

³³ T. F. Tout, *Edward the First* (London, 1893).

king's masterfulness first sounded by K. B. McFarlane in 1965.³⁴

Furthermore, in 1894 he revealed: 'I have been trying to construct a territorial map of England under Edward I with the special view of finding out in what districts lay the power of the chief baronial houses'. He took his cue from those who were urging historians to regard geography seriously, in the French tradition.³⁵ It took him a while and when completed, by 1901, it had become an impressive historical map of England and Wales in the year 1290 which sought to depict social and economic matters as well as political and administrative features. It was a visual representation of the view he expressed a year later on Edward's role in the barons' wars and the politics of the March before he became king: 'It is not too much to say that the whole constitutional and political development of the English nation was profoundly and permanently affected by the part which Wales and the March played in the momentous years when [King Edward] was learning his lessons of statecraft'.³⁶

Soon afterwards, however, Tout's mind shifted to the greater preoccupation of his academic life, the result, it seems, of reading and reviewing, first, J. E. Morris's *The Welsh Wars of Edward I*, published in 1901, and then, a few years later and more significantly, the writings of French administrative historians, most notably Eugène Déprez. Morris's book, and its use of unpublished records, made an unmistakable impression on Tout: 'This is the most important and by far the most original contribution to our knowledge of the most critical period of medieval English military history that has been made for many a long day'. It also reinforced his conviction that the medieval history of both England and Wales should be approached by 'the comparative method ... Thus in military as in so many other matters England and Wales had become very like each other at the

³⁴ T. F. Tout, 'The earldoms under Edward I', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, n.s., viii (1894), 129–55; K. B. McFarlane, 'Had Edward I a "policy" towards the earls?', *History*, lix (1965), 145–59, repr. in McFarlane, *The Nobility of Later Medieval England* (Oxford, 1973), pp. 248–67; A. M. Spencer, *Nobility and Kingship in Medieval England: the Earls and Edward I, 1272–1307* (Cambridge, 2014), e.g. pp. 2, 12–13, for acknowledgement of Tout's work.

³⁵ Tout, 'Earldoms', p. 129. H. J. Mackinder, the pioneer geographer, had begun to offer extension courses at Oxford from 1886 (B. W. Blouet, 'Mackinder, Sir Halford John (1861–1947)', in *ODNB* <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/34760>>).

³⁶ T. F. Tout, 'Wales and the March during the barons' wars', in *Historical Essays by Members of the Owens College, Manchester: Published in Commemoration of its Jubilee (1851–1901)*, ed. T. F. Tout and J. Tait (London, 1902), pp. 76–136, at p. 136, repr. in *Collected Papers of T. F. Tout*, ii. 47–100, at p. 100. The map, 31 x 23 cm, was printed by the Clarendon Press, Oxford (T. F. Tout, 'England and Wales in the Reign of Edward I', National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Map 4246, for a rare copy with accompanying booklet (said to be c.1914 but more likely 1902)).

end of the thirteenth century'. His mind was already receptive to Déprez's great work when it was published in 1908.³⁷

By the time that his edition of unpublished records of state trials during Edward I's reign appeared in 1906, he had engaged a collaborator in his sister-in-law, Hilda Johnstone. He had been alerted to the existence of two plea rolls of the trials by his friend at the Public Record Office, Hubert Hall, and 'several years ago' he had transcribed one of them himself, before engaging Hilda Johnstone to complete the project.³⁸ Yet Tout's own interest in Edward I and Wales's subsequent history did not dim. It was partly sustained by his relationship with J. E. Lloyd, who had moved from the university college at Aberystwyth, where the two first met, to Bangor a little over a year after Tout had moved to Manchester. Tout much admired Lloyd's two-volume *History of Wales from the Earliest Times to the Edwardian Conquest*, published in 1911; he had been instrumental in securing Lloyd's publication contract with Longman. But he did not hesitate to tell Lloyd that he wished he had taken matters further to examine the Edwardian conquest and its consequences in the fourteenth century; indeed, he offered suggestions about the unpublished chamberlains' accounts for Wales and Cheshire in the Public Record Office and the potential of the *corpus* of available Welsh literature.³⁹ It was in this co-operative spirit that he wrote to Lloyd in February 1914 that 'there are so many things to be done in Welsh history that it is a pity that two people [Lloyd and Tout's pupil, J. G. Edwards] should have been worrying at the same point at the same time within a hundred miles of each other'.⁴⁰ Tout himself now took the part of an impresario for some of his pupils as far as Wales's history was concerned, notably for Hilda Johnstone, his sister-in-law, for Arthur Jones, J. G. Edwards and, somewhat later on Cheshire and Flintshire, his daughter, Margaret Sharp.⁴¹

³⁷ J. E. Morris, *The Welsh Wars of Edward I* (Oxford, 1901; repr. Stroud, 1996), with Tout's review, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xvii (1902), 558–60; E. Déprez, *Etudes de diplomatique anglaise: le sceau privé, le sceau secret, le signet* (Paris, 1908), reviewed by Tout, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xxxiii (1908), 557–60.

³⁸ *State Trials of the Reign of Edward the First, 1289–1293*, ed. T. F. Tout and H. Johnstone (London, 1906), pp. v–vi.

³⁹ Pryce, *J. E. Lloyd*, p. 213, n. 22; Bangor University, Archives and Special Collections, Papers of Sir John Edward Lloyd, file 315/503, letter from Tout to Lloyd, 9 Nov. 1918. I am grateful to Dr. M. Pearson and Professor H. Pryce for drawing my attention to several letters in this file.

⁴⁰ Bangor University, J. E. Lloyd Papers, file 315/501, letter from Tout to Lloyd, 17 Feb. 1914. Edwards had recently discovered that he and Lloyd had both been investigating the etymology of the medieval borough of Flint.

⁴¹ A. Jones was a lecturer at Birkbeck College, London, by 1914 (*Survey of the Honour of Denbigh, 1334*, ed. P. Vinogradoff and F. Morgan (London, 1914), pp. vi–vii).

There is no sign in his published writings in the 1880s and 1890s that Tout personally consulted unpublished archives in the Public Record Office, but he kept an eagle eye on the energetic publication programme inaugurated by Henry Maxwell-Lyte, deputy-keeper of the public records. His appreciation of the importance of record sources, alongside chronicles and other literary works, in the quest for historical accuracy in these early years did not extend to privileging unpublished materials over the published. In relation to Edward I he opined: 'We may go so far in gratifying what a brilliant French scholar describes as the "gout excessif de l'inédit" that we are prone to forget how large a portion of historical truth is already in some form accessible to the earnest worker'.⁴² Moreover, for all his admiration of *The Welsh Wars of Edward I*, he could not resist chiding Morris that he had 'stuck so closely to his [unpublished] rolls that he does not seem to know that some of the records used by him have already been printed'.⁴³

Once he had moved to Manchester in 1890, his association with the Public Record Office developed. In company with Charles Firth and S. R. Gardiner he was in the van of those scholars who supported Maxwell-Lyte in resuming work on the *Calendar of State Papers Foreign* in 1894. A year earlier he and Firth had urged the appointment of an expert at the Record Office to end the mangling of Welsh personal and place-name 'misspellings and identifications at variance with philology and probability destined to stamp English official scholarship for aye' in its publications.⁴⁴ The formidable Maxwell-Lyte rejected Tout's and Firth's warnings, though behind the scenes Tout had allies in two of the clerks at the Record Office with knowledge of Wales: R. A. Roberts, who came from Carmarthen and may have encountered Tout at Lampeter, and especially Hubert Hall. They also collaborated in the campaign, which had political support at Westminster, for the repatriation of tons of Welsh records (and those of the palatinates of Chester, Lancaster and Durham, too) transferred from Wales and the regions to Chancery Lane in the mid nineteenth century. Tout was called as a prominent witness on this proposal before the royal commission on the public records established in 1911.⁴⁵ Had it been implemented, it

⁴² Tout, 'Earldoms', p. 130. He was most likely referring to the young C.-V. Langlois, medieval historian and palaeographer, whose *Les archives de l'histoire de France* had recently been published (Paris, 1891).

⁴³ Tout, 'The Welsh wars of Edward I', *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xvii (1902), 557–60, at p. 559.

⁴⁴ J. D. Cantwell, *The Public Record Office, 1838–1958* (London, 1991), p. 335.

⁴⁵ Cantwell, *Public Record Office*, p. 369. On this occasion H. Maxwell-Lyte opposed the decentralizing proposal. For the close association between Roberts, Hall, Tout and the Public Record Office, see R. A. Griffiths, 'Venturing into the "jungle": late medieval Wales in the Edwardian age', in *Writing a Small Nation's Past: Wales in Comparative Perspective, 1850–1950*, ed. N. Evans and H. Pryce (Farnham, 2013), pp. 195–207, at pp. 199–203.

Thomas Frederick Tout (1855–1929): refashioning history for the twentieth century

might have been a transformative step and not simply in the development of historical research in Britain – one among a number of imaginative proposals and projects with which Tout was associated during his career.

2. Thomas Frederick Tout at Lampeter: the making of a historian*

William Gibson

Thomas Frederick Tout's entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* is instructive about his years at Lampeter. Peter Slee wrote:

He worked in Oxford as a private tutor for two years before being appointed professor of modern history at St David's College, Lampeter, where he remained until his election, nine years later, to the chair of medieval and modern history at Owens College, Manchester. The years at Lampeter were the making of Tout, and most of the ideas with which he was later associated at Manchester received trial there.¹

His nine years at Lampeter are only briefly mentioned but are credited with 'the making of Tout'. Slee is right that Tout's time at Lampeter was his apprenticeship which bore fruit later on; and many of his later ideas and interests were clearly developed while he was at St. David's College. The purpose of this chapter, drawing on William Price's work on the history of St. David's College, is to explore some of the ways in which Tout's later work was inspired by his time at Lampeter.

Tout almost did not manage to make it to Lampeter. In 1880 he had been unsuccessful in an application for a teaching post there when William Augustus Brevoort Coolidge had been appointed.² But Tout had clearly

* This chapter owes a particular debt to the Revd. Canon D. T. W. Price, whose 'T. F. Tout, the Lampeter years' was published in *Trivium*, xv (1980), 73–81 (this volume was a *Festschrift* for Professor D. Chandaman). His two-volume history of St. David's University College, Lampeter is also a definitive source on the history of the college (D. T. W. Price, *A History of Saint David's University College, Lampeter. Volume One: to 1898* (Cardiff, 1977); and *A History of Saint David's University College, Lampeter. Volume Two, 1898–1971* (Cardiff, 1990). I am also extremely grateful to Sarah Roberts of the Roderic Bowen Research Centre at University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Lampeter, for supplying me with additional material from the Lampeter archives.

¹ V. H. Galbraith, 'T. F. Tout', rev. by P. R. H. Slee, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 845–8.

² Coolidge was an American, a former fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford and after he left Lampeter he became an Alpine mountaineer (R. W. Clark, *An Eccentric in the Alps: the*

W. Gibson, 'Thomas Frederick Tout at Lampeter: the making of a historian', in *Thomas Frederick Tout (1855–1929): refashioning history for the twentieth century*, ed. C. M. Barron and J. T. Rosenthal (London, 2019), pp. 25–39. License: CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0.

impressed the interviewing panel, so that when the same post was vacant two terms later he was appointed without the need for a further application.³ It has been assumed that Tout was the only choice for the 1881 vacancy, but Coolidge wrote that he was the second choice, the preferred candidate having accepted a post elsewhere from which he could not withdraw.⁴ Tout's post is often assumed to have been professor of English and history, but in the first entry in the college's calendar he was listed as 'Professor of English and Modern Languages and Lecturer in Logic and Political Economy'. It was in 1885 that he was appointed to a separate chair in history but remained a lecturer in political economy.

In 1881, therefore, Tout arrived to take up his post as professor at St. David's College, Lampeter. Lampeter was a small college in Cardiganshire, established by Bishop Thomas Burgess of St. David's and founded by royal charter in 1822 and with a grant of £1000 from George IV. The college was built by C. R. Cockerell in the style of an Oxford college with a chapel, hall and library in a quadrangle.⁵ The college had earned supplemental charters which gave it the right to award the degrees of BA and BD and was the first degree-awarding institution in Wales.⁶ Before that time most Welshman wanting to take a degree usually went to Jesus College, Oxford, which had strong links with Wales and numerous scholarships for Welshmen. Though St. David's College had never been a theological college and, in fact, offered a general education to anyone without a religious test for entry, it had been founded to educate the clergy and was often thought of as an Anglican institution. During the middle of the nineteenth century the college had been adversely affected by two significant factors. The first was the strident Toryism of the founding principal, Llewelyn Llewelin, who exercised almost complete authority over the college. From 1839 he combined the principalship with the deanery of St. David's, which meant he was much overloaded with work. The second factor was the trial in 1864 of the vice-principal, Rowland Williams, for heresy. Rowland Williams was the last man to be tried for heresy in England for his contribution to *Essays and Reviews*, which was published in 1860. Williams was convicted of the offence in the court of arches, but cleared on appeal to the privy council; however the college was associated with his unorthodox churchmanship for some

Story of W. A. B. Coolidge, the Great Victorian Mountaineer (London, 1959)).

³ RBRC, St. David's College, Minute Book of the College Board, 1875–1886, fo. 143. The decision was unanimous and taken on the authority of the Visitor of the college.

⁴ Magdalen College, Oxford, Wilson Papers, correspondence with W. A. B. Coolidge, MC:F 23/C3/9–12.

⁵ D. Watkin, *The Life and Work of C. R. Cockerell* (London, 1974), pp. 148–50.

⁶ Price, *History of Saint David's University College*, i. *passim*.



Figure 2.1. Photograph of the staff and students of St. David's College, Lampeter, 1890. Reproduced by kind permission of the Roderic Bowen Library and Archives, University of Wales Trinity Saint David. Tout is seated in the second row.

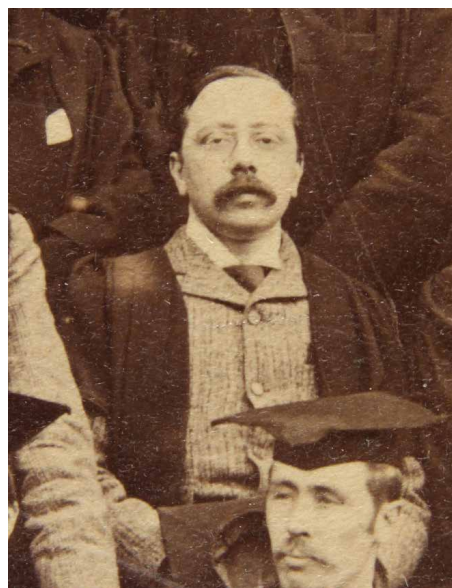


Figure 2.2. Close-ups of Thomas Frederick Tout from the college photograph of 1890; at this date Tout was thirty-four years of age. Reproduced by kind permission of the Roderic Bowen Library and Archives, University of Wales Trinity Saint David.

time.⁷ In the aftermath, some bishops refused to ordain students educated at the college for fear that they had been educated by heterodox teachers. By the 1870s the college had about sixty students reading for the BA or BD.

Tout's arrival coincided with a new phase in the college's development under an energetic and dynamic second principal, Francis Jayne. Jayne had fought off an attempt in the Aberdare Report of 1881 to combine Lampeter with the recently formed college at Aberystwyth and set about reinvigorating St. David's College. In the decade in which Tout was at the college student numbers doubled to 120 and staff numbers grew from six to eight. Among the other staff at Lampeter during Tout's time was an impressive array of distinguished scholars. These included: John Owen, a leading Welsh scholar and later bishop of St. David's; Hastings Rashdall, the great medieval historian who progressed to New College, Oxford; Hugh Walker, the literary specialist whom Betjeman later called 'the great Hugh Walker'; as well as Principal Jayne, who was a theologian of some standing and later bishop of Chester.⁸

On his appointment Tout was offered accommodation in college, which would have been created by merging two sets of student rooms. But Tout chose to forego the rooms in the college in preference for lodgings in the town, for which the college paid £20 a year and from 1885 this was increased to £25 a year.⁹ The decision to live in the town rather than the college could have set him apart from his fellow staff and from students, most of whom lived in the college, but as will be seen he was popular and respected in the college.

At Lampeter, Tout laid the foundations for his later teaching methods at Manchester. In the small, residential college of 120 students he was able to develop a teaching style in an atmosphere of close professional contact. The college's timetable suggests that his formal teaching in English, history and political economy sometimes reached twenty-eight hours a week and in addition he gave informal classes on subjects like essay composition.¹⁰

His students covered the broadest range of abilities. Some were men who were described as 'peculiarly rough material'¹¹ and whose knowledge of English was as a second language. Many of them were aiming to enter the ministry of the Anglican Church in Wales; others were outstanding scholars like Robert Williams, who took a second-class degree at Lampeter and a

⁷ O. W. Jones, *Rowland Williams* (Llandysul, 1991).

⁸ Price, 'Tout, the Lampeter years', p. 74; W. Gibson, *In a Class by Itself* (Exeter, 2007), p. 1.

⁹ St. David's College, College Board Papers, RBRC, SDC, UA/C/1/5, 159.

¹⁰ RBRC, SDC, UA/CP/18, *St. David's College Calendar* (1885), pp. 54–5.

¹¹ Price, 'Tout, the Lampeter years', p. 74.

first at Merton College, Oxford and eventually succeeded Tout in a chair in Lampeter.¹² An analysis of students entering St. David's College in 1877 and 1887 indicates that the majority were the sons of farmers with only a few coming from the 'middle classes'. Their average age was 20.4 in 1877 and this rose to 21.5 in 1887. Most came from Wales, although the increase in student numbers in the 1880s meant that there was a growth in the numbers of English students by 1887.¹³

Since some aspects of history were compulsory for students studying theology, Tout sometimes lectured to classes of eighty. It became his practice to lecture without notes – a demanding practice but one which enabled him to focus on the students' understanding of his teaching. Fairly swiftly, Tout established the history school at Lampeter as sufficiently strong, and with growing student numbers, for a second history lecturer to be appointed in 1884. Before that date Tout taught the entire history syllabus, ranging across huge swathes of British, European, imperial and even legal and constitutional history. Tout seems to have been a demanding teacher. Frederick Maurice Powicke referred to him as 'a kindly companion and a merciless critic', but one who made students feel at home in the period under study and also consciously inducted them into their study. At Lampeter Tout learned the ability to master enormous stretches of history and to be 'a vivid, confident teacher and talker'.¹⁴

In 1883 Tout revised the curriculum to produce a scheme that is perhaps his greatest achievement in undergraduate history teaching: the complementary combination of extensive outline courses and intensive, themed, special-subject courses which used original sources. The arrangement of these two approaches was, to some degree, modelled on the Oxford history scheme, but it was brought into sharp relief at Lampeter through the limited curriculum and small number of single-honours students. Before the era of the undergraduate final-year dissertation, Tout's special subject course was a way of generating specialization together with deep knowledge gained from an insight into the primary sources of the field.

The development of the special subject was Tout's principal achievement at Lampeter. It became associated with the idea of a culmination of academic enquiry in a specialist field in which a student could achieve a degree of exceptional knowledge and skill. It was also assessed, in part, through the use of gobbets – short extracts of primary source material on which the student was expected to write a penetrating exegesis. Such forms of assessment

¹² Price, *History of Saint David's University College*, i. 168.

¹³ Price, *History of Saint David's University College*, i. 209–10.

¹⁴ F. M. Powicke, 'Memoir', in *The Collected Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout* (3 vols., Manchester, 1932–5), i. 1–24, at p. 6.

tested both the broad, contextual knowledge of the student as well as their understanding of the historian's skill in detecting bias, weighing evidence and justifying an interpretation. For many history students it was the first occasion on which they had used original documents from which their historical interpretations were derived. From Lampeter the special subject came to dominate the final year of undergraduate honours teaching of history throughout Britain until the final quarter of the twentieth century.

A parallel development pioneered by Tout was a more rigorous and demanding assessment system, through a move to questions of interpretation over those that required the recitation of knowledge. The development of this trend can be traced through the examination papers that Tout set for honours finalists at Lampeter. It is clear that Tout set both history and English literature papers and while it was common for the English examination papers to ask students to respond to a poem or other extract, the history papers almost exclusively tested large quantities of knowledge and understanding. For example, one of the earliest history-paper questions Tout set was: 'Trace the steps by which the chief kingdoms of the English were united under one head'. Another question asked students to 'Compare the relations between England and Scotland in the reign of Edward I with those in the reign of Edward III'.¹⁵ Such testing of memory and knowledge was entirely usual for undergraduate history honours assessment in the period. However, starting in 1884 Tout began to set questions that used quotations from historians to stimulate a response. For example, in June 1884 he set questions on the growth of the Holy Roman Empire, Edward I and James I based on quotations from historians. The purpose of these questions was to ask the student to consider and evaluate historical opinions.¹⁶ Subsequent examination papers introduced extracts from original documents as their sources. It seems likely that Tout introduced these more evaluative and interpretive questions in history, which involved the use of sources, as a product of his teaching and assessment of English literature. Tout was also a stalwart and energetic external examiner. While at Lampeter he acted as examiner for the University of London external degree in history, for the modern history faculty at Oxford and for the Oxford and Cambridge local examination schemes for schools.¹⁷

Tout's interest in extra-mural teaching also began at Lampeter. There was no Historical Association or Workers Educational Association in Wales at this time, but Tout accepted invitations to lecture all across Wales. William

¹⁵ RBRC, SDC, History Examination Papers, June 1882, exam paper numbers 23–4.

¹⁶ RBRC, SDC, History Examination Papers, June 1884, exam paper numbers 126–31.

¹⁷ C. H. Firth, a Balliol contemporary of Tout, was external examiner at Lampeter.

Price claimed that Tout probably lectured in every town in Cardiganshire, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire. He gave a series of lectures in Carmarthen on early Welsh church history for which prizes were offered to local schoolboys who submitted the best summary of his lectures; and he made the offer of an examination for anyone who attended all of the lectures.¹⁸

Tout's interest in secondary education was also apparent in Lampeter, where he was a strong supporter of the creation of St. David's College School, which was a secondary school which prepared students for entry to the college. Not only did Tout write the school's first prospectus but he also taught at the school, specializing in the matriculation class and the preparation of candidates for the civil service examination.¹⁹

Tout was a strong believer in the importance of the publication of historical research and he began his activities in this field at Lampeter. His first publications were book reviews for the *St. David's College Magazine*, from which he progressed to reviewing for the *English Historical Review*. In his very first publication Tout showed signs of the strength of opinion that marked his later work. The editors of the *St. David's College Magazine* had suggested that reviewers stick to local topics which were related to the college or to Wales. However, in 1881 Tout chose to review Sydney Parry-Jones's book *My Journey Around the World*, published earlier that year. Parry-Jones's book was a stirring tale of adventure in Australia and south-east Asia. Tout liked it and recommended it to his readers. What he did not recommend was the prevailing state of book reviewing. He wrote:

[E]veryone knows that reviews are often of no great value. They may be executed in a hurry by men who know very little of the subject or who have not read the book they profess to criticize. It is the commonest thing in the world to find reviewers' copies of new books on second-hand bookstalls and *uncut*. In other cases we hear of publishers starting magazines to puff their own publications. Sometimes a dear friend, sometimes a secret foe of the author, undertakes to deal with his book. In none of these cases is the result altogether satisfactory, and when we come to reviews in some local and provincial journals, it is often difficult to see why they are written except as an advertisement.²⁰

His first major article, on Welsh counties, was published in *Y Cymmrodor*, the journal of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion; Powicke

¹⁸ Price, 'Tout, the Lampeter years', p. 75.

¹⁹ Price, 'Tout, the Lampeter years', p. 78.

²⁰ RBRC, SDC, UA/SP/1/1, *The St. David's College Magazine*, ii (1881), 289–95. I am grateful to S. Roberts and C. R. J. Smith for supplying me with a transcription of the review. Parry-Jones lived near Lampeter, so Tout was not entirely ignoring the editor's injunctions and he had donated a copy of his book to the library of St. David's College.

described the article as ‘getting straight to the heart of a subject and treating it with force and lucidity’.²¹ Some of the earliest of Tout’s articles were almost certainly developed from papers he read to the student debating societies in Lampeter. Tout attended both the English and Welsh student debating societies at the college and in 1889 presented an 8,000-word paper on ‘Owain Glyndwr and his times’ which he later published in the college magazine.²² It was an article that captured some of Tout’s views about both history and Wales. He wrote of the fifteenth century: ‘There is no part of English history which is harder to realise than the fifteenth century. There are few periods of fifteenth century history for which the authorities are less satisfactory than of the great Welsh revolt’.²³ His interest in Wales was marked. He wrote: ‘No part of the country played a greater part in the history of the 13th and 14th century than the Welsh Marches. Here the struggle of Simon de Montfort for constitutional liberty began and ended. The tragic history of Edward II closed in the Lordship of Glamorgan. Richard II’s career was ended in the Marches of North-eastern Wales’.²⁴ While Tout was dismissive of ‘bardic exaggeration’ as a historical source, he also wrote with feeling of Wales: ‘Owain had indeed failed in his attempt to make Wales a separate state. It was well that he did fail. But he succeeded in the nobler task of restoring self-respect and pride in race and country to the people that he loved so well, and who sacrificed so much for his sake. Welsh history is not, as some would have us think, a mere record of failure’.²⁵

In 1884 Tout contributed an essay on Wales to the *Dictionary of English History* – a paradoxical idea, perhaps. He also wrote the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century volume for York Powell’s school history textbook series, probably drawing on his experience teaching at St. David’s College School and in examining for the Oxford and Cambridge local examinations.²⁶ One of his own students reviewed Tout’s history textbook in the *St. David’s College Magazine* thus: ‘Mr Tout has done his work well. His facts are well-selected and skilfully marshalled; his style is clear and condensed ... [W]e can confidently recommend it for schools and colleges as an admirable text

²¹ Powicke, ‘Memoir’, p. 5.

²² RBRC, SDC, UA/SP/1/2, 158. It was a paper he had already read at the Cardiff Cambrian Society on 7 Dec. 1888. This certainly implied that Tout had mastered the Welsh language (‘Owen Glyndwr and his times’, *St. David’s College Magazine*, n.s., iii (1889)).

²³ RBRC, SDC, SP/1/2, ‘Owen Glyndwr and his times’, pp. 158–9. I am grateful to M. Haylock for her transcription of this article.

²⁴ ‘Owen Glyndwr and his times’, p. 161.

²⁵ ‘Owen Glyndwr and his times’, p. 177. He also wrote of Owain Glyndwr: ‘He was the soul of the one great effort made by the Cymry to win back their ancient freedom’ (p. 158).

²⁶ Galbraith, ‘Tout’.

book of English History'.²⁷ It was not a view that was shared by all readers of the work: Powicke certainly took a dim view of Tout's textbook. He also described some of Tout's articles for the *Dictionary of English History* and *Celebrities of the Century* as 'of the popular or "pot-boiling" kind'.²⁸

Tout's most significant venture in publishing at Lampeter was his contribution to the *Dictionary of National Biography (DNB)*, which appeared in quarterly intervals between 1885 and 1900. During his time at Lampeter Tout wrote 116 articles for the *DNB*, to which by 1900 he had contributed a total of 240 entries. This was the equivalent of a single volume of the whole work. Tout was not uncritical of the *DNB* and recorded his sense that some of the articles published in it lacked serious historical understanding. He was piqued that his request to write the article on Saint David had come too late and the editors had allocated the subject to Henry Bradley. He was also annoyed that the editors decided to leave out his entry for Dervorguilla, the co-foundress of Balliol, his *alma mater*. His deep interest in English medieval history was also becoming apparent in his work for the *DNB*. However, Welsh history remained an abiding interest and Henry Jones of Aberystwyth claimed to have seen a manuscript for a book on the history of Wales in Tout's papers which was never published.²⁹

Tout also emerged as an able administrator at Lampeter. The college was small enough for administrative duties to be shared among the academic staff and this gave Tout an apprenticeship which paid dividends in his work to create three separate universities from the Victoria University in the north of England in 1903–4.³⁰ Tout held a number of posts at Lampeter. From 1883–90 he was the college's librarian, a post to which he was elected and re-elected by the college board. The college allowed him £28 a year for books, but Tout was astute in begging books from other sources. He secured the gift of 300 volumes of the Rolls Series from the government and a significant donation of books from Macmillan's, the publisher. In July 1885 he obtained approval from the college board to sell duplicate books to fund the rebinding of some library items.³¹ In 1887 he persuaded the trustees of the British Museum to give the college more than seventy

²⁷ RBRC, SDC, UA/SP/1/2, *St. David's College Magazine*, i (1890), 32.

²⁸ Powicke, 'Memoir', p. 5.

²⁹ Price, 'Tout, the Lampeter years', p. 76.

³⁰ The Victoria University, founded in 1880, combined Owen's College, Manchester, University College, Liverpool and Yorkshire College, Leeds. In 1903 to 1904 the University was disaggregated into three separate universities: Leeds, Liverpool and the Victoria University of Manchester.

³¹ St. David's College, College Board Papers, RBRC, SDC, UA/C/1/5, 237.

volumes, including the catalogues of all the museum's departments.³² In 1881 Coolidge had written to Tout that the library at St. David's College was outstanding but lacked an adequate catalogue. Consequently, Tout decided to create a new catalogue for the library, a task to which C. H. Firth also contributed in 1885. Firth, having completed his work as external examiner at Lampeter, stayed on at the college to help Tout work on the catalogue.³³

One of Tout's achievements in this period was to rebind some of the volumes of the Bowdler Tract Collection, a unique collection of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century books and pamphlets. Tout, with Firth's help, saw the value of the unique collection – indeed, Firth found it so significant that he tried to buy the whole collection for £200.³⁴ Tout also wrote the *DNB* entry for Thomas Phillips, who had made an extraordinary endowment of the college library at Lampeter between the 1830s and 1850s. Phillips sent sixty batches of books and manuscripts (some of them were wagon-loads of items) to the college.³⁵ Most of these were miscellaneous lots of books, incunabula and manuscripts that Phillips had bought at auctions, but they included some exceptionally rare items. Tout, who as librarian had reason to appreciate some of the treasures Phillips had bought and sent to the college, wrote that he was 'the only Welshman of his day who made large sacrifices in the cause of the education of his countrymen'.³⁶

Between 1888 and 1890 Tout was also senior bursar at Lampeter and as a professor sat on the college board, which governed the institution. It seems likely that an alliance of Tout and John Owen ensured that principal Francis Jayne pursued his reforms of the college as far as he possibly could.³⁷ Tout also contributed to the negotiations between St. David's College, Lampeter and the University of Oxford to renew the 1880 affiliation scheme under which Lampeter graduates could matriculate at Oxford and complete their degrees in two years rather than three. His experiences in working on the new statutes of the college in 1888 were also

³² *St. David's College and School Gazette*, vii (1887), 5.

³³ Magdalen College, Oxford, MC: F23/C3/6.

³⁴ Firth bought some duplicates from the collection which are now in the library of Worcester College, Oxford.

³⁵ *The Founder's Library University of Wales, Lampeter* (Lampeter, 1994); *The Founders' Library University of Wales, Lampeter: Bibliographical and Contextual Studies. Essays in Memory of Robin Rider*, ed. W. Marx (Lampeter, 1997, special issue of *Trivium*, xxix and xxx), pp. 169–77; B. L. James, *A Catalogue of the Tract Collection of St. David's University College, Lampeter* (London, 1975).

³⁶ T. F. Tout, 'Thomas Phillips', in *Dictionary of National Biography*.

³⁷ Price, 'Tout, the Lampeter years', p. 77.

a useful preparation for his later work in drafting the statutes of the new University of Manchester.³⁸

Tout also edited the *College Magazine* at Lampeter, which was one of the ways in which both the staff and students could publish essays and develop a collegiate life. When he resigned in 1890 the March issue referred to Tout's 'energy, wisdom, prudence, business-like capacities, and willingness to sacrifice at any time the precious evening hours to committee meetings'.³⁹ He was also editor of the college's *Memorandum*, a form of early prospectus. From the start, he saw opportunities to reduce spending. One of his first decisions as editor was to issue the *Memorandum* biennially since the information rarely changed from year to year. This resulted in a saving of money for printing and distribution.

William Price rightly suggests that Tout's time at Lampeter was 'the making' of the later historian and academic. Nevertheless, Tout does not seem to have been entirely happy at the college. He applied for other jobs in 1882 (Dundee), 1884 (Liverpool) and in 1888 wondered whether to apply for a post at Lincoln College, Oxford, which, he wrote, 'can't be worse than Lampeter'⁴⁰ – this last comment probably reflecting his disappointment that his friend E. H. Cully was not appointed professor of Latin at Lampeter.⁴¹ Price also wondered whether he found the all-male atmosphere of the College stifling.⁴² A verse by E. H. Cully suggests that Tout was capable of opinionated views:

From behind his tinted glasses
Peer the lurid orbs of Tout,
'Most men I consider asses:
You are one, without a doubt'.⁴³

Nevertheless, Tout slowly became a defender of and advocate for the college. At the degree day celebrations on 1887 he proposed the toast to the sub-visitors who were present. The sub-visitors were usually some of the Welsh bishops and aristocrats. After his toast, Tout spoke about the college's reputation. He said that he was disappointed that Lampeter was sometimes thought of as either a college principally for south Wales or as a 'sectarian college'. He pointed out that two of the four sub-visitors were from north

³⁸ Price, 'Tout, the Lampeter years', p. 77.

³⁹ RBRC, SDC, UA/SP/1/2, *St. David's College Magazine*, i (March 1890), 3.

⁴⁰ JRL, T. F. Tout Collection, Tout to his mother, 21 Dec. 1888.

⁴¹ Cully was refused the post because he would not agree to be ordained, which was a requirement Price, 'T. F. Tout, the Lampeter years').

⁴² Price, 'Tout, the Lampeter years', p. 78.

⁴³ Quoted in Price, *History of Saint David's University College*, i. 147.

Wales and that the college existed ‘for Wales as a whole’. He said the college ‘could not protest too strongly’ at any attempt to diminish its contribution to education in north Wales.⁴⁴ He went on to commend the bishops of Bangor and St. Asaph for defending the college in the House of Lords. He also praised Lord Emlyn for supporting the college in the House of Commons and raised a further toast in his honour.⁴⁵ So Tout undoubtedly came to identify with the college and to regard it as an institution to which he felt some loyalty.

At the St. David’s Day celebrations in the same year, which marked the sixtieth anniversary since the college’s foundation, Tout made a remarkably outspoken speech. He was gratified that so many distinguished former students attended the event. He went on to suggest there had been a boycott of the college by some people in Wales and singled out for attack Stuart Rendel, Liberal MP for Montgomeryshire, later Lord Rendel. Rendel was, claimed Tout, a malevolent voice who opposed the college. Tout denounced Rendel as ‘ignorant’ of Welsh history and said that his claim that Lampeter was ‘a centre of English influence and an alien institution propped by English gold’ was ‘arrant nonsense’.⁴⁶

In the vacations Tout stayed at Pembroke College in Oxford, where he was a non-resident fellow and often undertook research at the British Museum or the Public Record Office in London. This was not, however, because he disliked Wales. Indeed, when he was at Manchester he often spent his vacations in Wales, frequently staying with his former Lampeter colleague John Owen, who was bishop of St. David’s.

Tout took an enduring interest in the career of his most able student, Robert Williams, who returned to teach Welsh at Lampeter in 1889, just before Tout moved to Manchester. He was delighted when Williams was appointed professor of history at Lampeter in 1891.⁴⁷ He also maintained a friendship with Charles Lett Feltoe, who had been professor of Latin at Lampeter and later became headmaster of the King’s School, Chester and with whom he corresponded on shared interests in medieval history. Tout advised Feltoe on some aspects of history for his publication *Three Canterbury Kalendars*.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ RBRC, SDC, UA/SP/2, *St. David’s College and School Gazette*, viii (1887).

⁴⁵ RBRC, SDC, UA/SP/2, *St. David’s College and School Gazette*, viii (1887), 6. Viscount Emlyn was the son of Earl Cawdor and therefore able to sit in the House of Commons. He was MP for Carmarthenshire until 1885 and succeeded as earl in 1898.

⁴⁶ *St. David’s College and School Gazette*, vii (1887), at p. 6.

⁴⁷ JRL, GB 133 TFT/1/1299, undated letter to Williams.

⁴⁸ Undated letter to Feltoe, Huntington Library, California, MS. HM 79862. The Huntington Library also owns a work by Tout described as ‘a typescript (some pages are

If a heavy teaching load, an impressive range of publications and research and educational administration were not enough, Tout was also committed to the Victorian ideal of civic responsibility. Here, too, Tout's time at Lampeter prefigured his life in Manchester. Since he had decided to live in the town, he became active in civic affairs and was one of the contributors to the application to the government to make Lampeter a borough in its own right. He served as an alderman of the town and in that capacity secured the award to Lampeter of the status of the assize town of Cardiganshire. Only political chicanery prevented him from serving as mayor in 1887. It was claimed that one leading local councillor, John Charles Harford, hoped that – since 1887 was a jubilee year – the mayors of towns might be knighted and so presented the council with new and expensive mayoral regalia on condition that he succeed as mayor instead of Tout.⁴⁹

In 1890, aged thirty-five, Tout was appointed to the chair of history at the Victoria University of Manchester. His departure was greeted with widespread regret in Lampeter. The college board recorded on 5 May 1890 that it wished 'to place on record its sense of the value of the service rendered by him to the College during the past nine years both in connexion with his Chair and in the discharge of College duties as Librarian and Senior Bursar'.⁵⁰ The students' comments in the *College Magazine* included observations that 'ever since he came here in 1881 he has devoted himself to the teaching of his subject with singular energy and with a success attested by a list of University Honours, which ... may be fairly described as extraordinary'.⁵¹ Another testimonial was the following: 'It is not too much to say that no pair of hands in Lampeter hold together more threads of the College and general policy'. And a third read: '[H]is pupils feel that in him they have lost as good a friend as they have a tutor. There are many of his past pupils, scattered throughout the country who will feel that Lampeter is scarcely the same place to them without such a good friend as Professor Tout to turn to'.⁵²

When, in November 1890, he returned to Lampeter from Manchester for a testimonial dinner in his honour it was recorded: 'Mr Tout arrived in Lampeter by the afternoon train from Aberystwyth and was met at the

carbon copies), with annotations and additions in various hands. It is divided into the following sections: Introductory Note (p. i-iv), Medieval Books (p. 1-87), Medieval Books Addenda (2 p.), Modern Books (p. 1-32), The Non Historical Publications of the Manchester University Press (p. 1-6), Titles Not Listed in Tout Catalogue & Supplementary List (p. 1-7)' (MS. HM 82622). In addition, the library owns a number of letters to Tout from a range of correspondents.

⁴⁹ Price, *History of Saint David's University College*, i. 147. Harford was not knighted.

⁵⁰ St. David's College, College Board Papers, RBRC, SDC, UA/c/1/6, 122.

⁵¹ RBRC, SDC, UA/SP/1/2, *St. David's College Magazine*, iv (1890), at p. 305.

⁵² RBRC, SDC, UA/SP/1/2, *St. David's College Magazine*, 305-6.

station by a large number of enthusiastic students, who took the horses out of the carriage that had come to meet him and dragged him up to the College'.⁵³ He was entertained to songs and dinner and the presentation of a testimonial. On that occasion Tout himself also spoke about his time at Lampeter. His speech was reported in the *College Magazine*:

Looking back over nine eventful and stirring years he had spent at the College, and he could now speak with greater freedom than his colleagues who were remaining, he might say that when he came to the College in May 1881, it was a College of about sixty students. For the last five or six years, after a sudden and very remarkable development, it had settled down, permanently he believed, as College double that number ... [N]ow the institution had entered on a permanent condition of prosperity, a prosperity which ... depended on no individual, but on the inherent merits of the system and the place.

He spoke warmly of the calibre of his former colleagues and the recruitment of new staff of exceptional ability. He claimed that the college now played a full role in the life of Wales. He concluded by saying that he was leaving 'with the greatest possible reluctance'.⁵⁴

After 1890 Tout continued to take an interest in the college. He was appointed to the college's governing council in the early years of the twentieth century and took part in selection panels until he retired from the council in 1929. In 1922, after a crisis forced the resignation of the principal, Gilbert Cunningham Joyce, Tout served on the 'Reconstruction Committee' to rebuild the college's relationship with the Church in Wales; and he also served on the Sankey Committee to investigate the situation at the college in the same year.⁵⁵ One of its chief recommendations was the restoration of the honours school in history, which had been abandoned during the Great War – almost certainly this recommendation was made through the encouragement of Tout.⁵⁶ Later, Tout's influence can be seen in the strong advocacy for Lampeter of Powicke in the post-Second World War attempts to provide government funds for the college. Powicke published a 'Memorandum for the Privy Council' in June 1951 arguing that Lampeter should not be excluded from government funding. He explained to the principal of Lampeter that Tout had been his 'old master'.⁵⁷

⁵³ RBRC, SDC, UA/SP/1/3, *St. David's College Magazine*, iv (1890), 60.

⁵⁴ RBRC, SDC, UA/SP/1/2, *St. David's College and School Gazette*, iv (1890), 413–5.

⁵⁵ Price, *History of Saint David's University College*, ii, 24, 53–4, 60.

⁵⁶ JRL, GB 133 TFT/1/1063, T. F. Tout's correspondence with Sir John Sankey, 1922–5.

⁵⁷ Powicke even gave evidence in the hearing before Mr. Justice Vaisey in the 1950s to defend the college from the ministry of education's failure to include it on a list of funded institutions (Price, *A History of St David's University College, Lampeter*, ii, 156).

Like Price and Slee, Powicke argued of Tout that 'his years at Lampeter were profoundly important in Tout's development'.⁵⁸ Hugh Walker, Tout's colleague and friend, wrote:

In the College Library during term time and the British Museum in the vacation he laid the broad and deep foundations of his scholarship in History; in the Lampeter lecture-rooms he prepared himself for the wider stage in Manchester; and what better training in administration could be conceived than that which he found in facing the problems which arose in the process of reconstituting and reviving the almost moribund little College?⁵⁹

At Lampeter, Tout also developed the ideas that changed the nature of undergraduate history teaching and assessment in British universities; he laid down the foundations of later flourishing research into medieval history and showed himself to be an able and effective administrator. It was the making of a historian.

⁵⁸ Powicke, 'Memoir', pp. 4–6.

⁵⁹ Quoted in F. M. Powicke, 'Memoir', in *Collected Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout*, i. 4–5.

3. The Manchester School of History: Tout's contribution to the pedagogy of academic history

Peter Slee

Thomas Tout made a significant and distinct contribution to the pedagogy of history teaching in English universities. Between 1890 and 1909 he developed and articulated a coherent narrative about the educational and vocational benefits of studying history as an academic discipline and about the pivotal role an undergraduate history degree could play in the training of professional historians. He developed his views in conjunction with some of his counterparts at other English universities, particularly Charles Harding Firth at Oxford. But what set Tout apart was his ability to implement fully in Manchester the ideas he developed. He was the first of his contemporaries to embed the intensive teaching of research techniques in the history undergraduate curriculum and to have made the writing of a thesis compulsory for all undergraduate students. He had some natural advantages in this activity: Manchester was a new university and keen to develop a more integrated approach to teaching and research than had been possible at Oxford and Cambridge. The history school was small and Tout was able to implement his ideas directly and without having to work through a larger and more traditional staff group. But, crucially, Tout himself was patient, open to ideas and sought to develop a pedagogical approach which addressed the wider concerns of academic historians in England. This chapter sets out the context within which Tout developed and implemented his ideas before explaining the steps he took in Manchester to create a distinctive approach to teaching and examining in history.

Between its introduction as a distinct subject in the curriculum in 1848 and the outbreak of war in 1914, the pedagogy of academic history in England was developed in three distinct phases.¹ The first phase began with the introduction of modern history into the curriculum of English universities in 1848 and lasted until 1870. Historical studies – antiquarian,

¹ P. R. H. Slee, *Learning and a Liberal Education: the Study of Modern History in the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge and Manchester, 1800–1914* (Manchester, 1986).

P. Slee, 'The Manchester School of History: Tout's contribution to the pedagogy of academic history', in *Thomas Frederick Tout (1855–1929): refashioning history for the twentieth century*, ed. C. M. Barron and J. T. Rosenthal (London, 2019), pp. 41–55. License: CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0.



Figure 3.1. Dinner to celebrate Tout's 'first 21 years at Manchester', April 1912. Back row: Edward Fiddes, Mary Tout, T. F. Tout, Hilda Johnstone, George Unwin, F. M. Powicke. Front row: ?Mrs Fiddes, Susan Powicke, James Tait, Mrs Unwin (Sharp family photograph).

archaeological, and the study of English institutions – were, as Philippa Levine has demonstrated, 'ranked alongside those of the sciences as the dominant intellectual resources which shaped Victorian culture'.² 'Historical-mindedness' – an abiding sense that the present was substantially different from the past – permeated the Victorian consciousness. Only fiction took up more shelf space in local libraries and even there, historical novels were the most popular. History inspired works of art, architecture and fashion. There was a great deal of consensus about the value and importance of understanding historical narrative. The *Edinburgh Review* said everyone should know '[w]hat the constitution of his country really was, how it had grown into its present state, – the perils that had threatened it, – the malignity that had attacked it, – the courage that had fought for it, and the wisdom that had made it great'.³

But the idea that history could become a worthwhile and effective educational discipline had its critics:

² P. Levine, *The Amateur and the Professional: Antiquarians, Historians and Archaeologists in Victorian England, 1838–1886* (Cambridge, 1986), p 1.

³ R. L. Edgeworth, 'Essays on a professional education', *Edinburgh Rev.*, xv (1809), 40–53, at p. 52.

Is the subject suitable for Education? Is it an exercise of the mind? Is it not better left till Education is completed? Is it not sufficiently attractive to ensure a voluntary attention to it? Is it a convenient subject for Examination? Where is the standard author like Thucydides, etc.? If there is no standard author, how are the comparative merits of the candidates to be judged? Will it not supersede those subjects where a severe discipline is required?⁴

In short, there were doubts about the possibility of organizing a body of knowledge everyone thought important to make it a suitable subject of education. Henry Halford Vaughan, regius professor of modern history at Oxford, summed up the issues neatly: 'The whole classical system has been the development of years and years – Details have always been prescribed with more or less rigour by custom – legislation has had existing custom for its basis. But with regard to Modern History ... there is no theory whatsoever in existence ... our first want will be order, unity and guidance'.⁵ In 1848 at both Oxford and Cambridge and later at Manchester in 1854, when Richard Copley Christie became its first professor of history, the 'order, unity and guidance' Vaughan asked for was borrowed from classics and found in the close study and examination of set texts, referred to as 'authorities'. Students were, in the time-honoured fashion of the medieval schools, invited to engage in the close reading of, and commentary on, agreed texts. They were examined solely on the factual content of these texts. This, it was believed, helped avoid grades being awarded on the basis of subjective judgement and prevented issues of political or religious bias being inflamed.

But from the mid 1860s there was a growing concern that this treatment of history neither provided the basis of an exacting education nor offered the students anything like a thorough grounding in the rudiments of history. As historical knowledge was growing, the old texts became increasingly anomalous. One anonymous Oxford critic was worried that if 'the Examiner and Candidate have studied different Historians ... the acquirements of the Candidates can be most praiseworthy and yet be wholly inappreciable by the Examiner'.⁶ The study of modern history was no longer regarded as meeting any of the generally agreed outcomes of a university education.

In the second phase of pedagogical development, beginning in 1870, a new organizing principle for the history curriculum was found in 'periods'. The period offered students a systematic narrative thread and a notion of

⁴ R. Southern, 'The contemporary study of history', in *The Varieties of History: from Voltaire to the Present*, ed. F. Stern (2nd edn., London, 1970), pp. 403–23.

⁵ Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. Lett. D. 440, fos. 28–9, letter from H. H. Vaughan to F. Jeune, Jan. 1850.

⁶ Levine, *The Amateur and the Professional*, p. 137.

continuity and helped to suffuse it with meaning. As Philippa Levine has demonstrated, much contemporary historical investigation was connected with the urgent need to make sense of a changing society: ‘The identification of past events with current structures and their use as a justification for and explanation of those structures was a means of establishing not just a common consensus but a sense of both individual and collective purpose’.⁷ The period was an ideal basis to establish a thread of continuity with the English past. In this new organizing system the curriculum replaced a reliance on ‘chronicle history’, in which the narrative was drawn from ancient texts, with ‘record history’, in which the narrative was pieced together through the critical studies of historians who had based their work on archival research.

The core of the periods was the English constitution. This appealed to those who sought meaning in history at a time of rapid change in the machinery of state bureaucracy brought about by industrialization. As John Mitchell Kemble put it: ‘It cannot be without advantage for us to learn how a State so favoured as our own has set about the great work of constitution, and solved the problem, of uniting the completest obedience to the law with the greatest amount of individual freedom’.⁸ It also played to the dominant trend in the growing development of ‘record history’ based on archival research. The opening of the Public Record Office in 1838 began a more systematic process of collecting, restoring, repairing, calendaring and indexing national records. Between 1852, when fees for scholarly access to records were removed, and 1884, when the *English Historical Review* was first published, the number of scholars working on the public records had increased fourfold. P. B. M. Blaas has suggested that the concentration among English historians on the apparatus of state bureaucracy was a consequence of them living at a time when industrialization was leading to the growth of local and national government.⁹ But it may also be the case that ‘record’ or ‘archival’ history tended to be the history of the state simply because the new collections of state records led irrevocably to that focus. Its inclusion was believed to provide some genuine intellectual rigour to the academic study of history. As Stubbs himself said, it could ‘scarcely be approached without an effort’.¹⁰ At this point, the educational value of history was generally considered to rest partly on the practical value of the

⁷ Levine, *The Amateur and the Professional*, p. 84.

⁸ Levine, *The Amateur and the Professional*, p. 85; J. M. Kemble, *The Saxons in England. A History of the English Commonwealth till the Period of the Norman Conquest* (2 vols., London, 1849), i. vi.

⁹ See Levine, *The Amateur and the Professional*, pp. 101–34.

¹⁰ Cited in Southern, ‘The contemporary study of history’, p. 412.

content, but mostly on the intellectual rigour of being asked to read a wide range of material on a series of given subjects and to form and communicate a balanced judgement on the issues it raised.

In Oxford and Cambridge, the redevelopment of the curriculum in the early 1870s brought with it a series of practical problems, not least who would teach the new syllabus. In 1848 the catechetical method employed by teachers of classics who drilled their students in the set texts could be adapted to history by existing college tutors and private teachers. The new syllabus required specialists, most of whom, by definition, did not exist and had to 'work-up' their teaching materials from scratch. Tutors in different colleges were directed by their professorial chairs or boards to develop specialisms in subjects that covered gaps in the curriculum and then led by their colleges to organize and share cross-college supervision of their own students in order to provide greater support.¹¹

This author has argued elsewhere that the emergent profession of academic historian had two distinct wings.¹² The dominant group were the college tutors who taught for a living. They formed a strong consensus that their primary function was to develop and refine the history curriculum as the vehicle for the general 'liberal education' of their students. They looked increasingly to 'professionalize' history teaching, partly through increasing specialization and partly through the development of new approaches to pedagogy and student learning. The second group were much smaller and formed largely, though not exclusively, from the emerging group of history professors who were appointed to conduct research and were increasingly chosen (often externally) on the basis of their prior attainment in that regard. Beginning with Stubbs in 1867, many of these new professors began to argue for adjustments to the curriculum to make sure students recognized the rigorous and objective process which underpinned the growing movement away from 'literary history' to archival history. Stubbs was the first of the new band of professors to argue that universities should be a training ground for historians and that the history curriculum should acquaint them with the new science of historical research. Steps were taken to accommodate these views. In 1872 in Oxford, in the 1880s in Cambridge and in Manchester (following A. W. Ward's appointment as professor of history) 'special subjects' were established in which final-year students had the opportunity to study a subject in depth, using and comparing the 'original authorities'.¹³

¹¹ Slee, *Learning and a Liberal Education*, pp. 67–71, 88–91.

¹² Slee, *Learning and a Liberal Education*, pp. 99–101.

¹³ Slee, *Learning and a Liberal Education*, pp. 83–93.

In Oxford and Cambridge, the special subject became something of a battleground between the professors and the tutors. Stubbs complained publicly: ‘The professorial and tutorial systems have not yet dovetailed into one another with all the completeness that could be wished ... Sometimes I have felt hurt that ... I found the junior assistant tutor advertising a course on the same subject, or at the very same hours as my own’.¹⁴ Stubbs was ready to share the original research upon which his latest work was based and he influenced a number of Oxford students, particularly those from Balliol, where he was resident and to which the Brackenbury scholarship lured many future historians. One of these was Thomas Tout and another Charles Harding Firth.

But Stubbs was referring to Arthur Lionel Smith of Balliol College. Smith established and ran the most popular lecture course at Oxford, called ‘Steps to Stubbs’, in which he simplified and summarized the assembled documents collected in Stubbs’s *Select Charters of English Constitutional History*, published in nine editions beginning in 1870. Charles Oman said he found these lectures invaluable: ‘One needed some guidance as to what part of the ‘Charters’ were of primary importance, for the book itself gave no help towards the sifting out of the crucial passages ... And the mere translation was hard enough, for the book lacked sufficient explanatory vocabulary of technical terms at the end’.¹⁵ Where Stubbs arranged and printed his documents in chronological order, Smith organized his analysis of them according to their content and subject matter. Going further (and after Stubbs had left Oxford), Smith printed his notes in a beautifully organized booklet which he gave to his students. Smith’s ‘hand-out’ was based almost entirely on secondary sources and the same ones to which the students were directed on their reading list. In doing so Smith aimed to simplify a complex subject, provide a detailed factual framework and then direct students to the relevant literature on the subject, with accompanying criticism. There is little doubt that students following Smith’s lead could have managed their examinations on constitutional history without reading Stubbs or attending his own classes.¹⁶ This approach was not without its critics. Max Muller suggested: ‘The sole object of a student at Oxford is to take a high class ... [I]t does not pay to look beyond a narrow given horizon ... to look beyond that teaching which is supplied in college lectures, and the results of which he is expected to produce before the examiners’.¹⁷

¹⁴ W. H. Stubbs, *Seventeen Lectures on the Study of Medieval and Modern History* (3rd edn., Oxford, 1900), pp. 35–6.

¹⁵ C. W. C. Oman, *Memories of Victorian Oxford* (London, 1941), pp. 104–5.

¹⁶ Slee, *Learning and a Liberal Education*, pp. 107–8.

¹⁷ Cited in Slee, *Learning and a Liberal Education*, p. 114.

The third major pedagogical development in the development of history as an academic discipline was the movement by historians engaged in archival research to ensure the undergraduate history curriculum trained students in the use of 'original authorities'. This began in the mid 1880s but intensified between 1903 and 1908, when the protagonists simply stopped arguing, either because they were worn out and ground down by the opposition they had met or because, in Tout's case, he had won the concessions he sought.

At Oxford and Cambridge two arguments were levelled in favour of curricular reform which would give more weight to training in historical techniques. The first was a question about the ends of a university education. It was a corollary of the growing sense among academic historians holding professorial posts about what constituted 'professional history'. John Bernard Bury at Cambridge, Frederick York Powell and then Charles Harding Firth at Oxford argued that a core purpose of any history degree programme should be to 'train men capable of adding to knowledge'.¹⁸ There had been concessions made in the mid 1890s to create avenues for postgraduate study at Oxford and an opportunity to achieve a BA by research at Cambridge. But neither programme attracted more than an average of two students a year. The protagonists believed that if they were to make the significant contribution to training the next generation of historians, as they believed their nature of their posts implied, it would need to be through adjustments to the undergraduate curriculum.¹⁹

The second argument was a question of means. Both Bury and Firth suggested that the special subject was not a suitable mechanism for training students in historical techniques and providing them with the basic skills they needed to undertake independent historical research. Bury argued cogently that it taught and examined the wrong things. There was too much emphasis on contextual subject knowledge and not enough stress on 'historical investigation and the criticism of sources'. Bury put to the board that a dissertation was the best method of demonstrating mastery of historical sources, but he recognized the many practical drawbacks to introducing this. He argued instead for an open-book examination as part of the special subject, one in which students had the sources at their disposal. Firth demanded weight be given to prize essays in the assessment of degree classification; and he lobbied for the introduction of a compulsory thesis as the basis for the assessment of the special subject.²⁰

¹⁸ C. H. Firth, *A Plea for the Historical Teaching of History: an Inaugural Lecture Delivered on 9 November 1904* (Oxford, 1904), p. 13.

¹⁹ Slee, *Learning and a Liberal Education*, p. 151.

²⁰ Firth, *Plea for the Historical Teaching of History*.

Both arguments were countered by the larger groups of well-organized college tutors. Their position on the value of training all undergraduates in historical techniques was summarized by Charles Oman at Oxford:

The first problem that must be faced is that this University is a place of Education as well as a place of Research. It is sometimes difficult to correlate its two functions: it often seems difficult to determine how far they can or ought to be discharged by the same body of workers ... [P]ractically our problem is to deal with some 150 or 200 undergraduates destined for the most various occupations in after-life, who unite in thinking that the Modern History School suits them better than any other of the avenues to a degree which the University at present offers ... [W]e must frankly recognize that the Modern History curriculum must be drawn up rather with an eye to the vast majority of men who seek in it a general liberal education, than to the small minority to whom a technical training ... might conceivably be more profitable.²¹

The second argument was that the special subject worked for both ‘the best men’ and the less able student. It gave them all the opportunity to understand and observe the ‘principles of research and criticism’ and offered the more able students the opportunity to pursue deeper research if they wished.²² Firth succeeded at Oxford in gaining support for the introduction of a thesis in 1907, after the external examiners had pointed out that special subjects were neither taught nor studied well. They noted that students who took B-grades in their special subject had still gone on to take a first-class degree and that not all displayed any real knowledge or familiarity with original sources. The board agreed that a thesis could be presented in lieu of one special subject paper but, crucially, it was made optional. Only twenty-five students submitted theses between 1909 and 1914 (around five per cent of the total number of graduates) and only half achieved first-class grades. The external examiners noted that many students tackled topics that were too broad-ranging, or that they became so engrossed in their research that they neglected the rest of their papers. The critical problem at Oxford was a lack of close supervision by tutors of students interested in research. The experiment was not deemed a success.²³

Thomas Tout was part of this campaign to incorporate a thorough training in historical research into the undergraduate curriculum. Where Bury had no success and Firth made only partial gains which he could not sustain on any significant scale, Tout gained full support from the

²¹ C. W. C. Oman, *Inaugural Lecture on the Study of History*, 7 February 1906 (Oxford, 1906), pp. 18–9.

²² Slee, *Learning and a Liberal Education*, p. 138.

²³ Slee, *Learning and a Liberal Education*, pp. 148–9.

university authorities in making the final year of the history programme at Manchester wholly devoted to training students in research techniques. Tout's success was based on two critical factors. First, despite developing his ideas in tandem with Firth, with whom he corresponded for thirty years, Tout was more cautious and measured in his approach to reform and more careful to build consensus so as not to offend. A letter from Firth to Tout in 1892 sets out the difference between the approaches of the two men:

I think this is a case in which we are so indubitably right, that we ought to stick to our guns and fight it out. At present no doubt we shall be defeated. The opinions of Smith and Johnson will probably carry the day ... In a few years however, you and I (if we can get our great works published) will have more reputation and more power than they have. Let us state our programme clearly now and educate our colleagues up to it.²⁴

Tout did 'stick to his guns' but was not prepared to fight unless he was sure he could win. But what Tout also did was to embark on a long and patient programme of educating colleagues.

Second, in a new and relatively small institution, Tout had more direct influence over day-to-day activities and did not have to work with an established tutorial power base. Two years after his appointment to the chair of history at Owens College, Tout began to develop ideas about voluntary practical classes. Firth warned him against it. 'I like the idea of your scheme for practical classes but it will be difficult to set the thing going', he said. He continued: 'Can you not combine it in some way with the special subject work done for the degree? ... [W]hat is wanted is to get hold of them in their last year and to get the subject going in some way for their degree'.²⁵ Tout took Firth's advice to heart and then approached A. W. Ward, the principal of Owens College, to propose formal changes to the special subject, which Ward had introduced to Manchester in 1880. Ward had taken part in intense debates at Cambridge to redress what he saw as an imbalance between the study of history and political science and was sympathetic. But Ward, who continued to teach history alongside Tout and assistant lecturer James Tait, urged caution: 'We must be careful to reform slowly, as our students need encouragement rather than frightening. It would be a great pity were the word to spread that our history work is too stiff'.²⁶ This was the notion put to Firth in Oxford: that research was

²⁴ John Rylands Library, Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout, GB 133 TFT, 1/367/21, letter from C. H. Firth to T. F. Tout, 13 March 1892.

²⁵ JRL, Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout, GB 133 TFT, 1/367/29, letter from Firth to Tout, 10 Apr. 1892.

²⁶ JRL, Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout, GB 133 TFT, 1/1242/32, letter from A. W. Ward to T. F. Tout, 31 Oct. 1892.

difficult and largely for the ‘best men’ and perhaps beyond the capability of most students.

Tout heeded Ward’s advice. But in 1895, when Ward gave up his teaching duties completely and passed over the departmental headship to him, Tout was free to experiment. Students worked in the Freeman Library, a specialist collection in the main university library based on a bequest made by E. A. Freeman in 1892. Directed to a subject in which either Tout or Tait had detailed knowledge, they worked among printed sources. Every student specialized in one particular aspect of the subject under discussion and was encouraged to write a short report about it. As Ward had predicted, it did not suit every student. F. M. Powicke, who experienced this approach at first hand, called it a ‘hot house method’ and it is clear from the examiners’ reports that some students gave up under the strain.²⁷ But Tout and Tait had the advantage of scale on their side. With an average class size of just five students a year they were able to supply the close levels of supervision denied to their Oxford counterparts. Of the forty-three students who graduated from Owens College in history between 1895 and 1904, eighteen published historical work. The best examples are displayed in a volume of essays written by staff and students which was published in 1902 as part of the campaign for an independent University of Manchester, *Historical Essays by Members of the Owens College Manchester*. In the preface, Tout and Tait stated that the requirement for history to be based on the critical study of primary sources was now axiomatic. But they suggested that in England ‘the effective encouragement of such research is still almost entirely left to the individual’. They made a manifesto commitment that at a new and independent University of Manchester the department of history would remedy that defect by ensuring history students were trained in historical techniques. This new volume of essays was intended to show beyond doubt that it could be done.²⁸

In 1904 the new Victoria University of Manchester came into being. On 9 May 1905 the board of the new faculty of arts appointed committee members for every honours school, consisting in every case of the members of faculty engaged in teaching and examining in the school. These committees were required to draw up the regulations and syllabuses of their respective honours schools. Tout and Tait were given carte blanche. Unlike Firth at Oxford or Bury at Cambridge, they did not have to battle against tradition or the vested interests of a well-organized group of college tutors to make their case.

²⁷ JRL, Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout, GB 133 TFT, 1/962/8, letter from F. M. Powicke to T. F. Tout, n.d. [1902].

²⁸ *Historical Essays by Members of the Owens College Manchester. Published in Commemoration of the Jubilee (1851–1901)*, ed. T. F. Tout and J. Tait (London, 1902), p. xii.

But Tout was still cautious. It was important to him, and to the new university, that the history curriculum at Manchester was respected and held in esteem by his peers at other universities. He was clearly conscious of the need to address the issue which had undone Firth and Bury: the suggested separation between what constituted a rigorous general education for the majority of students and what was required to train the next generation of historians in their training of historians. Tout's distinctive contribution to the debate was to suggest that the real educational value of history lay in the research method:

The educational value of our study, lies not so much in the accumulation of a mass of unrelated facts as in training in method, and evidence, and in seeing how history is made. It follows, then, that the study of history should be largely a study of processes and method, even for those to whom history is not mainly the preparation for a career, but chiefly a means of academic education. No historical education can, therefore, be regarded as complete unless it involves training in method. The best training in method is an attempt at research.²⁹

In the new University of Manchester Tout aimed to promote 'a good scheme for teaching general historical knowledge to undergraduates' but made it clear that general historical knowledge included instruction in the essential methods of historical research.³⁰ So here, in this approach, Tout was attempting to remove what he held to be a false dichotomy. If teaching the principles of historical research was a rigorous and effective means of developing both the intellect and the skills required by an aspiring historian, then it fulfilled the demands of both the teaching and research function of the university without placing undue stress on one to the seeming detriment of the other.

The meetings of 1905 brought few immediate changes to the curriculum at Manchester. But Tout made two tentative suggestions for change. The first suggestion was to divide the course into two distinct parts. He proposed a preliminary examination at the end of the student's second year to test the candidates' general historical knowledge. This left the final year for detailed study of two special subjects. The second principle, borrowed directly from Firth, was that any original work undertaken independently by a student be taken into account by the examiners at the final examination.³¹

Tout was ready now to introduce the thesis into the final year, but he continued to heed Ward's advice and to test the reaction among his peers in

²⁹ T. F. Tout, 'An "historical laboratory"', in T. F. Tout, *The Collected Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout* (3 vols., Manchester, 1932-4), i. 79-84, at p. 80.

³⁰ Tout, *Collected Papers*, i. 96.

³¹ Slee, *Learning and a Liberal Education*, p. 156.

other universities. In 1906, at the invitation of Mary Bateson, he delivered a provocative and forthright speech to the Newnham College history society. He followed it up by sending copies to leading historians across the country. His pamphlet entitled *Schools of History* was the definitive statement of the philosophy of teaching he had developed and amended over the previous fifteen years. ‘The spirit of research is in the air’, he said: ‘It has become commonplace that it is the function of the historical professor, not only to teach, but also to write books’. Despite this being an improvement on the conditions in which his predecessors had laboured, all was not yet as it should have been. England lacked schools of history in the sense that they had evolved on the Continent. A school of history was not simply a ‘good scheme for teaching general historical knowledge to undergraduates plus a respectable examination at the end of it’.³² All this did was to encourage ‘mere smartness and readiness’. The true test of an academic education was ‘not memory work but knowledge of method and criticism’ and a system of assessment that would test a students’ genuine understanding of history.

Tout was forthright in his criticism of Firth’s treatment at Oxford: ‘Most of our present systems neglect the opportunity that lies at their doors, and content themselves with a perfunctory “special period”, which is either studied so early that the student is not ripe for it, or so imperfectly that he never realises the training he can derive from it’. He then went on to say that the special subject, such as it was, was rarely taught effectively. Too many lecturers offered ‘the pupil a series of cut and dried lectures with all the obvious points systematically worked up, so all he has got to do is read up his notebooks and pour out on paper the treasures heaped up for him by others’.³³ The only way to achieve the real aim of deep historical study was to ensure the student actively learned research techniques. He argued for ‘students to be formed into little groups not exceeding a dozen, and to put each group under the direction of a teacher who has already made the subject his own, and who is still engaged in working upon it’. These classes, he said, should be based in a library and encompass the seminar method, in which everyone contributed to the whole class learning. Every student should then be ‘encouraged to write some sort of modest thesis ... a practicable compromise between the German dissertation and the British examinations’.³⁴ This system, which of course Tout had already established and tested informally, would be:

³² Tout, *Collected Papers*, i. 96.

³³ Tout, *Collected Papers*, i. 99, 101.

³⁴ Tout, *Collected Papers*, i. 902, 104.

eminently educative, so much so that it would train the minds of those who only use history as the means of education, as well as those who would be led on by such a system to desire a more technical training after they had taken their degree ... I cannot conceive how such a system would sacrifice the many to the few. It would be as good for the statesman, the lawyer, the clergyman, the journalist, the civil servant, and the man of business, as for the would-be historian.³⁵

Tout's letterbox was filled immediately with responses. Many ranged against him the arguments used so tellingly against Firth and Bury. E. A. Armstrong, a veteran college tutor at Oxford, said Tout had underestimated the benefits of the exam system. He also said there was nothing much wrong with the Oxford special subject: 'It seems to me a good enough test of ability, for after all for most professions, even for the future historian, it is a good practice to thoroughly accumulate a considerable bulk of knowledge and to be able to produce such parts of it as are required at a given moment in a limited space and time in good form, and that ... more or less their own'.³⁶ H. W. C. Davis, who was supporting Firth's drive to establish specialist classes for historians, echoed the concerns raised against Firth that only the very best students could benefit from the rigour of a thesis. Davis favoured the development of postgraduate provision to meet this objective.³⁷

Others agreed wholeheartedly with Tout's views. George Prothero spoke for many when he said: '[Y]our plea for training in method without being too technical and in a style which would be equally good for all sorts and conditions of men, not for professional historians only is admirable'.³⁸ Others, while they agreed with that judgement, reflected on the difficulties facing Firth and Bury. Reginald Lane Poole pointed out to Tout the advantage of his position in a newly formed university: 'I agree with almost all your ... suggestions; and it is only when I come to meditate on the possibility of fitting them into the Oxford system that I realise the immense power of accumulated tradition'.³⁹

Tout was of course well aware of all of this. 'Freedom', he said, 'is the *sine qua non* for success. What we want in the teaching of history ... is

³⁵ Tout, *Collected Papers*, i. 102–3.

³⁶ JRL, Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout, GB 133 TFT, 1/31/9, letter from E. A. Armstrong to T. F. Tout, 26 May 1906.

³⁷ Henry William C. Davis, 1874–1928: a memoir by J. R. H. Weaver and a Selection of his *Historical Papers*, ed. J. R. H. Weaver and A. L. Poole (London, 1933), p. 80.

³⁸ JRL, Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout, GB 133 TFT, 1/975/22, letter from G. W. Prothero to T. F. Tout, 25 May 1906.

³⁹ JRL, Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout, GB 133 TFT, 1/953/57, letter from R. L. Poole to T. F. Tout, 21 May 1906.

the courage to make experiments combined with the courage to stand fast in what is good in the ancient ways. We must have above all things freedom to work out our salvation for ourselves'.⁴⁰ But it is also clear that Tout had worked hard to create for himself the authority and seniority to express his ideas; and he chose to do so at the optimal time, when he had established a reputation as an outstanding academic historian and in the developing institutional context of a new civic university. His approach was also practical. Supervising theses did not involve his colleagues in any fundamental change of habit, style or mode of work. Nor did it in any way undermine their expertise or self-worth as teachers. Tout, Tait and later George Unwin simply directed students to their own research interests.⁴¹

After a short, informal period in which he tested the thesis with his class, Tout introduced it formally in Manchester in 1909, coinciding with the corresponding changes which Firth had encouraged at Oxford. But unlike Oxford, the thesis at Manchester was made compulsory and became a vital and distinguishing part of the Manchester history school. Surviving examples show clearly that not all students found it congenial. There clearly was some truth in the assertions that conducting research did not suit the weaker students. There is a wide disparity in standards. Some theses are poorly written and lacking in footnotes, bibliography or deep acquaintance with archival material. Clearly, Tout's pedagogical method did not extend to doing the students' work for them. It is also clear that the thesis was regarded as the core element of the curriculum. No student in Tout's time ever took a first-class degree without securing an alpha grade on the thesis. But it is equally clear that Tout listened to his critics. Many students wrote what were adjudged to be first-class theses but received second-class degrees. Tout was careful to balance a thorough training in method with a thorough grounding in historical knowledge and judgement of secondary sources. After ten years Tout felt the thesis had proved itself. Manchester then dropped the second special subject and allowed students more time to focus on their research. In 1919, after Tait retired, Tout became director of advanced studies and worked to build postgraduate education. He established a research library and through the Manchester University Press an outlet for published work.⁴²

Six of the eighty undergraduates who passed through the school between 1905 and 1920 became teachers of history in universities and colleges. Tout

⁴⁰ JRL, Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout, GB 133 TFT, manuscript notes by T. F. Tout on the 'Teaching of History', 11 Feb. 1903, with note 9.2 1907 (p. 2).

⁴¹ P. R. H. Slee, 'History as a discipline in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge 1848–1914' (unpublished University of Cambridge PhD thesis, 1983), p. 444, n. 16.

⁴² Slee, *Learning and a Liberal Education*, p. 159.

was sufficiently impressed with his school and its graduates to claim in 1920 that 'it is the boast of Manchester that the concluding year of its honours course forms a better bridge towards the advanced study of history than any other university of the kingdom'.⁴³ Not everyone agreed. Oxford and Cambridge boasted their share of academic historians, with twenty-seven teaching in higher education in 1920. While new history departments at Leeds, Liverpool, Birmingham and Bristol introduced the thesis, Sheffield and London did not. Albert Frederick Pollard at University College London, a long-standing friend of Tout, also learned from Firth's experience. He believed it would be difficult to co-ordinate the resources of far-flung colleges and to match supervisors to undergraduate students and perhaps impossible to secure agreement among a large body of college teachers. He concentrated his efforts on doing what Firth and Bury had found difficult: building a first-rate graduate school at the Institute of Historical Research.⁴⁴

Tout created a highly distinctive history school at Manchester, but his achievements were, as F. M. Powicke pointed out, very much a product of him being in the right place at the right time and not universally replicable.⁴⁵ Richard Lodge's summary is perhaps apposite: 'The conclusion to be drawn, is not that this system is the best for all men, but that it is the best for Tout'.⁴⁶

⁴³ T. F. Tout, 'The Manchester school of history', in Tout, *Collected Papers*, i, 85–92, at p. 88.

⁴⁴ Slee, *Learning and a Liberal Education*, p. 160.

⁴⁵ F. M. Powicke, 'The Manchester history school', in *Modern Historians and the Study of History: Essays and Papers* (London, 1955), pp. 19–95, at pp. 30–31.

⁴⁶ R. Lodge, 'Thomas Frederick Tout: a retrospect of twin academic careers', *Cornhill Magazine*, n.s., lxxviii (1930), 114–26, at p. 124.

4. Tout and Manchester University Press*

Dorothy J. Clayton

Of the many institutions with which Professor Tout was associated, two especially may rightly look to him as their founder. These are the Manchester School of Historical Research and the Manchester University Press. A scheme in which the two were associated would be particularly suitable as a memorial.¹

These are the opening sentences of a circular written in 1930, the year following Tout's death. The signatories to the circular, 'in the main leading historians but also scholars influential in other fields of learning', proposed the setting up of a fund in his honour. The 'Tout Memorial Publication Fund' should 'assist the publication of learned historical works by the Manchester University Press'. The types of texts to be supported were defined more precisely as 'works [which] owing to their special character, appeal to a limited public, and it is generally impossible to print them without a subsidy'. Consideration was also given to the authors whose works might be published. Here, there was more flexibility: 'While members of the University of Manchester, and perhaps works in mediaeval history, should have the first consideration, the advantages should not be confined to them, but should be available for any historical work published by the Manchester University Press'.

When Tout arrived in Manchester in 1890 he had two imperatives: the history department which he headed needed to be strong and widely recognized within the broader historical community; and it should also be significant within the university. J. H. Wylie, the historian of Henry IV and Henry V, was effusive in his recognition of what had been achieved by 1894 when supporting Tout's application for the chair of history at Glasgow:

* I am grateful to Dr. James Peters, archivist of the University of Manchester Archives, and to Karen Jacques and Catherine Smith for their patience and help during the preparation of this article.

¹ H. Guppy, 'Library notes and news', *Bull. John Rylands Libr.*, xiv.ii (July 1930), 299–332, at pp. 305–6; and 'Annual statement, session 1929–1930', in *The Victoria University of Manchester, Calendar 1930–1931* (Manchester, 1930), pp. 834–59, at p. 857.

D. J. Clayton, 'Tout and Manchester University Press', in *Thomas Frederick Tout (1855–1929): refashioning history for the twentieth century*, ed. C. M. Barron and J. T. Rosenthal (London, 2019), pp. 57–70. License: CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0.

‘His influence in Manchester has already borne notable fruit in the training of an earnest band of students of both sexes who are devoting themselves to the thorough investigation of special periods of history by the help of original and hitherto unpublished material’.² Wylie continued: ‘There is little doubt he is laying the foundation for a school of systematic research such as may one day bring up the scientific study of History in England to the high level that it has already attained in France and Germany’.

Certainly Tout realized that he needed to do in history what, for example, Arthur Schuster was achieving in physics.³ Tout and Schuster knew each other well; both were closely involved in the negotiations which led to the University of Manchester gaining its independent charter in 1903.⁴ Wylie had aptly outlined what Tout was aiming to do. In the years ahead, with the purposeful focus on research and with his concept of the ‘historical laboratory’,⁵ Tout drove the department to a position of pre-eminence. The strongest affirmation of his department’s early achievements came with the publication in 1902 of *Historical Essays by Members of the Owens College, Manchester*, edited by Tout and his colleague James Tait.⁶ Sixteen of the twenty essays were by former students and ranged widely over historical periods, touching also on the teaching of history. Hubert Hall, an archivist and historian, commented that this was ‘such an important piece of work ... its “moral” effect will be considerable, apart from any other; and one thinks of the University of the future with its *école des chartes!*’.⁷ Central to Tout’s vision was the requirement for undergraduates to write a thesis – a demonstration of his commitment to embedding research into historical

² JRL, Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout, TFT/1/418/1: testimonials, including one from Wylie, 15 May 1894.

³ H. B. Charlton, *Portrait of a University: To Commemorate the Centenary of Manchester University, 1851–1951* (2nd edn., Manchester, 1952), ch. v, ‘Federal to free university: the Schuster-Tout epoch’, pp. 78–96, esp. pp. 85–93. Charlton’s book is very useful, but it lacks footnotes. In the volume’s foreword, Sir John Stopford, the vice-chancellor, said: ‘He writes from intimate knowledge of a number of the people he mentions; he has made an exhaustive study of the documents’ (Foreword, pp. ix–x, at p. x). Indeed, Charlton gives direct quotations from many individuals, including Tout. For a more recent study, see A. B. Robertson and C. Lees, ‘The history department’, in *The University of Manchester, 1918–50: New Approaches and Changing Perspectives* (double issue of *Bull. John Rylands Libr.*, lxxxiv (2002)), pp. 357–64, at pp. 357–8.

⁴ JRL, TFT/1/1074/1–4, letters from Schuster to Tout, 18 Nov. 1901, 19 Sept. 1902, 18 Dec. 1902.

⁵ Tout, ‘An historical “laboratory”’, in *The Collected Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout* (3 vols., Manchester, 1932–4), i. 79–84.

⁶ *Historical Essays by Members of the Owens College, Manchester: Published in Commemoration of its Jubilee (1851–1901)*, ed. T. F. Tout and J. Tait (London, 1902).

⁷ JRL, TFT/1/466/14, letter from Hall to Tout, 11 March 1902.

study and the proudly distinctive mark of the Manchester history school.⁸ This vision was shared, and indeed reinforced, by his former student and later colleague, Frederick Maurice Powicke, who wrote in 1902: 'I hope your lecture or paper will go off well – I mean, will have a proper bracing effect on your hearers, so that they may brace themselves up to make the Owens History School as famous as the *École des Chartes*'.⁹

For Tout, learning and scholarly research attained their true value only when their 'results' could be accessed by other interested parties. A press was, therefore, an essential element of his vision of a university in which postgraduate work and the publication of new knowledge by staff were paramount. In other words, for Tout the success of Manchester's history department and the establishment of a viable university publications' facility were inextricably linked.

When Manchester University became independent in 1903 it established a publications committee. Tout was appointed its first chairman in 1904 and he remained in that position until his retirement in 1925. In fact, this was not a new venture for Tout. He had been involved with the Owens College publications committee from shortly after he came to Manchester and for a time he was apparently the only arts representative on it.¹⁰ In preparation for the jubilee of Owens College in 1901, Philip Joseph Hartog, a lecturer in chemistry, wrote a history of the college and included a list of all publications written by staff members since its foundation; the great majority of these were published outside Manchester.¹¹ Most of the writings published by Owens College were one-offs, such as inaugural lectures, and they were undertaken and paid for by the college as the need arose. Tait's *Catalogue of the Freeman Library, Owens College* (1894) appears to have

⁸ P. R. H. Slee, *Learning and a Liberal Education: the Study of Modern History in the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge and Manchester, 1800–1914* (Manchester, 1986), pp. 129, 153, 156–9; and T. F. Tout, 'The Manchester school of history', in *Collected Papers*, i, 85–9, at pp. 88–9.

⁹ JRL, TFT/1/962/4, letter from Powicke to Tout, 25 Feb. 1902.

¹⁰ Charlton, *Portrait of a University*, pp. 93–4. No records of the Owens College publications committee survive and minutes of the publications/press committee for the period 1904 to 1925 are now missing. The most useful available records for the period between 1904 and 1925 are the annual reports of the committee chairman in *The Victoria University of Manchester, Report of the Council to the Court of Governors*. A brief report of the committee's work, including a list of its publications for that year, is found in the calendars. Full lists of all the university publications since 1904 can be found in the final pages of the calendars for 1914–5, 1915–6 and 1916–7.

¹¹ P. J. Hartog, 'Original publications by members of the various departments of the College, 1851–1900', in *The Owens College, Manchester (founded 1851): a Brief History of the College and Description of its Various Departments*, ed. P. J. Hartog (Manchester, 1900), pp. 155–243.

been the only work by a member of Owens College history department to be published by the council of the college between 1851 and 1900.¹² The number of monographs sponsored and paid for by the council was low; they were published for the college by J. E. Cornish of St. Ann's Square, Manchester. All the authors of monographs, including Hartog, were members of staff from science or medical departments. It might have been expected that *Historical Essays* would have been one of these college publications. After all, the volume was published 'in Commemoration of its [Owens College's] Jubilee' and the senior editor, Tout, was a member of the college's publications committee. But no, this substantial volume of 557 pages celebrating Manchester's contribution to the 'federal University of the North' was published in London by Longmans, Green, and Co.¹³ Alfred Hopkinson, the principal of Owens College, acknowledged, however, that the volume 'by members of the College ... constitutes another valuable and fitting memorial of the Jubilee year'.¹⁴

Hartog's book illustrates the substantial research undertaken by members of Owens College, resulting in a large number of scholarly publications. The fact that the vast majority of this output was published outside Manchester must surely have strengthened the argument for a professional publishing house attached to the newly independent Victoria University of Manchester.

On 27 July 1905, at the end of the academic session for 1904–5, Tout signed off his first end-of-year report of the newly constituted university publications committee. He set out the committee's brief and then reported on its activities during the year. With Tout at the helm, its financial affairs were carefully controlled. During its first year, only three books were published 'for which the Committee has been financially responsible'.¹⁵ It is something of an understatement to say that Tout chose well. Each of the books was written by a distinguished academic and each became a seminal work. Sydney J. Chapman's *Lancashire Cotton Industry* was the first volume of the 'Economics Series'. James Tait's *Mediaeval Manchester and the Beginnings of Lancashire* and Andrew George Little's *Initia Operum Latinorum* were numbers I and II of the 'Historical Series'.

Chapman was professor of political economy from 1901 to 1918. He later joined the civil service and had a successful career as permanent secretary of the Board of Trade. He was deemed to be responsible for laying the foundations

¹² Hartog, 'Original publications', p. 163.

¹³ Tout and Tait, title-page and preface, in *Historical Essays*, pp. v–xii, at p. vii.

¹⁴ 'Annual statement 1902', in *The Owens College, Manchester, Calendar, 1902–1903* (Manchester, 1902), pp. 526–41, at p. 540.

¹⁵ *VUM, Report of the Council to the Court of Governors, 16 Nov. 1905*, App. VI: Report of the Publications Committee, Session 1904–05, pp. 150–54, at p. 150.

for Manchester's later international reputation in economics.¹⁶ Tait was Tout's trusted colleague and friend: from 1902 until 1919 he was professor of ancient and medieval history; and on Tout's retirement he agreed to take over the chairmanship of the university press – a role he fulfilled until 1935.¹⁷ *Mediaeval Manchester* was described by Vivian Hunter Galbraith as 'perhaps his [Tait's] best book';¹⁸ it was reissued in 1972 and 1991. Back in 1905 Tout reported that it had 'a considerable circulation' and there was a 'substantial profit accruing from [its] sales'.¹⁹ Little had been professor of history at Cardiff from 1898 to 1901.²⁰ It was Tout who persuaded him, in 1903, to accept a visiting lectureship (later readership) in palaeography. His appointment, which continued until 1928, was part of Tout's drive to equip all history students to read original documents.²¹ In his 1905 report Tout stated that stock of Little's book 'is practically exhausted, and it is a very satisfactory augury for the future that a work of this description, appealing to so limited a public, should have been self-supporting within a sum of five pounds'.²²

Little's life's work was studying the Franciscans. He set up a British Society of Franciscan Studies in 1907, with the emphasis on members publishing texts and studies relating to the English friars. The society published twenty-two volumes before it was dissolved in 1937. From 1908 the society's publications appeared under the imprint 'Manchester, at the University Press'. From its inception the publications committee 'allowed the imprint of the University Press to be used for a considerable number of selected works'. For example, the annual university calendar and other university official publications and prospectuses, together with two medical journals, were included in the publications list for 1904–5.²³ Soon this list lengthened considerably and

¹⁶ K. Tribe, 'Chapman, Sir Sydney John (1871–1951)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/32368>> [accessed 27 Oct. 2018].

¹⁷ The Tait papers are held in the John Rylands Library, Manchester. See an online catalogue, compiled in 2010 <<https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/manchesteruniversity/data/gb133-tai>> [accessed 27 Oct. 2018].

¹⁸ V. H. Galbraith, 'Tait, James (1863–1944)', rev. by K. D. Reynolds, in *ODNB* <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/36406>> [accessed 27 Oct. 2018].

¹⁹ *VUM, Report of Council, Nov. 1905*, App. VI, p. 151.

²⁰ F. M. Powicke, 'Little, Andrew George (1863–1945)', rev. by M. Pottle, in *ODNB* <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/34556>> [accessed 10 Nov. 2018].

²¹ JRL, TFT/1/706/20–21, letters from Little to Tout, 12 Apr. and 26 May 1903. Tout and Tait commented: 'By the appointment of Mr. A. G. Little [1903] ... the most urgent of the needs then felt for promoting the training of mediaeval historians has been met, and a course of lectures on mediaeval palaeography is now being given in alternate years' (T. F. Tout and J. Tait 'Preface to the Reissue', in Tout and Tait, *Historical Essays* (reissued Manchester, 1907), p. vi).

²² *VUM, Report of Council, Nov. 1905*, App. VI, p. 153.

²³ *VUM, Report of Council, Nov. 1905*, App. VI, pp. 150, 153.

included works issued by the John Rylands Library, the Chetham Society, the Manchester Museum and other less known bodies like Little's British Society of Franciscan Studies. It was always made clear in the relevant council report and accounts that although these publications appeared under the imprint 'Manchester, at the University Press', financial responsibility for them 'has not been assumed by the Committee'. For example, the *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* appeared under the press imprint, but the library was financially responsible for all publication and distribution costs. The annual list of publications for which the publications committee was financially responsible remained small and was rarely in double figures. During Tout's time as chairman the highest number was thirteen; and, perhaps surprisingly, this was during the academic year 1914–15.²⁴

Tout was diligent in recording updates of sales in subsequent reports. Here we occasionally glimpse Tout's personality coming through. In his report for the session 1905–6 he states that Little's book 'is out of print' and that 'it is to be regretted that the edition of Professor Tait's *Mediaeval Manchester* will before long be exhausted'. However, there is clear disappointment expressed at the fate of Chapman's *Cotton Industry*, which 'might reasonably have been expected to be in much greater demand'.²⁵

During the session 1906–7 the publications committee took the decision to reissue *Historical Essays*. In the preface to the reissue and in his publications committee report of 1907, Tout gave the reasons for this.²⁶ It was thought 'desirable to incorporate the volume in the [Historical] series'; and he thanked Longmans for releasing the book from their imprint. Henceforth it would be distributed by Sherratt & Hughes, the university printers and publishers since 1904. In the new preface Tout took the opportunity to describe how 'through the liberality of the Council of the University considerable progress has been made towards the expansion of the Historical Department'. New staff, including a professor, had been appointed and new courses were being offered. Tout concluded with praise for his committee and its work: 'The University Publications only began in 1904: this reissue makes the sixth volume of the Historical Series alone'.²⁷

²⁴ *VUM, Report of the Council to the Court of Governors, 17 Nov. 1915*, App. X: Report of the University Press Committee, Session 1914–15, pp. 234–41, at pp. 237–8.

²⁵ *VUM, Report of the Council to the Court of Governors, 15 Nov. 1906*, App. X: Report of the Publications Committee, Session 1905–06, pp. 160–7, at p. 161.

²⁶ *Historical Essays* (1907), 'Preface to the Reissue', pp. v–vi; and *VUM, Report of the Council to the Court of Governors, 1 Nov. 1907*, App. X: Report of the Publications Committee, Session 1906–7, pp. 171–7, at pp. 173–4, 176.

²⁷ 'Preface to the Reissue', p. vi.

Contemporaries were generous in their assessment of Tout's contribution in setting up and steering the university's publishing activities. Edward Fiddes, the first registrar of the new university (1903–20) and a fellow historian, wrote: 'Tout was not only the founder of the Press but its progress in its early years was due almost entirely to his energy and enthusiasm. By 1911 he had carried the press through seven arduous years with brilliant success and at an amazingly small cost'.²⁸ Tait, in his 1930 obituary of Tout, also alluded to the size of Tout's task, especially in its early days when he 'guided [it] through some troubled waters ... to financial stability and a wide reputation at home and abroad'.²⁹ With the clear approval of Tout, in 1911 the council authorized the appointment of a full-time secretary to what was still officially described as the university publications committee. H. M. McKechnie was appointed and remained in that post until 1949. He and Tout worked well together. In writing his tenth report in 1914, Tout attributed the 'increased output of the press since 1911' to 'the strenuous and unwearied efforts of its secretary, Mr. McKechnie'.³⁰ In this report Tout was able to include his own book, *The Place of the Reign of Edward II in English History*, in the Historical Series listing (no. xxi). In the preface to that volume, Tout again paid tribute to McKechnie: 'Every author who has published a volume under his auspices, knows well the debt under which he lies to Mr. McKechnie's watchfulness and precision ... but only the Chairman of the Publications Committee is in a position to see in its fullness the secretary's devotion and success'.³¹

McKechnie had experience of commercial publishing and, according to Charlton, he was keen to make changes in the set-up at Manchester almost as soon as he became secretary. He believed that a dedicated university printing press was the way forward. The council is said to have been more cautious and resisted McKechnie's plans for some time.³² Although there is nothing in the records about this, it is likely that Charlton's account is accurate, as he himself published the first volume in the 'Comparative Literature Series' in 1913 (*Castelvetro's Theory of Poetry*) and may well have been a member of the publications committee.³³

²⁸ E. Fiddes, *Chapters in the History of Owens College and of Manchester University, 1851–1914* (Manchester, 1937), p. 138.

²⁹ J. Tait, 'Thomas Frederick Tout', *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xlv (1930), 78–85, at p. 80.

³⁰ *VUM, Report of the Council to the Court of Governors, 18 Nov. 1914*, App. X: Report of the Publications Committee, Session 1913–14, pp. 237–43, at p. 237.

³¹ T. F. Tout, *The Place of the Reign of Edward II in English History* (Manchester, 1914), p. ix.

³² Charlton, *Portrait of a University*, pp. 94–5.

³³ As mentioned above, n. 10, no minutes of the publications/press committee survive before 1925. Membership of council committees is not recorded in the university calendars.

By the time Tout came to give his eleventh report in 1915 things had changed quite dramatically. The report was described for the first time as ‘Report of the University Press Committee, Session 1914–15’.³⁴ Tout said: ‘Since February [1915] the Committee has become itself a publisher, and has been admitted a member of the Publishers’ Association under the designation of the Manchester University Press’. Sherratt & Hughes, publishers to the university since 1904, had resigned; and Longmans, Green, & Co. had become general publishing agents of the university and would in future supply all booksellers outside the Manchester area.³⁵ It was felt that Longmans’ high profile and elaborate series of catalogues would give the press’s volumes ‘the increased publicity which has long been felt necessary if its works were to attain full recognition alike in this country, in the empire, and abroad’. Tout added that although the full effects of these changes ‘cannot be realised during the continuance of the War ... the gross sales of the year exceed the unprecedentedly high total of 1913–14’.

Members of the university – students and staff – were inevitably embroiled in the war. As chairman of the university press committee Tout took overall responsibility for maintaining a ‘List of Past and Present Members of the University serving with H.M. Forces in the War’. The first list was published in 1915 as a twenty-four page pamphlet.³⁶ A second edition, forty-four pages in length and thus reflecting the increased involvement of members of the university, was published in March 1917.³⁷ In the preface Tout explains that ‘the list does not profess to be a complete roll of all those associated with the University, who have in one capacity or another done service to the state at the hour of its extreme need. It is limited to those who have joined the naval and military forces’. There are 1,762 names on the list (in alphabetical order), of whom 181 are described as ‘killed’ or ‘dead’ and twenty-two as ‘prisoners or missing (sometimes presumed dead)’. Tout apparently planned a ‘further re-issue’ of the list which would include ‘a supplementary list of those associated with the University whose service has taken a form other than that of direct membership of the two war services but has involved

³⁴ *VUM, Report of Council, Nov. 1915*, App. X, pp. 234–41, at p. 234.

³⁵ Local booksellers would be supplied directly by the press office in Lime Grove.

³⁶ See *VUM, Report of Council, Nov. 1915*, App. X, pp. 234–41, at pp. 235–6, 238. The quarto-sized pamphlet was priced at ‘6d. net’. Unfortunately it has not been possible to trace a copy of this publication, and it was soon superseded.

³⁷ *List of Past and Present Members, University of Manchester, Serving with H. M. Forces in the War*, compiled by T. F. Tout (2nd edn., Manchester, 1917). The publication consists of an unnumbered single-page Preface, followed by 44 numbered pages. Copies of this edition are also scarce, and none is held by The University of Manchester Library. However, Toronto University Library has digitized its copy. See <<https://archive.org/details/listofpastpresenoouniv>> [accessed 27 Oct. 2018].

the complete or substantial abandonment of their ordinary occupations'. Unfortunately, there is no evidence that this list was compiled; indeed, it would have been a very difficult task. Looking at Tout's correspondence alone, we know of three women – Lila and Margaret Dibben and Florence Evans – who sought advice and references from their former teacher in order to undertake war work.³⁸ Gertrude Powicke, a modern languages graduate and the sister of F. M. Powicke, also corresponded with Tout. She worked first for the Red Cross in France and then served with the Friends' War Victims Relief Expedition in Poland, where she died of typhus in 1919.³⁹ It is also worth noting that the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps was not established until early 1917; and although eventually 6,000 women served with the unit in France, the first party of fourteen women arrived on the Western Front on 31 March 1917. If Tout had been able to issue another 'list of past and present members of the University serving with H.M. Forces', it might well have included some female army personnel.

In the March 1917 list it is recorded that Mark Hovell was killed in France on 13 August 1916. Hovell had gained a first in history in 1909 and held a part-time lectureship in military history at the time of his call-up. He had done substantial work on the Chartists and Tout had made a promise 'that should anything untoward befall him, I would see his book through the press'. He made good that promise in 1918 when *The Chartist Movement, edited and completed with a Memoir by T. F. Tout* was published by the university press in its 'Historical Series' (no. xxxi). Working entirely outside his usual area of research, Tout wrote the substantial final chapter, 'The decline of Chartism', as well as a moving memoir of Hovell. Tout displayed his personal admiration for his pupil and friend: 'I can truly say', he wrote, 'that I never had a pupil with whom I had a more lively friendship or one for whom I had a more certain assurance of a distinguished and honourable career'.⁴⁰

It must surely have pleased Tout that one of the last books he saw published while chairman of the university press committee was a second edition of *The Chartist Movement* (1925). The Manchester University Press report which covered Tout's final year as chairman was written by

³⁸ JRL, TFT/1/278/7–15, letters from Lila Dibben to Tout, 28 May, 28 June, 4 July, 24 Aug. 1916; 5 Jan., 26 Aug., 26 Nov., 15 Dec. 1917; 20 Oct. 1918. TFT/1/279/1–9, letters from Margaret Dibben to Tout, 29 Aug. 1915; 19 July, 16 Aug., 2 Sept., 27 Sept., 17 Nov. 1916; 18 Aug. 1917; 22 Feb., 28 Aug. 1918. TFT/1/336/1–3, letters from Florence M. G. Evans to Tout, 21 July, 21 Aug., 8 Oct. 1917.

³⁹ JRL, TFT/1/963/1–6, 8–10, letters from Gertrude Powicke to Tout, 26 June, 8 Aug., 6 Dec. 1915; 23 May, 16 Dec. 1916; 24 Mar., 24 June 1917; 2 Apr. 1918.

⁴⁰ M. Hovell, *Chartist Movement* (Manchester, 1918), p. xxxvii.

McKechnie.⁴¹ He paid a fulsome tribute to Tout, acknowledging that ‘the credit for any measure of success which has been attained by the University Press must in the first place be awarded to him ... a lasting memorial to his work will be found in the 250 volumes bearing the Press imprint, which have been published during his occupation of the office of Chairman’.⁴²

Tout’s close allies in the university – people like Henry Guppy, librarian of the John Rylands, and academic colleagues like A. G. Little, James Tait and H. B. Charlton – believed he viewed his role at the press as an extension of his work in the school of history. Although by 1925 the university press published volumes across more than twenty subject areas, the historical series, by then numbering fifty-five volumes, remained the largest by some margin. Little described how Tout ‘acted as a kind of general editor’ of the series, ‘examining manuscripts and revising those accepted for publication’.⁴³ Tait agreed that Tout ‘took a special interest in the historical series ... and was proud of the fact that nearly a third of these are the work of his pupils’.⁴⁴ But, Tout’s motivation in helping researchers to publish their work in the historical series was more than just personal vanity or favouritism. He was both a kind man and a pragmatist: we should remember that it was Tout who brought Little to Manchester in 1903 to help instil his students with palaeographical skills; and it was he who then championed the publication of Little’s esoteric *Initia Operum Latinorum* in the publications committee’s fledgling historical series. Tout saw it as his mission to help researchers to get their work disseminated and he understood just how difficult it was for those in departments within the faculty of arts in particular to have their writing published. This was a time when publishers invariably required a subsidy to take on works which they regarded as having limited appeal.

Tout’s activities as the founder of the Manchester school of history and as the ‘only begetter’ of Manchester University Press⁴⁵ were certainly complementary. Charlton, a future chairman of the press, linked the two most eloquently: ‘By building up the Manchester University Press, and by making it an instrument for publishing books of historical research, Tout fixed Manchester firmly on the scholars’ map of Europe as the University which had produced, amongst other publications, a series of historical books and monographs unsurpassed by those of any other University Press’.⁴⁶

⁴¹ *VUM, Report of the Council to the Court of Governors, Part II, Nov. 1925*, App. V: Manchester University Press Report, Session 1924–25, pp. 76–83, at p. 79.

⁴² *VUM, Report of the Council, Part II, Nov. 1925*, App. V, p. 76.

⁴³ A. G. Little, ‘Professor Tout’, *History*, xiv (1930), 313–24, at p. 322.

⁴⁴ Tait, ‘Thomas Frederick Tout’, p. 80.

⁴⁵ Fiddes, *Chapters in the History of Owens College*, p. 138.

⁴⁶ Charlton, *Portrait of a University*, p. 95.

In 1930 Henry Guppy, Rylands librarian from 1900 to 1948, said that he had been ‘privileged to enjoy [Tout’s] friendship and wise counsel during more than thirty years’.⁴⁷ Guppy was one of the staunchest supporters of the Tout Memorial Publication Fund, allowing it to be advertised and promoted in the pages of the *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*. Beneath one such advertisement Guppy wrote: ‘Those who subscribe to this fund will not only pay tribute to the work of Thomas Frederick Tout, by helping to carry it on, but they will smooth the path for the science and art of history in the future’.⁴⁸ Tout would surely have approved of this epitaph.

By way of a postscript, I will consider how effective the Tout Memorial Publication Fund was in ‘perpetuating Professor Tout’s association with the University Press’.⁴⁹ In the circular advertising and promoting the fund it was stated that ‘the nucleus of such a fund has already been formed from the proceeds of *Essays in Medieval History Presented to Thomas Frederick Tout*’.⁵⁰ This was the 1925 *Festschrift* volume, edited by Little and Powicke and printed in Manchester ‘for the Subscribers’, to mark Tout’s retirement from the university. Later notices about the Tout Memorial Fund, such as an entry in the *Calendar* for 1940–1, said that from these two sources ‘more than £1,200’ had been received.⁵¹ It was the interest on this sum which was to be ‘devoted to the publication of works in history, for the printing of which some form of subsidy is necessary’.⁵²

It has not been possible to find a list of the volumes published by the Tout Memorial Fund. According to the *Calendar* for 1940–1, four volumes were published in the 1930s: Edward Hughes, *Studies in Administration and Finance, 1558–1825: With Special Reference to the History of Salt Taxation in England* (1934); A. J. P. Taylor, *The Italian Problem in European Diplomacy* (1934); Bertie Wilkinson, *Studies in the Constitutional History of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (1937); and Thomas Stuart Willan, *The English Coasting Trade, 1600–1750* (1938). All four recipients of subsidies from the Tout fund had strong associations with the Manchester history school.

Edward Hughes was both a student and colleague of Tout’s. After a period as an assistant lecturer at Queen’s University, Belfast, he returned to

⁴⁷ Guppy, ‘Library notes’, *Bull. John Rylands Libr.*, xiv.i (Jan. 1930), 1–36, at p. 11.

⁴⁸ Guppy, ‘Library notes’, *Bull. John Rylands Libr.*, xiv.ii (July 1930), 299–332, at p. 306.

⁴⁹ ‘Annual Statement, session 1929–1930’, p. 857.

⁵⁰ Guppy, ‘Library notes’, *Bull. John Rylands Libr.*, xiv.ii (July 1930), p. 306.

⁵¹ *VUM, Calendar 1940–41*, p. 144. Notices in the calendars about the Tout Memorial Fund said that it was ‘instituted’ in ‘1926’, and that Tout died in ‘1928’. These mistakes were repeated in the front of the books for which subsidies had been made from the Fund.

⁵² ‘Annual Statement, session 1929–1930’, p. 857.

Manchester as a lecturer. In the preface to his book of 1934 he paid tribute to Tout: 'It will always be a source of special gratification to me to think that the first year's income from the Tout Memorial Fund should have been allocated to assist the publication of the work'.⁵³ Hughes's book was highly specialized and in the climate of the 1930s it would have been hard for a little-known scholar to find a publisher for such a text. By 1939 Hughes had got a chair in Durham.

The other beneficiary from the Tout Memorial Fund in 1934 was A. J. P. Taylor. Although he subsequently became a well-known 'popular' historian, it was a different story when he was at Manchester between 1930 and 1938; indeed, his time in the city and university was somewhat controversial. In later years Taylor wrote a detailed critique of the Manchester history school, past and present. Although he recognized Tout as a 'giant' whose 'shade still dominated the department' in 1930, he was otherwise critical, declaring that Ernest Fraser Jacob (then head of the department) was not 'a tyrant as Tout had been'.⁵⁴ It is unlikely that Taylor and Tout ever met. In the perhaps aptly titled *Troublemaker: the Life and History of A. J. P. Taylor*, Kathleen Burk tried to fathom the complicated story behind the publication of Taylor's first book.⁵⁵ Lewis Namier, who came to Manchester in 1931, was well disposed towards him, believing he was 'worth the attention of publishers'.⁵⁶ Namier approached his own publishers and thus paved the way for the publication of the book by Macmillan, owned at that time by Harold Macmillan, MP for Stockton-on-Tees and future prime minister. Macmillan accepted the book, but required a £50 subsidy, to which Taylor first agreed but then said he could not pay because he had spent money on buying and furnishing a new house. Taylor's most recent biographer, Chris Wrigley, knew Taylor well over a long period of time. He has suggested that £50 was a 'relatively trifling' sum for Taylor, given his wife's independent wealth and his 'ever indulgent parents'.⁵⁷ Manchester University Press took up the baton, agreeing to accept the book if Taylor first submitted it as a doctoral thesis. This he duly did and the thesis was passed. However, having declined to pay Macmillan £50, Taylor then refused to pay the university the fee of eighteen guineas required before the PhD could be formally awarded. Whilst Burk attributed this bizarre behaviour to Taylor's strong dislike of

⁵³ E. Hughes, *Studies in Administration and Finance, 1558–1825: With Special Reference to the History of Salt Taxation in England* (Manchester, 1934), Preface, p. viii.

⁵⁴ A. J. P. Taylor, *A Personal History* (London, 1983), pp. 102–3.

⁵⁵ K. Burk, *Troublemaker: the Life and History of A. J. P. Taylor* (New Haven, Conn., 2000), pp. 91–3.

⁵⁶ Burk, *Troublemaker*, p. 91.

⁵⁷ C. Wrigley, *A. J. P. Taylor: Radical Historian of Europe* (London, 2006), pp. 72–3.

the provincial PhD, which he regarded as unnecessary, Wrigley placed more emphasis on a stand-off between Taylor and Manchester University. The latter had recently declined to promote Taylor from assistant lecturer to lecturer, claiming a lack of funds. Taylor, who believed he did the work of a senior member of staff, let alone that of a lecturer, was outraged to be granted a further three-year extension of his contract as an assistant lecturer. The deadlock was broken when the Tout Memorial Fund, no doubt at the instigation of Namier, provided a subsidy which enabled the university press to publish the book in 1934. Taylor was thus saved from making any financial contribution himself and he was not required to accept his doctorate. In fact, *The Italian Problem in European Diplomacy* received good reviews and was considered to be an impressive first scholarly monograph, based on detailed archival research. It doubtless helped Taylor to return to Oxford in 1938.

Bertie Wilkinson was a student of Tout and remained close to him.⁵⁸ Wilkinson and his wife Edith were also friends with Margaret Sharp (Tout's daughter and herself a graduate of the Manchester school of history). In 1937, the year *Studies in the Constitutional History of the Thirteen and Fourteen Centuries* was published, Wilkinson left Exeter University, where he had been since 1928, and took up a chair at Toronto University. In some ways Wilkinson was not an obvious candidate to receive a subsidy from the Tout Memorial Fund. Yes, he was a medieval historian and a Tout student, but by 1937 he was a significant figure in his own right. Certainly he would have had no difficulty in finding a North American publisher for his book. Perhaps the university press wished to associate one of Tout's most successful pupils with the Tout Memorial Fund. It may reasonably be conjectured that the fund was already floundering: it had limited resources and these were challenging times.

T. S. Willan was an Oxford graduate, gaining a DPhil in 1935, the same year that he was appointed an assistant lecturer in Manchester.⁵⁹ He was declared unfit for active service and remained at the university throughout the war years. He later claimed that 'he taught every history course in the department' and boasted that he was 'the longest serving assistant lecturer ever!'⁶⁰ Willan did not become a full lecturer until 1945 and so he would have found it difficult to subsidize his own publications. Nevertheless, his DPhil provided him with enough material to publish seven papers and two books

⁵⁸ JRL, TFT/1/1286/1-13, letters from Wilkinson to Tout, 1916-28.

⁵⁹ I am grateful to Dr. C. B. Phillips, a lecturer in economic history in Manchester from 1969, for sharing his recollections of Willan with me. See also C. B. Phillips, 'Thomas Stuart Willan, 1910-1994', *Proc. Brit. Academy*, ci (1999), 557-63.

⁶⁰ Phillips, 'Thomas Stuart Willan', p. 559.

between 1936 and 1938, including *The English Coasting Trade, 1600–1750*, for which a subsidy was provided by the Tout Memorial Fund. Like Taylor, who incidentally rated Willan highly, it is unlikely that he had met Tout.

It is unfortunate that no records survive of how or by whom the Tout Memorial Fund was administered. It would seem likely that the fund was within the remit of McKechnie until his retirement from the press in 1949. In 1943 E. F. Jacob, professor of medieval history since 1929, had his *Essays in the Conciliar Epoch* published by the press; he thanked the ‘Committee’ of the Tout Memorial Publication Fund for a ‘generous subsidy’.⁶¹ Clearly Jacob had no need of a subsidy in order to see his work in print. It may well be that like Wilkinson twelve years before, Jacob wanted to give the press and Tout’s fund a boost, especially as he was shortly to leave Manchester. He was a courteous man and he recognized that Tout’s legacy was significant. Back in 1929 he had taken great care to reassure Tout: ‘I shall endeavour not to prove an “alien” in the 13th century sense. The good traditions must and shall be maintained, and I will do my best to give Manchester historians confidence & belief in the value of their work’.⁶²

In 1951 the university press published posthumously A. G. Little’s edition of the Latin text *Fratr̄is Thomae Vulgo Dicti de Eccleston, Tractatus de Adventu Fratrum Minorum in Angliam* with the aid of a subsidy from the Tout Memorial Fund. This history of Brother Thomas Eccleston is the major source for the coming of the friars to Britain. There is a certain poignancy that Little’s *Initia Operum Latinorum* was only the second title to be published in the university publications committee’s ‘Historical Series’ in 1904; and nearly fifty years later Thomas Eccleston’s Latin text, edited with a commentary and detailed notes by Little, was one of the last volumes published with the aid of a subsidy from the Tout Memorial Publication Fund.⁶³ In many ways this is a fitting end. Tout had taken a chance with Little’s Latin text in 1904 and was delighted when that book was self-supporting. It was in order to enable books like Little’s to be published that Tout’s friends and colleagues had established the Tout Memorial Publication Fund in 1930.

⁶¹ E. F. Jacob, *Essays in the Conciliar Epoch*, Preface, p. vi.

⁶² JRL, TFT/1/577/1, letter from Jacob to Tout, 18 March [1929].

⁶³ I have not found evidence of any other books published with a subsidy from the Tout Memorial Publication Fund only. Two books were each published with subsidies totalling £200 from the Tait Bequest and the Tout Memorial Publication Fund: B. Bonsall, *Sir James Crowther and Cumberland & Westmorland Elections 1754–1775* (Manchester, 1960); and *The Fourth Earl of Sandwich: Diplomatic Correspondence, 1763–1765*, ed. F. Spencer (Manchester, 1961). One book was published with subsidies from both the Tout Memorial Publication Fund and the Little Memorial Fund: *Guillelmi de Ockham, Opera Politica*, i, ed. H. S. Offler (2nd rev. edn., Manchester, 1974).

5. T. F. Tout and the idea of the university

H. S. Jones

Introduction

This volume is subtitled ‘Refashioning history for the twentieth century’. Other chapters examine how Tout refashioned the study and writing of medieval history and that was in itself a major contribution at a time when medieval history enjoyed more power and prestige than any other branch of the historical profession in the UK. Still, Tout was more than a medieval historian: most of his teaching at Manchester in fact lay outside the medieval period and he was deeply engaged with questions about the nature of the discipline as a whole and its place in the university. This chapter focuses on his contribution as an academic organizer who, as much through force of personality as by intellect, helped to reposition the study of history in the university and the standing of the civic university in the city. In particular, he foregrounded the importance of the research-teaching nexus for the humanities and the symbiotic relationship between the university and the city. So Tout was a protagonist of the research university and of the university’s civic mission; and in his mind the two missions were naturally complementary. In demonstrating the connection between these two moves, this chapter aims to make a distinctive contribution to the literature on university reform in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century England, on the assimilation of the research ideal in the humanities and on the genesis of the idea of the civic university in England.¹

History in the university: Tout’s vision

Tout stood for, and was assiduous in promoting, a distinctive vision of how history should be studied in the university. Michael Bentley has called him ‘the most determined anti-whig’, a foremost representative of the ‘first

¹ The standard study is now W. Whyte, *Redbrick: the Social and Architectural History of Britain’s Civic Universities* (Oxford, 2015).

H. S. Jones, ‘T. F. Tout and the idea of the university’, in *Thomas Frederick Tout (1855–1929): refashioning history for the twentieth century*, ed. C. M. Barron and J. T. Rosenthal (London, 2019), pp. 71–85. License: CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0.

age' of modernist historiography.² Committed modernizer though he was, Tout was in fact deeply indebted to two of the foremost 'whig' historians of the previous generation: his Oxford tutor William Stubbs and Stubbs's successor as regius professor, Edward Freeman, on whom Tout wrote a reverential obituary in the *Manchester Guardian*.³ Like Freeman, he was fond of showing that the innovations he proposed in fact had deep roots in the past.⁴ But he was a reformer who came to believe, soon after his appointment at Owens College in 1890, that the humanities disciplines at Manchester had a great deal to learn from the idea that the distinctive mission of the university was the production of knowledge and that they must commit themselves to that mission if they were to flourish in the modern university. In particular, four key features of Tout's conception of the study of history in the university can be distinguished: research-based teaching, graduate studies, specialization and collaboration. Together these constituted a powerfully articulated agenda for the future of the discipline.

First, Tout was a committed advocate of research-based teaching at the undergraduate level. This was a clear break with the kind of historical education he had received at Oxford, with its distinctive emphasis on the continuous study of English history and on assessment by means of the three-hour written examination. The Oxford system at its best imparted breadth of knowledge and a synoptic view of history, but offered little in the way of a training in the technique of history. Tout's department was the first to introduce the thesis as an integral component of the honours degree in history; and as far as can be established the history degree at Manchester was the first degree course of any kind in the UK to have a compulsory thesis.⁵ Oxford, under the regius professor Charles Firth, introduced an optional thesis at the same time, but take-up was very low and remained so until the thesis became compulsory almost a century later.⁶ Tout did not think in terms of a research/teaching binary, but instead made a potent argument for one kind of teaching rather than another: in particular, he

² M. Bentley, *Modernizing England's Past: English Historiography in the Age of Modernism, 1870–1970* (Cambridge, 2005), p. 101.

³ T. F. Tout, 'Schools of history', *University Review* (March 1906), repr. in *The Collected Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout* (3 vols., Manchester, 1932–4), i. 93–109, at p. 108; F. M. Powicke, 'Memoir', in *Collected Papers*, i. 1–24, at p. 2; T. F. Tout, 'Edward Augustus Freeman', *Manchester Guardian*, 18 March 1892, repr. in *Collected Papers*, i. 124–35.

⁴ T. F. Tout, 'International co-operation in history', in *Collected Papers*, i. 110–23, at p. 111.

⁵ P. R. H. Slee, *Learning and a Liberal Education: the Study of Modern History in the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge and Manchester 1800–1914* (Manchester, 1986), pp. 156–61.

⁶ R. N. Soffer, 'Modern history', in *Nineteenth-Century Oxford*, pt. 2, ed. M. G. Brock and M. C. Curthoys (*The History of the University of Oxford*, 8 vols., Oxford, 1984–2000), vii. 361–84, at pp. 372, 378.

maintained that the teaching of the technique of doing history was more important, and more useful, than the teaching of the results of the historical investigation of others. This was the central argument he developed in an article of January 1910, espousing the cause of a historical ‘laboratory’. ‘The educational value of our study’, he wrote, ‘lies not so much in the accumulation of a mass of unrelated facts as in training in method, and evidence, and in seeing how history is made ... [T]he study of history should be largely a study of processes and method, even for those to whom history is not mainly the preparation for a career’.⁷ In that sense, he believed, research-based teaching constituted the best kind of liberal education: a discipline requiring ‘a careful technical equipment’ offered a ‘better training to the mind’ than one requiring only ‘the woolly half-knowledge by which a smart undergraduate who cannot read original texts is enabled to write plausible answers to questions in examinations’.⁸

The second feature was his role as an early advocate of graduate studies. ‘Even more important than the honour schools is the post-graduate and research work of a university. The true measure of academic progress is the share which the university takes in the advancement of knowledge and the part which it plays in training its alumni in original investigation’ – so he wrote in the *Manchester Guardian*, addressing the broader educated public of Manchester and beyond.⁹ The university was precocious in using endowments to promote research through fellowships, starting with the Bishop Berkeley fellowships endowed by an anonymous donor in 1881.¹⁰ Both Goronwy Edwards (later director of the Institute of Historical Research) and Vivian Galbraith (later regius professor at Oxford) laid the foundations of their careers as medieval historians thanks to research fellowships held under Tout at Manchester.¹¹ After the First World War, with the new and modernistic title of ‘director of advanced study’, Tout devoted himself to the development of the new degree of PhD.¹² And he was strikingly successful.

⁷ T. F. Tout, ‘An historical “laboratory”’, *The Standard*, 3 Jan. 1910, repr. in Tout, *Collected Papers*, i, 79–84, at p. 80.

⁸ Tout, ‘An historical “laboratory”’, p. 82.

⁹ T. F. Tout, ‘The University of Manchester. Four years of development’, *Manchester Guardian*, 14 Jan. 1908, repr. in Tout, *Collected Papers*, i, 53–59, at p. 54.

¹⁰ E. Fiddes, *Chapters in the History of Owens College and of Manchester University 1851–1914* (Manchester, 1937), pp. 114–6.

¹¹ J. S. Roskell, ‘John Goronwy Edwards, 1891–1976’, *Proc. Brit. Academy*, lxiv (1980), 359–98, at p. 361; R. W. Southern, ‘Vivian Hunter Galbraith, 1889–1976’, *Proc. Brit. Academy*, lxiii (1979), 397–425, at p. 401.

¹² R. Simpson notes Tout’s role in persuading the university’s council to adopt the degree, which was introduced in 1918 (R. Simpson, *How the PhD Came to Britain: a Century of Struggle for Postgraduate Education* (Guildford, 1983), p. 122).

Of twenty-three PhDs awarded in the arts in Tout's lifetime, seventeen were in history.¹³ He supervised nine of these. Tout's own daughter, Margaret Sharp, was herself one of this early cohort, two-thirds of whom were women. Supervised by F. M. Powicke, she later became a lecturer in history at the University of Bristol. Manchester's history department had a strikingly high doctoral completion rate in these years, something that the historian of the PhD, Renate Simpson, attributed to the 'Tout factor'.¹⁴ In support of the new graduate school, Tout was instrumental in securing the establishment of the Philip Haworth research library in the history department.¹⁵

Third, Tout was a clear-sighted advocate of specialization as the route to the advancement of knowledge. Today the argument for specialization looks dated, since it is a favoured axiom of our age that intellectual progress comes from the crossing of boundaries, between disciplines and between academia and the world beyond. An influential strand in British intellectual life, from Tout's time onwards, has tried to combat the deleterious educational impact of academic specialization.¹⁶ But for Tout and his allies the cause of academic progress was necessarily linked to the advance of specialization. As an early fellow of the British Academy (he was elected in 1911) he argued vociferously for the creation of sub-sections, so that (for example) medievalists would not sit in judgement on modern historians and vice versa. He was also a leading proponent of the expansion of the fellowship, so as to ensure that there was a sufficiently large critical mass in each sub-discipline.¹⁷

Fourth, Tout was also an advocate of collaborative research projects, including international collaboration, the value of which he proclaimed in a presidential address to the Royal Historical Society in February 1927.¹⁸ Again, this was a position he espoused trenchantly within the British Academy when a rift emerged during the First World War over the question of expansion. It was Tout who, alongside his fellow historian Sir George Prothero, initiated the case for expansion and pressed it most

¹³ Data derived from Manchester University Calendar.

¹⁴ R. Simpson, *The Development of the PhD Degree in Britain, 1917–1959 and Since* (Lampeter, 2009), p. 470.

¹⁵ Powicke, 'Memoir', p. 10. The library was endowed by Alfred Haworth and his wife Elizabeth in memory of their son, Philip, who was killed in action in 1917. Both Alfred and Elizabeth Haworth were Owens College graduates and Alfred was an influential lay figure in the governance of the college and subsequently of the University of Manchester.

¹⁶ For an example in Tout's time, see A. Zimmern, *The Prospects of Democracy and Other Essays* (London, 1929), p. 69. I owe this reference and many other similar references to texts by Zimmern to Liam Stowell.

¹⁷ British Academy Archives BA 357, letter from T. F. Tout to I. Gollancz, 3 March 1914.

¹⁸ T. F. Tout, 'International co-operation in history'.

vocally.¹⁹ There was a heated debate about this, some opponents such as the classicist Henry Jackson arguing, perhaps spuriously, that to press the case for expansion at a key moment in the struggle against Germany would be to undermine or divert the war effort.²⁰ But fundamentally what was at stake was this: opponents of expansion believed that the primary function of the Academy was to act as a guardian of distinction and that expansion would dilute standards. This was, for instance, the position of the jurist A. V. Dicey.²¹ Advocates of expansion such as Tout, Prothero and Sir Charles Firth argued that what was at stake was the influence of the Academy.²² This was a particularly opportune moment to make this case, for it was in the First World War, really for the first time, that the humanities came to seem beleaguered in the face of aggressive advocates of the national necessity of investment in the training of scientists.²³ For Tout and his allies the Academy could only be influential if it were to be active, notably by sponsoring collaborative scholarly projects. 'It is high time that something was done to offer resistance to the extravagant claims made for the teaching of science', wrote James Bryce, president of the Academy, to Tout in 1916.²⁴ Tout was an energetic promoter of the Academy's projects, notably the medieval Latin dictionary, on which he chaired the Academy's committee.²⁵

In making the case for research-based teaching, for graduate study, for specialization and for collaboration, Tout used language that unashamedly assimilated history to the sciences. He advocated the establishment of 'historical laboratories' organized around libraries equipped to house and support seminar teaching. He insisted that the research ideal was 'no less applicable to history than to physics and chemistry', claiming that '[o]ne way of raising the level of the academic study of history in this country is to follow more closely the methods by which British exponents of the physical sciences have made their mark'.²⁶ By that he meant, above all, that the

¹⁹ John Rylands Library, Tout Papers TFT/1/975/26, letter from Sir G. Prothero to T. F. Tout, 21 Jan. 1914.

²⁰ British Academy Archives BA 357, letter from H. Jackson to I. Gollancz, 7 Jan. 1917.

²¹ JRL, Tout Papers TFT/1/975/41, Dicey, as reported in a letter from Sir G. Prothero to T. F. Tout, 30 May 1917.

²² JRL, Tout Papers TFT/1/975/43, letter from Sir G. Prothero to T. F. Tout, 3 June [1917].

²³ D. S. L. Cardwell, 'Science and World War I', *Proc. Royal Soc. of London, ser. A, Mathematical and Physical Sciences*, cccxlii, *A Discussion on the Effects of the Two World Wars on the Organization and Development of Science in the United Kingdom* (1975), pp. 447–56; Z. Wang, 'The First World War, academic science, and the "two cultures": educational reforms at the University of Cambridge', *Minerva*, xxxiii (1995), 107–27.

²⁴ JRL, Tout Papers TFT/1/143/10, letter from Lord Bryce to T. F. Tout, 24 June 1916.

²⁵ Powicke, 'Memoir', p. 18, n. 1.

²⁶ Tout, 'An historical "laboratory"', pp. 79–80.

research-teaching nexus should be strengthened through a greater emphasis in historical education upon ‘the processes by which history is studied’ as opposed to the results of those investigations.²⁷ The practice of university history must be orientated towards the advancement of knowledge. Tout was instrumental in the establishment of Manchester University Press, serving as its first chairman and promoting the press as a flagship expression of the university’s commitment to original research in the humanities.²⁸

Where did Tout’s profound commitment to a distinctive conception of the university come from? It was far from being unique or indeed original: what he did at Manchester was not radically different from what his Balliol contemporary Charles Firth tried to do as regius professor at Oxford. But Firth had little power and his efforts were largely scuppered by the resistance of the powerfully organized tutors – a story that Reba Soffer has recounted.²⁹ Firth’s counterpart at Cambridge, J. B. Bury, made a famous case for the scientific credentials of history in his inaugural lecture in 1903.³⁰ Tout’s vision had much in common with that espoused by earlier generations of university reformers: by Mark Pattison in Oxford and by John Seeley in Cambridge, both of whom were insistent that universities existed for knowledge and learning and not just for teaching undergraduates, let alone just for examining them.³¹ From one point of view, what Tout did at Manchester was to implement something resembling the German model of the research university; and there is indeed an extensive literature on the British reception of German ideas of the university.³² German contacts were strong at Owens College: Henry Roscoe and Arthur Schuster among the scientists, Adolphus Ward and James Bryce among the historians and Thomas Ashton among the lay governors had all lived or studied in Germany and were drawn to the kind of academic practice they found there.³³ But it is

²⁷ Tout, ‘An historical “laboratory”’, p. 80

²⁸ H. B. Charlton, *Portrait of a University, 1851–1951: To Commemorate the Centenary of Manchester University* (Manchester, 1951), pp. 94–5.

²⁹ R. N. Soffer, *Discipline and Power: the University, History, and the Making of an English Elite, 1870–1930* (Stanford, Calif., 1994), pp. 104–12; Soffer, ‘Modern history’, pp. 370–2.

³⁰ J. B. Bury, *The Science of History: an Inaugural Lecture* (Cambridge, 1903).

³¹ On Pattison, who had an important influence at Owens College, see H. S. Jones, *Intellect and Character in Victorian England: Mark Pattison and the Invention of the Don* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 178–218; for Seeley, see J. R. Seeley, ‘A Midland University’, *Fortnightly Rev.*, xlii (1887), 703–16.

³² Notably *Humboldt International. Der Export des deutschen Universitätsmodells im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. R. C. Schwinges (Basel, 2001); and M. Schalenberg, *Humboldt auf Reisen? Die Rezeption des ‘deutschen Universitätsmodells’ in den französischen und britischen Reformdiskursen (1810–1870)* (Basel, 2002).

³³ H. Roscoe, professor of chemistry from 1857 to 1886, had studied for his PhD under Robert Bunsen at Heidelberg; A. Schuster, professor of physics from 1888 to 1907, lived

not enough to invoke the ‘German influence’. For the concept of influence to have explanatory power in history we need to understand why particular influences had traction in particular contexts. The argument advanced in the remainder of this chapter is that Tout’s conception of the discipline was profoundly shaped by the context in which he worked at Manchester, where he served as professor of history (with changing titles) at Owens College and then at the Victoria University of Manchester from 1890 until his retirement in 1925. In particular, the decisive episode in Tout’s career was the struggle for the creation of an independent university in Manchester and the break-up of the federal Victoria University, which took place in 1903. Tout fought vigorously on the side of independence and his programmatic statements on history as a discipline were profoundly shaped by that struggle. These were principally the series of articles he wrote for the *Manchester Guardian*, *The Standard* and other newspapers and periodicals, mostly in the first decade of the twentieth century. They included well-known pieces on ‘The historical teaching of history’ (1904) and ‘An historical “laboratory”’ (1910), which were reprinted in his *Collected Papers*. These expounded such characteristic themes as the importance of technical training in the historian’s education, the centrality of original research to a proper understanding of the university and the value of research-based teaching to a liberal education. Crucially, these were themes that crystallized in Tout’s mind in the struggle for the decomposition of the Victoria University and the formation of independent universities out of its constituent colleges.

The making of the civic university

The context was the genesis of the civic university in England. There were no civic universities in England before 1900. There were civic colleges, of which Owens College was the oldest and most important, but only five institutions held university status: Oxford, Cambridge, Durham, London and the Victoria University. Oxford and Cambridge are not conventionally designated civic universities and for good reason: Cambridge did not become a city until 1951 and, more importantly, until well into the twentieth century

in Frankfurt am Main until the age of 18 and later took a PhD at Heidelberg under the German physicist G. R. Kirchhoff; A. Ward, professor of history between 1866 and 1897 and principal of the college from 1889 to 1897, was educated in Leipzig, where his father was consul general, until the age of 16 and became an authority on German history; J. Bryce, professor of law and jurisprudence from 1870 to 1875 and another authority on German history, had studied law under the German lawyer and legal historian K. A. von Vangerow at Heidelberg in 1863; and T. Ashton, cotton manufacturer and with Roscoe the driving force behind the extension of Owens College in 1870, had studied chemistry at Heidelberg in 1838.

the university dominated the city in both cases. Durham was technically located in a city, but a very small one, and the university's dependence upon the dean and chapter of Durham cathedral really made it an ecclesiastical rather than a civic institution.³⁴ More of its students studied in Newcastle than in Durham. London University was, in the nineteenth century, an examining institution which therefore had no organic connection with the metropolis: it awarded its degrees to students of London colleges and of provincial colleges and, indeed, to candidates who were not registered students of any college. The other institution of university standing was the Victoria University. This had its seat in Manchester but was a federal university rather than a civic one and its teaching was provided by the three constituent colleges in Manchester, Leeds and Liverpool. There was a deep-seated attachment to the idea of the federal university as a means of combining the establishment of new civic colleges with the maintenance of standards, which was believed to require both a jealous guarding of the award of the title 'university' and a clear separation of teaching from examining.³⁵

Things began to change in 1900. The early years of the twentieth century saw the reconstitution of the University of London as a teaching institution: from 1900 colleges such as University College, King's College, Royal Holloway College and the London School of Economics were now part of the university, whereas previously their relationship with the university had been no different from that of the provincial colleges in cities such as Bristol and Nottingham – and previously Manchester – which prepared students for London degrees.³⁶ But a metropolitan university is rather different in character from a civic one. Birmingham University was founded in the same year and can therefore justly claim to be England's first civic university. It was the creation of Joseph Chamberlain, colonial secretary, MP for Birmingham and former mayor of the city, who rejected the case for a federal 'Midlands University' in favour of a university that was explicitly

³⁴ The best studies of the University of Durham in the 19th century are now M. Andrews, *Universities in the Age of Reform, 1800–1870: Durham, London and King's College* (London, 2018); and M. Andrews, 'Durham University: last of the ancient universities and first of the new (1831–1871)' (unpublished University of Oxford doctoral thesis, 2016). On university–city relations in Oxford, see *Oxford: Studies in the History of a University Town since 1800*, ed. R. C. Whiting (Manchester, 1993), esp. ch. 1, A. Howe, 'Intellect and civic responsibility: dons and citizens in nineteenth-century Oxford', pp. 12–52.

³⁵ There is an illuminating discussion of the critique of the idea of the federal university by S. Rothblatt, *The Modern University and its Discontents: the Fate of Newman's Legacies in Britain and America* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 229–99.

³⁶ F. M. G. Wilson, *The University of London, 1858–1900: the Politics of Senate and Convocation* (Woodbridge, 2004).

identified with a city.³⁷ It was the foundation of Birmingham University that prompted the break-up of the federal Victoria University. Liverpool gained its charter in 1903 and Leeds in 1904, the Victoria University being reconstituted as the Victoria University of Manchester.

Owens College had first staked its case to become an independent University of Manchester in the late 1870s, when the key argument hinged on the shadow cast on the teaching of distinguished academics by having to teach to an externally framed curriculum – specifically, one shaped by the University of London. In the event, rivalry from Leeds blocked the Manchester case and the compromise was the creation of a federal Victoria University, with its seat at Manchester, consisting initially of Owens College only but shortly afterwards of Yorkshire College, Leeds, and University College, Liverpool. A generation later, the disruption of the Victoria University was precipitated, in the first place in Liverpool – still at that time England's second city in terms of population – where public opinion was increasingly resentful of the dependence of University College upon the Victoria University, based in Manchester. The campaign at Liverpool was driven by the spell-binding personality and high ideals of John MacDonal Mackay, Rathbone professor of history since 1884.³⁸ But there soon emerged a vocal campaign at Manchester, too. Tout was at the forefront of the Manchester campaign, along with his friends the physicist Sir Arthur Schuster and the philosopher Samuel Alexander. He was vocal in public, but also in private, since he and Mary Tout both corresponded extensively with former students to ensure that the proposal was not blocked by the votes of graduates of the Victoria University in the University's convocation.³⁹ He also worked closely with the leading Liverpool campaigner, the historian Ramsay Muir, who had begun his career in Tout's department a few years before – and would later return there as the first specialist professor of modern history.

Tout, Schuster, Alexander and Muir shared, to a striking degree, a common sense of what was at stake in the contest over the creation of separate universities. They insisted, first of all, that this was a contest that turned on rival conceptions of the university. They asked 'What is

³⁷ On Chamberlain and Birmingham University, see Rothblatt, *The Modern University*, pp. 258–9.

³⁸ On Mackay's role, see T. Kelly, *For Advancement of Learning: the University of Liverpool 1881–1981* (Liverpool, 1981), pp. 126–7.

³⁹ JRL, Tout papers, unlisted envelopes headed 'MT Independent University of Manchester' and 'TFT/MT Independent University of Manchester'. Mary Tout (*née* Johnstone) was an early student of Tout at Manchester. She was an active figure in the affairs of the university, serving as chair of the convocation from 1920 to 1922.

a university?’, whereas their opponents maintained that the question was a purely practical one about the organization of higher education.⁴⁰ For the advocates of independence, the struggle was fundamentally about the coming to maturity of the three colleges as teaching and researching corporations. That entailed their emancipation from their subordinate relationship with an outside organization, the federal university. Critically, it was also about the recognition of the maturity of the professorial staff of the three universities. It was degrading to them, as researchers with established reputations for original work, to be deemed unfit to frame a syllabus for themselves in accordance with their own conception of their subject. ‘When you have got a good man’, wrote Muir, ‘you must leave him, in teaching advanced students, to use his own methods. To impose upon him the methods of other men, even of men as good as or better than, himself, will only hamper him’. Independence would therefore enhance ‘the freshness and effectiveness of the teaching in our local University’.⁴¹ What was at stake, in short, was what German academics defined as one of their essential freedoms: *Lehrfreiheit*, or the freedom to teach what they regarded as true and important.⁴²

It is highly significant that Tout’s most influential programmatic statements on the practice of the discipline of history date from the years during and immediately following the battle for independence: his paper on ‘History at Owens College’ in February 1902; his *Manchester Guardian* piece on ‘The historical teaching of history’, a review of Charles Firth’s inaugural lecture at Oxford, which appeared in December 1904; and, finally, his piece on ‘An historical “laboratory”’ in January 1910.⁴³ To an extent there is a humdrum reason for this: now that he was professor at a unitary and independent university, he and his colleague James Tait had the power to shape the curriculum for themselves, so this was a propitious time for reflection on what kind of history should be taught at university

⁴⁰ This question was posed in T. F. Tout, ‘The future of the Victoria University’, *The Pilot* (1902), repr. in Tout, *Collected Papers*, i. 45–52, at pp. 47–8; and in his interview with the *Daily Despatch*, 9 Jan. 1902 (JRL, Tout papers, folder headed ‘Dissolution Victoria University Cuttings’, unlisted). Likewise Alexander invoked ‘the essential bases of a true university’ (S. Alexander, ‘A plea for an independent university in Manchester’, *Manchester Guardian*, 11 June 1902, p. 12).

⁴¹ R. Muir, *Plea for a Liverpool University* (Liverpool, 1901), pp. 55–6.

⁴² On this concept, see H. S. Commager, ‘The university and freedom. “Lehrfreiheit” and “Lernfreiheit”’, *Jour. Higher Education*, xxxiv (1963), 361–70; and P. Josephson, ‘Lehrfreiheit, Lernfreiheit, Wertfreiheit: Max Weber and the university teachers’ congress in Jena 1908’, *Max Weber Studies*, iv (2004), 201–19.

⁴³ These are all reprinted in Tout, *Collected Papers*, i. 76–79, 79–84.

and how it should be taught.⁴⁴ But, more importantly, there was a direct connection between the arguments deployed in favour of independence and the particular way in which Tout set about reshaping the curriculum. Advocates of independence pointed out that the existence of an external examining body led to a reliance on the traditional unseen examination, since the ethos was to separate the function of examining from the function of teaching. There was no room for (in modern terminology) the assessment of coursework or the production of pieces of independent research for examination. The Manchester physicist Arthur Schuster, in his evidence to the privy council, argued that the need to balance the interests of students from the different colleges in the federal university prevented 'a proper recognition of research work' in the examination of degrees and the recognition of laboratory work undertaken by the student.⁴⁵ This was a key point. Defenders of the status quo maintained that there was no reason why the Victoria University examination should not accommodate the different teaching practices of the constituent colleges, but the system they defended was one that separated the examining from the teaching function and implicitly required the teacher to teach to the examination. Tout, who was close to Schuster, fully agreed in seeing this as the essential weakness of the federal university: he emphasized 'the unity of a college, the unity of a university, and the unity of teaching with the subordinate and unimportant function of examination'.⁴⁶ Once independence was achieved, he adopted the thesis as a compulsory and distinctive feature of the Manchester curriculum. Significantly, it was something he discussed with Muir, who told him that his Liverpool colleagues would welcome this initiative: it 'would be hailed with delight as fully satisfying everything that has been asked for from this side'.⁴⁷ It marked a clear break with the hegemony of the unseen examination.

In other words, there was a powerful structural connection between the separation of the examining function from the teaching function in English universities and the survival of a model of historical education that concentrated on teaching the results of historical investigation as opposed

⁴⁴ Slee, *Learning and a Liberal Education*, p. 155.

⁴⁵ JRL, FVU/4/21, 'Proof of Professor Schuster, F.R.S. on Behalf of the Owens College, Manchester'.

⁴⁶ JRL, Tout papers, unlisted folder headed 'Dissolution Victoria University Cuttings', *Daily Despatch*, 9 Jan. 1902.

⁴⁷ JRL, TFT/1/842, letter from R. Muir to T. F. Tout, 11 June 1907; Slee, *Learning and a Liberal Education*, pp. 156–9. Oxford, at the initiative of the regius professor, C. Firth, also introduced an undergraduate thesis in 1907, but this was optional and only a very small proportion of candidates offered one.

to the techniques and methods of historical research. The dissolution of the federal university was therefore the prerequisite for an experiment with a new kind of historical education in which students would be taught research methods and would undertake a small-scale piece of historical research for themselves.

In addition, advocates of independence were clear that the dissolution of the federal university was necessary if universities were to be brought into livelier contact with their civic environment: making curricular innovations to serve the distinctive needs of the local economy; attracting new endowments from local notables; shaping the intellectual life of the city; and in general serving as a focus for civic patriotism. In all these respects the civic colleges were hampered by the sense that they were something less than universities and dependent upon a federal university that lacked a clear geographical identity. Tout, Alexander and Muir all shared a powerful sense of the social responsibility of the university and that social responsibility was focused above all on the city. That could have implications for the academic content of research and teaching: Muir, for instance, became a specialist in the history of Liverpool; and urban history in a broader sense was an important focus in Tout's department.⁴⁸ But even more important was the idea of the scholar as citizen. Tout, like Alexander, had been taught by the influential idealist philosopher Thomas Hill Green at Oxford and, as his widow put it, he learnt from Green 'that the academic man owes civic service in the widest sense'.⁴⁹ Mary Tout's memoir of 'T. F. Tout as a citizen' draws out the full range of his civic activity: his work with schools, especially as a governor of Manchester High School for Girls alongside the notable headmistress, Sara Burstall (headmistress 1898–1927); his enduring involvement in the university extension movement and for the body that became the Workers' Educational Association; and his role in the creation of the Ancient Monuments Society. He was also a key figure in building relationships between the University and the *Manchester Guardian*.

This is a significant point. Tout and his allies were proponents of professionalism, specialization and the duty of the academic to be a researcher. But they were also clear that the new university they wanted to create must reach outwards and build new bonds with the local community. What emerged from the independence campaign, then, was an articulate case for the formation of *civic universities*. That is such a familiar, even a

⁴⁸ R. Muir, *A History of Liverpool* (London, 1907). Specialists in urban history in Tout's department included his medieval colleague J. Tait, author of studies of medieval Manchester and of the medieval English borough; and the economic historian G. Unwin, author of *The Gilds and Companies of London* (London, 1908).

⁴⁹ M. Tout, 'T. F. Tout as a citizen', in Tout, *Collected Papers*, i. 27–38, at p. 27.

humdrum, term today that it is easy to lose sight of its very distinctive ideological resonance at the moment of its coinage in the Edwardian period. A civic university was not just a university that happened to be located in a city, but a university which was in some sense the embodiment and representative of the intellectual and educational life of that city – ‘crowning the education system of Manchester and of the surrounding district’, as Tout and others put it in a memorandum of 1902.⁵⁰

Muir, who was beginning to make a reputation for himself as an urban historian of Liverpool, made the case for the civic idea of the university most strongly in his *Plea for a Liverpool University* in 1901. There he argued that the new university would need to be able to tap ‘the patriotism and public spirit of Liverpool’ in order to secure a permanent endowment.⁵¹ But, more importantly, he also highlighted the civic mission of the university in the modern world: ‘The great cities of the modern world, like the great cities of the ancient world and of the Middle Ages, should be the centres of the most eager intellectual life, and should give to their citizens advantages which they could obtain nowhere else’. The realization of that ideal depended crucially on the existence of a flourishing university.⁵² Tout and Muir were as one on these points. For Tout a close bond between the university and its civic location was essential to a true conception of the university. This conception was expounded in most depth in a critique of the federal university which he published in *The Pilot* in 1902. A federal university he considered ‘but an artificial piece of mechanism’ lacking any real corporate life and frustrating the development of the kind of local ties which were necessary for a modern university to flourish.⁵³ He wanted a University of Manchester to ‘include in a single corporate body all the institutions which make for the higher education in this city’.⁵⁴

The university, Tout believed, would draw intellectual vigour from its location in a dynamic modern city and it would embody the best of the intellectual life of that city. Interestingly, this was not a vision that would allow for a plurality of competing universities in the city. The University of Manchester, as Tout envisaged it, would not just be a university *in* Manchester, but *the* University *of* Manchester. Indeed, for almost the whole of the twentieth century the idea of a city with more than one university

⁵⁰ University of Manchester Archives, OCA/25/11/, A. Schuster, T. F. Tout, S. Alexander, S. J. Chapman, ‘Memorandum on the Organization of the University of Manchester, January 1902’.

⁵¹ Muir, *Plea*, pp. 66–7.

⁵² Muir, *Plea*, pp. 83–6.

⁵³ Tout, ‘The future of the Victoria University’, p. 49.

⁵⁴ Tout, ‘The future of the Victoria University’, pp. 50–1.

remained practically unknown in England. There was, apparently, no suggestion that the new university should be named the Owens University and this was quite possibly because this naming practice would undermine the identification of the university with the city. Whereas colleges in Britain have often been named after benefactors or famous men or women, universities were hardly ever so named before the end of the binary divide between universities and polytechnics in 1992.

Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted three dimensions of Tout's conception of the university: the central place of research in the university's mission, including in its teaching; the crucial distinction between a college in a federal university and an independent university; the social responsibility of the university, or, to put it differently, the vital strength that a civic university gains from its interaction with its civic environment. The fundamental point is that these were all interconnected in Tout's mind. A university which lacked a commitment to the advancement of knowledge would not be worthy of independence and would lack the essential qualities needed to impact on its civic context; and, conversely, a college that was seriously committed to the advancement of knowledge would inevitably be frustrated by federal structures.

Two wider implications of this chapter should be emphasized. One concerns the English reception of the German idea of the university and the other concerns the idea of the civic university. The literature on university reform in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century England has given generous attention to both advocates and opponents of German models of the university, but it remains the case that that literature has focused predominantly on Oxford and Cambridge. William Whyte has made a persuasive case for a more multi-centred model of the English – and still more the British – system of higher education.⁵⁵ One aspect of this new history will be a different account of how foreign models of the university – notably the German – made an impact on the British system. The reception of the German idea of the university in the civic universities by no means simply mirrored its reception at Oxford and Cambridge. We need to understand more clearly how the German idea of the university gained traction in specific British contexts; and this chapter has outlined how this occurred in the context of the struggle for independent civic universities.

The civic universities were founded at a significant and distinctive moment in British social thought – what this author has called elsewhere

⁵⁵ Whyte, *Redbrick*, pp. 8–9.

a 'civic moment', a moment when ethical and social thought, under the influence of T. H. Green among others, privileged 'citizenship' as a central concept.⁵⁶ A good city was seen as the terrain in which good citizenship would grow. It is not accidental that the term 'civic university' was coined at this time. It was coined because the thing itself was new, to be sure; but the term itself is resonant of a rich intellectual context. To put it differently: a 'civic university' was not just a university in a city, but a university whose distinctive mission was shaped by a sense of commitment to service of the city.

⁵⁶ H. S. Jones, 'The civic moment in British social thought: civil society and the ethics of citizenship, c. 1880–1914', in *Welfare and Social Policy in Britain since 1870: Essays in Honour of Jose Harris*, ed. L. Goldman (Oxford, 2019), pp. 29–43.

6. ‘Dear Professor Tout ...’: letters from Tout’s students during the First World War*

Christopher Godden

On first examination, the evaluation of Thomas Tout’s work during the First World War is a relatively straightforward task. Full details of Tout’s work, including that portion published between 1914 and 1918, were compiled by his wife Mary Tout as a bibliography and included as part of the collection of essays presented to him on his retirement in 1925.¹ The majority of these publications cover his established research in medieval history. Two particular works, however, are worth noting primarily because they sit outside Tout’s normal historical interests and draw particularly on the events of the war. The first of these is an introductory note, dated 10 November 1914, that Tout completed in the third edition of *Germany in the Nineteenth Century*. The first edition of the book, published in 1912, had been based on a series of lectures organized by Professor C. H. Herford in 1911 and a third edition (incorporating new material by Bernard Bosanquet,

* My thanks to the audiences at conferences who heard and commented on earlier versions of material presented in this chapter. These conferences include ‘In the Shadow of the First World War: Social and Cultural Dimensions of Conflict in Global Perspective’ (University of Manchester, May 2014); ‘Manchester Soldier, Manchester Historian: Exploring the Life and Legacy of Mark Hovell’ (People’s History Museum, Manchester, June 2016); and ‘Thomas Frederick Tout: Refashioning History in the 20th Century’ (Institute of Historical Research, University of London, June 2017). I owe a special debt of gratitude to Stuart Jones and James Hopkins, both of whom have kindly discussed various aspects of this project with me over a number of years. I am also grateful to help from James Peters and staff at the John Rylands Library. The excerpts from letters in the Thomas Tout collection have been reproduced courtesy of the University of Manchester Library. My profound thanks also to Dorothy Clayton for her efforts in helping me complete the manuscript, and for correcting several errors. Finally, I would like to express my thanks to the editors of this book, Caroline Barron and Joel Rosenthal, for their continuing support for this project and their patience in dealing with me.

¹ M. Tout, ‘A list of the published writings of T. F. Tout’, in *Essays in Medieval History: Presented to Thomas Frederick Tout*, ed. A. G. Little and F. M. Powicke (Manchester, 1925), pp. 379–98, at pp. 392–4. The chapter by Joel Rosenthal in this volume focuses on the 1925 *Festschrift*.

C. Godden, ‘Dear Professor Tout ...’: letters from Tout’s students during the First World War’, in *Thomas Frederick Tout (1855–1929): refashioning history for the twentieth century*, ed. C. M. Barron and J. T. Rosenthal (London, 2019), pp. 87–103. License: CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0.

A. S. Peake and Ferruccio Bonavia) was in preparation when war broke out in August 1914. Tout's introductory note is useful as it provides some insight into his attitude towards the war only a few months after the outbreak of hostilities:

The sudden outbreak of the present calamitous war frustrated the hopes of those who had steadily believed that the best method to promote international goodwill was to dispel the cloud of suspicion by the spread of sound knowledge ... We have also to look forward to the time when an honourable settlement becomes possible without relinquishing the objects for which we have reluctantly drawn the sword.²

The second work worth noting here is a book, *The Chartist Movement*, which Tout completed for publication following the death of its author, Mark Hovell, in 1916. Hovell was recognized during his lifetime as 'one of the ablest and most promising men that the Manchester School of History has ever produced, a good scholar and forcible writer, and a man of strong and resourceful character';³ and his death in the trenches in 1916 had 'permanently ended a career of unusual promise'.⁴ Appreciation of Hovell's historical research today rests exclusively on his early efforts – presented in the posthumous publication of his only book, *The Chartist Movement* (1918) – to weave the history of Chartism into the social and political life of Britain.⁵ Hovell had joined the army in the spring of 1915 and before leaving to join his regiment in France in the summer of 1916 had discussed his incomplete manuscript on Chartism with Tout. As Tout later recalled in his obituary essay on Hovell:

In saying good-bye to Hovell in July 1916 I learned from him that he had almost finished the first draft of the book on which had had been working for several years, and I promised that, should the fortune of war go against him, I would do my best to get it ready for publication. Within a few weeks I was unhappily called upon to redeem my word.⁶

² T. F. Tout, 'Note to the third edition', in *Germany in the Nineteenth Century: a Series of Lectures*, ed. C. H. Herford (Manchester, 1915), pp. v–vii, at pp. vi–vii.

³ 'The late Second Lieutenant Mark Hovell', *Manchester Guardian* (21 Aug. 1916), p. 4.

⁴ T. F. Tout, 'Reports of Departments: History', *Victoria University of Manchester – Report of the Council to the Court of Governors* (Manchester, 1916), p. 163.

⁵ For further information on Hovell's life, see C. Godden, 'The life and legacy of Mark Hovell', in *The Legacy of The Chartist Movement: Centenary Perspectives on the Life and Legacy of Mark Hovell*, ed. C. Godden (*Bull. John Rylands Libr.*, xciv (2018), 1–14).

⁶ T. F. Tout, 'Preface', in M. Hovell, *The Chartist Movement* (Manchester, 1918), pp. v–viii, at p. v.

Hovell died on the evening of 12 August 1916 near Vermelles on the Western Front, exactly one month after receiving his orders for France.⁷ In the weeks following news of Hovell's death, Tout set about the task of fulfilling his pledge to his friend regarding the unfinished manuscript.⁸ Hovell's draft of *The Chartist Movement* presented a fairly complete story of Chartism up to the strike wave of the summer of 1842. A number of additions and revisions to the manuscript were made by Tout during the summer of 1917 and the completed volume was published in early 1918.

The identification and evaluation of Tout's published works which, in some way or other, related to the events of the First World War are, as noted, a relatively straightforward task. Yet there are other materials not recorded in Mary Tout's list of her husband's publications – some written by Tout, some by others – that are extremely important in informing us about the various aspects of Tout's thoughts and activities during the war. Important sources here are the annual reports detailing the activities of the history department that Tout submitted to the court of governors of the University of Manchester throughout the war years.⁹ In these reports Tout regularly commented on the number of staff and students (both undergraduates and graduates) who were in military service or serving as ambulance workers and munitions workers.¹⁰ A second example of surviving material detailing Tout's activities during the war can be found in the Thomas Tout papers, held at the John Rylands Library in Manchester. This archive serves as one of the most important collections – comprising notebooks, photographs and an extensive correspondence – covering the development of the British historical profession from the late nineteenth century through to the first quarter of the twentieth century. Many of the letters held in the collection provide clear evidence of Tout as medieval scholar, academic administrator

⁷ The announcements of Hovell's death can be found in 'The casualties', *Manchester Guardian* (18 Aug. 1916), p. 7; and 'The late Second Lieutenant Mark Hovell', *Manchester Guardian* (21 Aug. 1916), p. 4.

⁸ John Rylands Library, TFT/1/543/2, letter from F. Hovell to T. F. Tout, 23 Aug. 1916.

⁹ F. M. Powicke later commented that it was Tout and a few senior colleagues who kept the Manchester school of history going during the war years (F. M. Powicke, 'Mémorial', in *The Collected Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout* (3 vols., Manchester, 1932–5), i, 1–24, at p. 17).

¹⁰ See T. F. Tout, 'Reports of Departments: History', *Victoria University of Manchester – Report of the Council to the Court of Governors* (Manchester, 1915), pp. 170–4; T. F. Tout 'Reports of Departments: History', *Victoria University of Manchester – Report of the Council to the Court of Governors* (Manchester, 1916), pp. 162–4; T. F. Tout 'Reports of Departments: History', *Victoria University of Manchester – Report of the Council to the Court of Governors* (Manchester, 1917), pp. 157–9; T. F. Tout 'Reports of Departments: History', *Victoria University of Manchester – Report of the Council to the Court of Governors* (Manchester, 1918), pp. 154–7; T. F. Tout 'Reports of Departments: History', *Victoria University of Manchester – Report of the Council to the Court of Governors* (Manchester, 1919), pp. 159–63.

and the central force behind the creation of the Manchester history school.¹¹ Yet the Tout papers also provide a fascinating source of information relating to the social history of the First World War, with numerous letters written to Tout from current and former students who were making some contribution to the national defence.

This chapter will focus specifically on various themes in these wartime letters written to Tout by these students.¹² The details set out below make no claims to providing a complete coverage of the correspondence Tout received from his students during the First World War. It is impossible to know how closely the surviving letters in the John Rylands Library reflect the full nature of the correspondence. No copies of Tout's own wartime letters are contained within the archive and no copies have come to light elsewhere. The fact that Tout's letters have not survived is not surprising, with the majority no doubt lost, discarded or destroyed in the vicissitudes of war. All that can be noted is that the archive testifies to the personal style and habits of Tout, together with his clear efforts to preserve letters sent to him.

Santanu Das has explored the central position of the sense of touch in the experience of the First World War and the importance of wartime letters as touched objects.¹³ As archival research requires the handling of such documents and consulting these letters in the reading room of the John Rylands Library enables the reader to be physically connected with both the original writer and recipient, one becomes absorbed in the emotional experience of the material. As will be demonstrated below, the power and the poignancy of these wartime letters have not faded with the passage of time.

The vast majority of the surviving letters were handwritten, some in pen, some in pencil (the passage of time has made some of these particularly difficult to decipher), on a variety of different sizes and qualities of paper. One student, Stanley Ormerod Moffet, wrote to Tout on 23 April 1918 commenting on the physical conditions of writing and the poor quality of

¹¹ For a detailed overview of the Manchester school of history, see C. Wrigley, 'Manchester's historians: archives and industry', in *King Cotton: a Tribute to Douglas A. Farnie*, ed. J. F. Wilson (Lancaster, 2009), pp. 23–44.

¹² Some of this wartime correspondence was with young scholars who had not necessarily been students of Tout but who went on to distinguished academic careers. In the context of this particular volume, one example worth nothing is John Goronwy Edwards (1891–1976), a Welsh historian and later director of the Institute of Historical Research. Edwards had undertaken research at the University of Manchester between 1913 and 1915, before enlisting in the Royal Welsh Fusiliers. The Tout papers (TFT/1/312) hold 46 letters from Edwards to Tout (covering the period from 1913 to 1929), many dealing with his wartime experiences.

¹³ S. Das, *Touch and Intimacy in First World War Literature* (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 13–4.

the materials available to him: ‘I’m sorry to inflict pencil on you but this paper was not meant for ink’.¹⁴ All the excerpts from the letters presented below have been directly transcribed from the manuscript originals, including any idiosyncrasies of grammar and punctuation. Hardly any of the letters contain illustrations. One notable exception is a letter from Herbert Eckersley, written in the summer of 1916, which includes an illustration of the barge hospital to which he had been assigned: ‘The Barge ... has been most wonderfully transformed into a hospital, having a ward, equal to half its length, which holds 26 patients with ease ... Perhaps the plan will give you some idea of the arrangements, which are most successful’.¹⁵ In addition to the wartime letters, the archive contains a number of smaller items, mainly consisting of picture postcards¹⁶ and Christmas cards.¹⁷ One interesting item in the collection is the front page from a newspaper, *The Balkan News* (dated Sunday 25 November 1917), which contains an article entitled ‘St. Paul’s Donkey: a Local Tradition’. The printed article is unsigned, but it was sent to Tout by its author, Arthur Redford,¹⁸ together with a note dated Christmas Day 1917.¹⁹

Much has also been written about letters sent from soldiers serving in the trenches during the First World War.²⁰ The cultural historian Jay Winter has commented on the vast body of evidence derived from soldiers’ wartime letters (particularly those written by men who died in the war),

¹⁴ JRL, TFT/1/822/22, letter from S. O. Moffet to T. F. Tout, 23 Apr. 1918. Moffet (1886–1960) graduated with a BA in history (1908) and MA in history (1909) from the University of Manchester. He survived the war and later worked as a librarian at University College, Cardiff.

¹⁵ JRL, TFT/1/304/3, letter from H. Eckersley to T. F. Tout, 7 July 1916. Eckersley was an undergraduate studying history at the University of Manchester when war broke out in 1914. He served in the Friends’ Ambulance Unit and the Labour Corps during the First World War. He was killed in action near Ypres on 15 Nov. 1917.

¹⁶ JRL, TFT/1/1257/4, letter from G. S. Watson to T. F. Tout, 11 March 1916.

¹⁷ For Christmas cards, see JRL, TFT/1/560/19, T. S. Hurrell to T. F. Tout, Dec. 1916; TFT/1/1001/14, A. Redford to T. F. Tout, Dec. 1917; TFT/1/1284/8, W. A. Wildblood to Tout, Dec. 1916.

¹⁸ JRL, TFT/1/1001/15, Redford to Tout, 25 Dec. 1917. Redford had been a student of Tout at the University of Manchester and was the first male history student at the university to be awarded a history PhD. He was appointed professor of economic history at the university in 1945. In an obituary in 1961 its author commented that Redford had originally been a ‘specialist in medieval history under the great T. F. Tout’ before switching to the study of modern economic history (‘Professor A. Redford: an appreciation’, *Manchester Guardian* (29 July 1961), p. 3).

¹⁹ JRL, TFT/1/1001/15, letter from Redford to Tout, 25 Dec. 1917.

²⁰ See, e.g., K. Hunter, ‘More than an archive: intimacy and manliness in the letters of a Great War soldier to the woman he loved, 1915–1919’, *Gender and History*, xxv (2013), 339–54.

arguing that this body of correspondence is an ‘essential but relatively unexplored part of the cultural legacy of the Great War’.²¹ The letters in the Tout collection have received little or no scholarly attention. Turning to the recent surge of historical interest in university histories, we may note Tamson Pietsch’s study of university networks between c.1850 and 1939, which covers the impact of the First World War on academic systems but provides only brief references to the University of Manchester and nothing regarding Tout;²² Tomás Irish’s work addressing the mobilization of British, French and American universities during the war but again having no reference to Tout;²³ and, more recently, John Taylor’s study of the impact of the First World War on British universities, which provides an account of key themes (wartime funding for universities, the changing position of research), but again offers no discussion of Tout or the wartime letters.²⁴

In terms of the broader historiography, there are works that have explored the experience of university students (both British and German) and the First World War.²⁵ Similarly, there are numerous studies detailing the activities of academics and intellectuals during the war.²⁶ None of these make reference to the Tout letters. Peter Slee’s study from the 1980s details the development and professionalization of historical research in Britain and, while offering a discussion of Tout’s work and his students, only takes

²¹ J. Winter, *Remembering War: the Great War between Memory and History in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven, Conn., 2006), p. 103.

²² T. Pietsch, *Empire of Scholars: Universities, Networks and the British Academic World, 1850–1939* (Manchester, 2013).

²³ T. Irish, *The University at War, 1914–25: Britain, France, and the United States* (Basingstoke and New York, 2015).

²⁴ J. Taylor, *The Impact of the First World War on British Universities: Emerging from the Shadows* (London, 2018). It is worth noting here that Taylor consulted the archives of several British universities for this book, but did not include the University of Manchester archives.

²⁵ See, e.g., K. H. Jarausch, ‘German student in the First World War’, *Central European History*, xvii (1984), 310–29; S. Levens, ‘Elite identities: university students, military masculinity and the consequences of the Great War in Britain and Germany’, *Past & Present*, cxcviii (2008), 147–83; and L. Matthews-Jones, ‘“I still remain one of the old Settlement boys”: cross-class friendship in the First World War letters of Cardiff University Settlement Lads’ Club’, *Cult. and Soc. History*, xiii (2016), 195–211.

²⁶ For a general overview of this topic, see C. Prochasson, ‘Intellectuals and writers’, in *A Companion to World War I*, ed. John Horne (Oxford, 2010), pp. 323–37. For British intellectuals and academics during the war, the best study remains S. Wallace, *War and the Image of Germany: British Academics, 1914–1918* (Edinburgh, 1988). Other examples include M. Hanna, *The Mobilization of Intellect: French Scholars and Writers during the Great War* (Cambridge, Mass., 1996); and *Philosophers at the Front: Phenomenology and the First World War*, ed. N. de Warren and T. Vongehr (Leuven, 2018). For a fascinating overview of the work of the modern and diplomatic historian H. Temperley, see T. G. Otte, *An Historian in Peace and War: the Diaries of Harold Temperley* (London, 2016).

the story up to 1914.²⁷ Stuart Wallace's study of British academics during the First World War provides only one, very scant reference to the letters, namely: 'T.F. Tout received letters from former students at the Front'.²⁸ Peter McNiven, former university archivist at the John Rylands Library, also briefly noted the wartime letters in his overview of Manchester University's archives: 'Of particular interest are a large number of letters which record the involvement of many of Tout's former pupils in the First World War'.²⁹ It is surprising, therefore, that no scholar has yet attempted a full and detailed evaluation of these wartime letters.

Before proceeding to explore the specific content of these wartime letters, this chapter will briefly consider their wider cultural life in recent years. While it is certainly true that they have not been investigated as part of the wider literature on wartime correspondence, it is important to recognize that in recent years the letters have received attention as part of events to mark the centenary of the First World War. In early 2014 several visual arts undergraduates from the University of Salford incorporated themes from the letters into specially commissioned works, ranging from printed books to sculpture to textile pieces, for an art exhibition entitled 'Aftermath: 100 years of creativity from conflict', which was held at the John Rylands Library.³⁰ This was followed in summer 2014 by a short film researched, directed and produced by a group of postgraduate history students at the University of Manchester. The students had been taught the methods, theoretical and practical techniques involved in making documentary films and for their final assessment they decided to explore the lives of three University of Manchester history students who detailed their wartime experiences in their letters to Tout. On 25 November 2014, as part of a series of events to mark the centenary of the outbreak of the war, the University of Manchester held a special ceremony to commemorate staff and students whose lives were lost or changed forever due to the war. Once again several history students delivered readings from the letters sent to Tout during the war.³¹ In April 2016 the wartime student letters formed the basis of an episode entitled 'A

²⁷ P. R. H. Slee, *Learning and a Liberal Education: the Study of Modern History in the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge and Manchester, 1800–1914* (Manchester, 1986), pp. 153–64.

²⁸ Wallace, *War and the Image of Germany*, p. 75.

²⁹ P. McNiven, 'Manchester University Archive Collections in the John Rylands Library of Manchester', *Bull. John Rylands Libr.*, lxxi (1989), 205–26, at p. 217.

³⁰ The specific creative-response project based on the letters in the 'Tout Papers and involving students from the University of Salford was entitled 'Testaments of youth' and formed part of the 'Aftermath' exhibition <<https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/student-letters-world-war-one-6718231>> [accessed 12 Jan. 2019]. The exhibition ran from 13 Feb. to 29 June 2014.

³¹ For further details, see <<http://www.ww1.manchester.ac.uk/centenary-events/past-events/>> [accessed 12 Jan. 2019].

letter from the trenches’ for a ten-part BBC Radio 4 series, ‘Scenes from student life’, that explored 900 years of British student life.³²

Moreover, a First World War centenary performance – ‘Between the lines’ – took place at dusk on Friday 7 December 2018 in the Old Quadrangle on the University of Manchester campus. First-year drama undergraduates had worked throughout the semester to explore the student letters and then to devise and produce an outdoor, site-responsive performance as part of the university’s First World War centenary commemorations. In addition to large-scale group performances, the event used the enclosed environment of the Old Quad to intensify the experience and enabled the audience to move freely between spaces and to watch groups that performed original pieces which drew explicitly on material from the Tout letters.³³

Let us turn now to consider the content of these wartime letters. A relatively straightforward approach would be to utilize these surviving primary sources in order to explore the personal experiences of those who wrote to Tout. It is clear from details in the letters to Tout that he was requesting his students to provide him with information about the war and their experiences. One example of this can be found in a letter from G. S. Baldick, written in October 1915: ‘In fulfilment of my promise I will give you some account of my adventures at the front’.³⁴ Similarly, Arthur Langford Jones wrote in February 1916, commenting on Tout’s continuing interest in his former students and saying: ‘I should like to let you know where I am and what I am doing’.³⁵ George Stanley Watson wrote in October 1916 of his pleasure in discovering ‘that my letters have been of interest to you’;³⁶ while William Arthur Wildblood, writing in the early weeks of 1917, began his letter: ‘I am responding to your invitation to let you hear more of my

³² E. Cawthorne, ‘A Letter from the Trenches’, *Scenes from Student Life*, BBC Radio 4, 27 Apr. 2016 <<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0787djt>> [accessed 12 Jan. 2019].

³³ The performance involved 50 first-year drama students on several degree programmes: BA (Hons.) Drama, BA (Hons.) Drama and Screen Studies and BA (Hons.) Drama and English. The performance focused on the impact of the war on the university’s community, exploring the diversity of that community and the different ways in which individuals were involved in, or affected by, the conflict. This was an immersive environment, telling the stories of people who once inhabited the Old Quad.

³⁴ JRL, TFT/1/47/9, letter from G. S. Baldick to T. F. Tout, 3 Oct. 1915. Little biographical detail is available on Baldick. Letters in the Tout papers do, however, show that he survived the war, with the last letter dated 8 Dec. 1918 (TFT/1/47/9).

³⁵ JRL, TFT/1/609/5, letter from A. L. Jones to T. F. Tout, 8 Feb. 1916. Jones had graduated with a BA in history (1913) and MA in history (1914) from the University of Manchester. Correspondence in the Tout papers shows that he survived the war.

³⁶ JRL, TFT/1/1257/14, 21 Oct. 1916. G. S. Watson survived the war, returned to his studies and successfully graduated with a BA in history from the University of Manchester in 1919.

'Dear Professor Tout ...': letters from Tout's students during the First World War

doings'.³⁷ Looking through the surviving letters provides us with insights into what Tout knew about the experiences faced by his students. The following short excerpts, presented in chronological order, provide some indication of these key themes:

Letter from Robert Harold Bedford (1 December 1915)

The winter burst on us suddenly four days ago and after a day of pouring rain we had three bitterly cold ones with the result that men are being sent off with frost bite and rheumatism. More seriously however is the trouble we are having with rifles and machine guns and our fears of Turkish gas attacks ... [T]he Turks must dread the cold and war for all the Turks I have captured were miserably shod and only indifferently clothed and the Christians in the ranks cannot have much stomach for the fight at any time. Anyhow, we are hoping that they will surrender in crowds.³⁸

Letter from Mark Hovell (1 August 1916)

Behold me at last an officer of a regiment of the line and in command of a small fortress somewhere in France, with a platoon, a gun, stores and brother officers temporarily on my charge. I thus become owner of the best dug-out in the line, with a bed (four poles and a piece of stretched canvas), a table, and a ceiling ten feet thick. We are in the third line at present, so life is very quiet. Our worst enemies are rats, mice, beetles, and mosquitoes.³⁹

Letter from George Stanley Watson (3 September 1916)

I got up to the front line after three quarters of an hour trudge through mud and fallen trees ... I was very pleased to see such a good trench on the front line. It was an old Boche trench with not a few dugouts, most of which contained many badly wounded cases who couldn't be evacuated.⁴⁰

Letter from Maurice Vincent Gregory (16 November 1916)

We have been here since October 23 and strafed the Boche with gas last Monday morning before dawn ... My first impressions of a strafe are very vivid, especially of the bombardment which Fritz gave us when he discovered

³⁷ JRL, TFT/1/1284/9, letter from W. A. Wildblood to T. F. Tout, 26 Jan. 1917. Wildblood received an MA in history (1912) from the University of Manchester. He was killed by a shell whilst on duty on 16 June 1917 at Ouderdom, Belgium.

³⁸ JRL, TFT/1/88/3, letter from R. H. Bedford to T. F. Tout, 1 Dec. 1915. Bedford graduated with a BA in history from the University of Manchester in 1914. He was killed in action on the Western Front in March 1918. Bedford's death was noted by Tout in his annual report to the University of Manchester in 1918: 'He was mentioned in Sir Douglas Haig's dispatch of 7th April 1918, for gallant and distinguished service in the field' (T. F. Tout, *Victoria University of Manchester: Report of the Council to the Court of Governors* (November 1918), p. 155).

³⁹ JRL, TFT/1/545/24, letter from M. Hovell to T. F. Tout, 1 Aug. 1916.

⁴⁰ JRL, TFT/1/1257/12, letter from Watson to Tout, 3 Sept. 1916.

he was gassed. Casualties though were small: of about 250 men in our company, two were killed by a dug-out being blown in, two wounded and three gassed. I escaped scott free ... We have many amusing little experiences though life in the main is hardly a picture. The general attitude amongst the men out here is to make the best of a bad job. Everyone talks of 'après la guerre', as if the end was drawing near if not actually in sight.⁴¹

These descriptions, and others that can be taken from the letters, bear witness to, first, wartime conditions: '[T]he spectacle of lines of unburied corpses in front – some of them one's own chums – does not add any enjoyment to the condition of things';⁴² or 'Nobody fears the Boche. It is the conditions that fill us with self-pity'.⁴³ Second, they also illustrate the constant threat of death: 'The very first night the Bosche raided us and dropped bombs all around us but fortunately missed us'.⁴⁴ Third, they express repeated thoughts about the direction of the war and hopes for the coming of peace: 'There is a generally feeling out here ... that Fritz won't fight another winter. I hope so';⁴⁵ or 'A year of fairly good progress is ending in terrible disaster'.⁴⁶ These letters speak of life in the trenches and their vivid qualities have not faded with the passage of time. This very much fits with John Horne's description of letters from the trenches as part of a 'private information network' that conveyed to those at home the realities of the war.⁴⁷

In addition to conveying clear details about the experience of war, the letters contain occasional flashes of humour. For example, Robert Harold Bedford, writing to Tout in March 1916, recounted the story of 'two fellows in the artillery' who had applied for leave, one to get married and the other to act as best man. The best man was granted a leave of absence, but the bridegroom's request was refused. Bedford remarked: 'Little things like these cheer us up immensely'.⁴⁸ In a letter dated 15 February 1916 Arthur Redford reported on his experience of war thus far: 'Up to now the only service

⁴¹ JRL, TFT/1/445/3, letter from M. V. Gregory to T. F. Tout, 16 Nov. 1916. Gregory survived the war, returned to his studies and graduated with a BA in history (1920) and MA in history (1921) from the University of Manchester.

⁴² JRL, TFT/1/88/1, letter from Bedford to Tout, 5 Oct. 1915.

⁴³ JRL, TFT/1/88/10, letter from Bedford to Tout, 3 Nov. 1917.

⁴⁴ JRL, TFT/1/304/12, letter from Eckersley to Tout, 29 Oct. 1917.

⁴⁵ JRL, TFT/1/545/24, letter from M. Hovell to T. F. Tout, 1 Aug. 1916.

⁴⁶ JRL, TFT/1/936/17, letter from S. Phillipson to T. F. Tout, 10 Dec. 1916. Phillipson graduated with a BA in history (1912) and MA in history (1913) from the University of Manchester. He survived the war and later worked in the colonial civil service.

⁴⁷ M. Roper, *The Secret Battle: Emotional Survival in the Great War* (Manchester, 2009), p. 63.

⁴⁸ JRL, TFT/1/88/6, letter from Bedford to Tout, 18 March 1916.

casualties I have suffered are a severe cold and the loss of a pair of putties'.⁴⁹ Another example can be found in a letter from G. S. Watson, dated 28 February 1916: 'Once more we are in the frontline trenches and once more under the most depressing conditions. I begin to think that Hannibal's march must have been more enjoyable than this, for he could keep his feet warm'.⁵⁰ There are also occasions in the letters when the seriousness of the matter, particularly the horrors of war, is masked by a note of dark humour. One particularly striking example of this can be found in a letter from James Stanley Carr, dated 27 August 1917: 'At night, without lights, is a punishment and I wonder what are my sins to deserve such ... How I am longing to be back in England! A settled life is all I ask. Even the prospect of teaching is pleasant'.⁵¹

It would, as noted above, be perfectly possible to evaluate these wartime letters on the basis of what they reveal about the experiences of war. When reading such wartime letters we are, as David Omissi has commented, 'eavesdropping on the innermost thoughts of the soldiers' and 'looking invisibly over their shoulders as they write'.⁵² However, if we approach the material from a different perspective, we may also begin to consider how these letters offer opportunities to move us beyond some partial reconstruction of wartime conditions and experiences. For example, it is important to recognize that, due to the asymmetric quality of the surviving wartime letters, we are dealing with material that bears primarily upon the biographical details – the lives, thoughts and experiences – of only those history students and graduates (whether they survived the war or not) who corresponded with Tout. The voice of the student is present in the letters, but Tout's voice is missing. The full details of what Tout wrote are unknown, but careful reading of the surviving portion of the correspondence allows us to reconstruct certain things. One interesting example can be found in comments from Bedford, who wrote to Tout in the spring of 1916, thanking him for sending four volumes of Edward Gibbon's *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*: '[A]s we are fixed for a time I shall be able to read them at leisure'.⁵³ Perhaps one of the oddest details to be found in

⁴⁹ JRL, TFT/1/1001/5, letter from Redford to Tout, 15 Feb. 1916.

⁵⁰ JRL, TFT/1/1257/3, letter from Watson to Tout, 28 Feb. 1916.

⁵¹ JRL, TFT/1/167/7, letter from J. S. Carr to T. F. Tout, 27 Aug. 1917. Carr was studying for a BA in history at the University of Manchester when war broke out in 1914. He initially registered as a conscientious objector due to his Quaker faith and later joined the Friends' Ambulance Unit in April 1915. Correspondence in the Tout papers shows that he survived the war.

⁵² D. Omissi, *Indian Voices of the Great War: Soldiers' Letters, 1914–18* (Basingstoke, 1999), p. 4.

⁵³ JRL, TFT/1/88/6, letter from Bedford to Tout, 18 March 1916.

the wartime letters (possibly in the whole of the Tout papers), highlighting the contents of one of Tout's own letters, can be found in the opening lines of a letter from Redford dated May 1917: 'Since you last wrote I have been testing your Balkan weather forecast. Things happened pretty much as you said'.⁵⁴

A second theme the letters demonstrate is the extent to which Tout provided assistance for his students, particularly in the form of offering advice and responding to requests for references and testimonials. The details in the correspondence with one student – Phyllis W. Brown – are particularly important for offering further perspectives on Tout's relationship with his students during the war. Phyllis Brown wrote to Tout on several occasions throughout the war discussing her duties in the hospitals.⁵⁵ In June 1917 she wrote thanking Tout for speedily providing a testimonial she had requested: 'Thank you very much indeed for the beautiful testimonial. It was very good of you to take such trouble over it at a moment's notice ... [W]hen I am depressed and troubled I shall take it out and read it to myself and say "such a very kind and learned professor wrote about me" and then I shall feel able to grapple with any problem'.⁵⁶ The details given in Brown's letter are fascinating, as these are not simply the words of a student recounting her experiences of the war. What we see clearly here is the extremely strong, emotional link this student had with Tout. In order to understand the nature of this Tout/student relationship it is necessary to consider some of the evaluations of and reflections on Tout following his death in 1929. At the time of his death the *Manchester Guardian* carried two obituary notices. One commented on Tout's 'warm heart' and his genuine concern for the interests of his students which 'secured him their devotion not unmingled with awe'.⁵⁷ The second obituary provided a little more detail, and highlighted the following: '[Tout] gathered the students frequently at his house, counselled and admonished them individually, found them places, and watched over their careers. This entailed no slight addition to his always heavy correspondence'.⁵⁸ The best account of Tout's character and

⁵⁴ JRL, TFT/1/1001/11, letter from Redford to Tout, 28 May 1917.

⁵⁵ See, e.g., JRL, TFT/1/136/1, letter from P. W. Brown to T. F. Tout, 7 Oct. 1915; and TFT/1/136/3, letter from Brown to Tout, 26 Jan. 1916. It has not been possible to trace details of Brown's career at the University of Manchester. However, it is recorded that Brown was awarded an MBE in June 1919 in recognition of her wartime services in France. Correspondence in the Tout papers show that she survived the war and later went to teach in Hong Kong.

⁵⁶ JRL, TFT/1/136/12, letter from Brown to Tout, 22 June 1917.

⁵⁷ 'T. F. Tout', *Manchester Guardian*, 24 Oct. 1929, p. 10.

⁵⁸ 'Professor T. F. Tout', *Manchester Guardian*, 24 Oct. 1929, p. 6. It is almost certain that this second 1929 obituary was written by Tout's friend and colleague J. Tait. Almost

the relationship he had with his students and pupils can be found in Sir Maurice Powicke’s British Academy *Memoir*, which detailed his activities as an academic and citizen and was included in the first volume of *The Collected Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout* (1932). Details from this vivid biographical sketch are important and it is therefore necessary to quote Powicke at length:

When they speak of Tout, his pupils frequently use the word ‘great’ – not in a facile sense, but because they can find no better word ... [F]ew of Tout’s pupils were hero-worshippers by nature, and it is unlikely that the strong and distinctive impression which he made upon them and upon many others will be conveyed to later generations either by the study of his life or the study of his writings ... Apart from any particular qualities, mental or moral, he had a ‘big’ nature. He was sagacious and he was accessible. No barrier impeded the full and free expression of his strong good sense and genuine feeling. His pupils soon learned to feel at ease with him, while they never lost respect for an experience so much greater than their own. They looked upon him as a powerful protector; yet his complete indifference to forms and appearances relieved them of embarrassment. Without any pose he became, as though it was a matter of course, their natural guide, counsellor and friend.⁵⁹

In examining Tout’s role as ‘their natural guide, counsellor and friend’ (as in the case of Phyllis Brown noted above) we are led to consider the wider psychological dynamics of these wartime student letters. The issue here can no longer be limited to what the letters revealed about life in the trenches: it encompasses the ways in which the ‘strong and distinctive impression’ that Tout made on his pupils can be inferred through this correspondence. Michael Roper’s study *The Secret Battle* focuses on the battle for emotional survival of British soldiers during the First World War and explores the roles played by the families of these soldiers in this emotional battle.⁶⁰ Regarding the wartime correspondence in the Tout papers, the focus of this chapter now shifts to consider the role of a historian/academic in this

identical words can be found in Tait’s obituary of Tout in the *English Historical Review* (J. Tait, ‘Thomas Frederick Tout’, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xlv (1930), 78–85, at p. 80).

⁵⁹ Powicke, ‘Memoir’, p. 15. It is worth noting briefly that A. G. Little’s obituary of Tout provides no indication of Tout’s relationship with his students. One aspect of Tout’s character that Little did note, however, concerned Tout’s support for the independence of students in choosing their final-year dissertation subjects: ‘He was always most emphatic in condemning the practice of a professor choosing the subject for his pupils, or making them “devil” for him, without regard to their interests and tastes ... I remember at a meeting some years ago, when one of the speakers seemed to him to be advocating this method, he took up the cudgels in favour of the free voice of the students: “even they are God’s creatures”’ (A. G. Little, ‘Professor Tout’, *History*, xiv (1929–30), 313–24, at p. 320).

⁶⁰ M. Roper, *The Secret Battle: Emotional Survival in the Great War* (Manchester, 2009).

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emotional battle and the key role Tout played in providing psychological support to sustain young men and women caught in the theatre of war. Some important themes follow on from this. For example, we can see the enthusiasm with which students thanked Tout for the letters he sent them:

I think there must be very few people who can boast at having received such a long letter from so busy a man as yourself.⁶¹

I was very pleased to have a letter from you a few days ago. Letters are very welcome reminders of civilisation.⁶²

I was delighted to get your interesting letter yesterday and hastened to reply.⁶³

To one on active service, letters are events and your long letter ... received in the midst of a week of trekking was indeed a 'big event'.⁶⁴

Following from this, it is possible to find numerous references to student life, the nostalgia for experiences at the University of Manchester and repeated requests for information about friends:

Now that all my fellow-students of the University are scattered about the country, I am absolutely out of touch with the life of that institution. I should be glad to hear any news concerning the University, its staff and students.⁶⁵

Very many thanks for your letter in reply to my last one. I was very interested to hear how my friends in the History School are getting on nowadays.⁶⁶

I often think of Manchester and the happy times the first years had last year, thanks in many instances to the efforts of yourself and Mrs Tout.⁶⁷

I heard yesterday of a social meeting of past and present students of the History School. I should have liked a chance of being there. The need for some intellectual respite from army life grows greater with me every day.⁶⁸

⁶¹ JRL, TFT/1/88/1, letter from Bedford to Tout, 5 Oct. 1915.

⁶² JRL, TFT/1/822/11, letter from Moffet to Tout, 23 March 1916.

⁶³ JRL, TFT/1/1257/12, letter from Watson to Tout, 3 Sept. 1916.

⁶⁴ JRL, TFT/1/973/16, letter from A. E. Prince to T. F. Tout, 12 Aug. 1917 (written 'somewhere between Egypt and Assyria'). Prince graduated with a BA in history (1910) from the University of Manchester. Correspondence in the Tout papers shows that he survived the war.

⁶⁵ JRL, TFT/1/943/2, letter from R. H. Pilling to T. F. Tout, 2 Apr. 1916. Pilling graduated with a BA in history from the University of Manchester in 1913. The Tout papers do not indicate whether or not he survived the war.

⁶⁶ JRL, TFT/1/1212/4, letter from G. Van der Veen to T. F. Tout, 2 July 1916. Gerald Van der Veen graduated with a BA in history (1913) and MA in history (1914) from the University of Manchester. Details in the Tout papers indicate that he survived the war.

⁶⁷ JRL, TFT/1/445/3, letter from M. V. Gregory to T. F. Tout, 16 Nov. 1916.

⁶⁸ JRL, TFT/1/88/9, letter from Bedford to Tout, 23 Apr. 1917.

Such references demonstrate the extent to which Tout served as a tangible link to home, embodying the life these students and graduates had known before the outbreak of the war. These emotional links were, as shown in the third excerpt above, sometimes mixed with the desire for some form of intellectual stimulation. Not surprisingly for history students, this took the form of trying to understand the Great War in the wider context of European history. Writing from Mesopotamia in the summer of 1917, Francis Swinnerton Cook commented that he had been ‘reading a fair amount lately’, with particular attention to trying to ‘fix this war in its relations with previous European history’.⁶⁹ Similarly, Maurice Vincent Gregory wrote in early September 1918 that he was reading the first volume of Hilaire Belloc’s *General Sketch of the European War*, commenting: ‘It is quite good, but extremely Bellocious in parts’.⁷⁰ Another interesting example can be found in a letter from James Stanley Carr, who wrote seeking Tout’s advice on suggested reading as preparation for undertaking a research project:

There never has been a time when the civilians of waring [*sic*] countries have been so greatly affected. My particular knowledge however is more confined to those civilians living say some 10 – 15 miles behind the lines. It is interesting to note the gradual improvement in their economic position since the first hard days. Could you advise me of any publication which touches on similar lives? A contrast between Napoleonic lives and these would be intensely interesting to me. Or is it that trench warfare on this scale had made such a contrast of no account? I should be glad of your view because I could spend what leisure I have preparing some account of the same.⁷¹

A second example worth highlighting is the emotional support Tout provided to those expressing questions and concerns about the future direction of the war, as well as the future direction of their lives once war had ended. Two letters from Redford – the first from May 1917, the other written two days before the armistice was signed in November 1918 – are worth quoting:

If you can find time to write, please let me know (in strict confidence) whether the war will be over this year or not. That is the only question in which I am really interested at present.⁷²

⁶⁹ JRL, TFT/1/215/7, letter from F. S. Cook to T. F. Tout, 23 Aug. 1917. Cook graduated with a BA in history from the University of Manchester in 1914. Correspondence in the Tout papers shows that he survived the war.

⁷⁰ JRL, TFT/1/445/13, letter from Gregory to Tout, 9 Oct. 1918.

⁷¹ JRL, TFT/1/167/8, letter from Carr to Tout, 26 Jan. 1918.

⁷² JRL, TFT/1/1001/11, letter from Redford to Tout, 28 May 1917.

Most young people of my own age seem frankly undecided on the subject of post-war employment; I'm with them! How can one decide what to do when nobody (not even the Ministry of Reconstruction) claims to know what the world will be like when peace breaks out? What a problem it will be for everybody concerned!⁷³

Another fascinating letter covering these same issues was written by Baldick in December 1918. Here we see the details of a student summarizing his experiences of the war and seeking Tout's help and advice in rebuilding his life now that the war had ended:

As you will perhaps recall I joined the forces at once in August 1914, was seriously wounded in Sept. 1915, & on recovery gained a commission in Feb. 1917 and have since that date served in France as an officer ... I continued to be again wounded, gassed & in addition blown up bodily three times, and buried twice ... The question that [now] occupies my thoughts more of course is how & when to take up the threads dropped in 1914. I'm fully alive to all the difficulties & am not very clear as to the best way in which to approach them. I should therefore be very glad of an interview & your advice if possible ... If you have an hour to spare on Wednesday, Thursday or Friday I could slip over to Manchester & should be very glad to do so.⁷⁴

In conclusion, it can be seen that relationships between Tout and his students were sustained through regular correspondence during the First World War. An examination of the surviving correspondence reveals much about the experiences and mentalities of these young men and women during the war, while also highlighting the enormous respect they had for their teacher. One theme which is palpable in the correspondence is the central role Tout played in the lives of his students, primarily as a provider of assistance, advice and emotional support for those dealing with the horrors of war and with the uncertainties facing those fortunate enough to survive as they sought to rebuild their lives. Even though we are sadly lacking Tout's side of the correspondence, the opportunity to explore the relationships conducted via letter allows us to gain some understanding of the ways in which these young men and women sought to maintain links with their pre-war lives and the high value they placed on their association with Tout. The emotional power of these letters reflects these experiences. The letters enable us to capture aspects of Tout's character, while also

⁷³ JRL, TFT/1/1001/17, letter from Redford to Tout, 9 Nov. 1918.

⁷⁴ JRL, TFT/1/47/9, letter from Baldick to Tout, 8 Dec. 1918. It should be recorded that this excerpt from Baldick's letter formed the basis of the large-scale group performance as part of the 'Between the lines' event that took place at the University of Manchester on 7 Dec. 2018.

'Dear Professor Tout ...': letters from Tout's students during the First World War
providing fascinating insights into the history of emotional survival during
the First World War.

II. Tout as a political historian

7. Tout and the reign of Edward II

Seymour Phillips

Thomas Frederick Tout looms large over the writing of the history of the reign in his four works, beginning with his 8,000-word essay on Edward II for the *Dictionary of National Biography* in 1888.¹ Tout's Edward II biography was only one of 240 that he contributed to the *DNB*² and initially makes his later transition to the writing of administrative history all the more surprising, though, as will become apparent, there was a reason for the change in direction. He also treated Edward II's reign in his *History of England from 1216 to 1377*, first published by Longmans Green in 1905.³ This was the first attempt at a scholarly history of the reign since the publication of Reinhold Pauli's *Geschichte von England* in 1855 and the second volume of William Stubbs's *Constitutional History of England* in 1875.⁴ Although in his 1888 *DNB* essay on Edward II Tout had described these two books as 'the best modern accounts of the reign', there was a pressing need for an up-to-date treatment.⁵ Until the publication in 1952 of A. R. Myers's *England in the Late Middle Ages* in the Pelican History of England series and May

¹ I was very conscious while writing the Edward II entry for the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* published in 2004 that I had large shoes to fill. For a survey of earlier historical writing on Edward II and his reign, see S. Phillips, *Edward II* (New Haven, Conn. and London, 2010), ch. 1, 'The reputation of a king', pp. 5–32, and n. 4 below.

² See V. H. Galbraith, 'T. F. Tout', rev. by P. R. H. Slee, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), lv. 90–3, at pp. 91–2.

³ Reprinted in 1920.

⁴ Although written in England, where Pauli (1823–82) spent part of his career, his book, covering the period 1272–1399, was published at Gotha in Germany as part of a series on the states of Europe intended for a German readership and never appeared in an English translation. It was based on such archive and chronicle material as was then available in print. Edward II's reign is covered in vol. iv (Gotha, 1855), at pp. 199–304. In addition to Stubbs's *The Constitutional History of England in its Origin and Development* (Oxford, 1875), Tout also had the benefit of the many chronicle editions which Stubbs, his former Oxford tutor, had contributed to the Rolls Series. Stubbs's work was, however, too long and too detailed for a general readership and, although this was not apparent in his 1905 work, Tout was later to disagree fundamentally with Stubbs's emphasis on parliament.

⁵ *DNB* (1888), xvii. 48; *DNB* (1908 edition), vi. 466.

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McKisack's volume *Fourteenth-Century England, 1307–1399* in the *Oxford History of England* in 1959, Tout's book was the most readily available text on thirteenth- and fourteenth-century England. It was reprinted as late as 1969 and even now it remains available as an e-book.

Tout's other contributions were more specialized in content and in their intended readership: *The Place of the Reign of Edward II in English History*, based on the Ford lectures delivered in Oxford in 1913, published in an expanded form by the Manchester University Press in 1914 and republished in a revised edition in 1936;⁶ and finally his *magnum opus*, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Mediaeval England*, covering the twelfth to the end of the fourteenth century, published by Manchester University Press in six volumes, starting in 1920 and completed just before his death in 1929, although the final volumes did not appear in print until four years later. In this work the reign of Edward II is covered in the second volume.⁷

Tout was a pioneer in the extent and range of his research in the unpublished records of the English crown, especially those belonging to the exchequer and the royal household. In his work at Manchester University he carefully trained his students in the techniques of historical research; a number of his pupils, such as Margaret Deanesly,⁸ Sir Maurice Powicke,⁹ Hilda Johnstone,¹⁰ Vivian Galbraith,¹¹ Sir Goronwy Edwards¹² and W. T. Waugh¹³ were to become highly distinguished professional historians in their own right.¹⁴ He was not, however, alone among his contemporaries in

⁶ T. F. Tout, *The Place of the Reign of Edward II in English History* (Manchester, 1914) <<https://archive.org/details/placeofreignofedootout/page/n5>> [accessed 19 Dec. 2018]. The revision was undertaken by his sister-in-law and former pupil, Hilda Johnstone, who was careful to distinguish between Tout's original text and her additions.

⁷ T. F. Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Mediaeval England* <<https://archive.org/details/chaptersinadminortout/page/n5>> [accessed 19 Dec. 2018].

⁸ Professor of medieval ecclesiastical history at Royal Holloway College and then at Bedford College, University of London.

⁹ Regius professor of modern history, University of Oxford, 1928–47.

¹⁰ Professor of medieval history, Royal Holloway College, University of London, 1922–42.

¹¹ Director of the Institute of Historical Research, University of London, 1944–8; regius professor of modern history, University of Oxford, 1948–57.

¹² A graduate of Oxford, Edwards became a research student at Manchester in 1913 before returning to Oxford after war service. In 1948 he became director of the Institute of Historical Research and professor of history in the University of London, retiring in 1960.

¹³ Waugh became professor of medieval history at McGill University in Montreal.

¹⁴ In the 'Contents' of his *Festschrift*, *Essays in Medieval History presented to Thomas Frederick Tout*, ed. A. G. Little and F. M. Powicke (Manchester, 1925), his former pupils are marked. In addition to the names already cited, these included Agnes Sandys, Dorothy Broome, his daughter Margaret Sharp (who later taught at Bristol University), Florence Higham and his wife Mary Tout (*née* Johnstone).

his exploration of official records. In 1893 F. W. Maitland had published his edition of the *Memoranda de Parlamento* of 1305, which drew attention to the enormous number of petitions surviving in the Public Record Office.¹⁵ Another example is J. E. Morris, whose book on Edward I's campaigns in Wales was published in 1901.¹⁶ Tout's review in the *English Historical Review* in the following year praised Morris's use of record sources while at the same time showing his own extensive knowledge both of Welsh history and of France.¹⁷ There was also a young graduate of the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, James Conway Davies, who was working on a vast study of the reign of Edward II which won the Thirlwall essay prize at Cambridge in 1917 and was published by the university press a year later.¹⁸

Tout knew of Davies's work and could well have been resentful of the younger scholar's apparent trespassing on his ground. However, this does not seem to have been the case, since Tout referred generously to the large amount of Public Record Office material extracted and published by Davies,¹⁹ while Davies also acknowledged the 'counsel and advice which Professor Tout gave me ungrudgingly'.²⁰ Davies explored the resources of

¹⁵ *Memoranda de Parlamento, or Records of the Parliament holden at Westminster, 25 Edw I*, ed. F. W. Maitland (Rolls Series, xcvi, London, 1893). This is an edition of what is now The National Archives of the UK, SC 9/12. For a more recent edition see *Parliament Rolls of Medieval England, 1275–1504 (PROME)*, ed. C. Given-Wilson (16 vols., Woodbridge, 2005), Lent Parliament 1305 and Original Documents Relating to the Parliaments of Edward I, Roll 12 and Vetus Codex, 1305. In the eighteenth century many transcripts of petitions derived from a variety of manuscript sources had been published in an uncritical manner by the editors of the *Rotuli Parliamentorum*, ed. J. Strachey et al. (London, 1767).

¹⁶ J. E. Morris, *The Welsh Wars of Edward I* (Oxford, 1901; repr. 1968 and most recently 2018).

¹⁷ Tout, review of J. E. Morris, *The Welsh Wars of Edward I* (Oxford, 1901), *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xvii (1902), 557–60.

¹⁸ J. C. Davies, *The Baronial Opposition to Edward II: its Character and Policy* (Cambridge, 1918; repr. London, 1968); reviewed by Charles Johnson in *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xxxv (1920), 122–5. On a personal note, James Conway Davies's brother, Harold Davies, was married to a cousin of mine; I knew both well. While I was still an undergraduate at King's College London they put me in touch with Conway Davies and I met him once at the Public Record Office in Chancery Lane. I had no idea at that stage that I should eventually find myself doing research on the reign of Edward II. Later, when I was trying to focus my own research and hoping that Davies and Tout between them had not exhausted the field, I was struck by Davies's references to the amount of record material relating to the earl of Pembroke and by his description of him as the earl 'who alone of the men of the reign seems to be worthy of a biography' (Davies, *Baronial Opposition*, p. vii). Tout, too, formed a high opinion of Pembroke (*Place of the Reign*, pp. 17–8). This turned out to be a very fruitful line of research.

¹⁹ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 41, 57; ii. 188 n.1.

²⁰ Davies, *Baronial Opposition*, p. vi.

the PRO more thoroughly than Tout,²¹ who understandably concentrated on financial records and does not, for example, seem to have made as much use as Davies of important sources such as Ancient Correspondence (now TNA, SC 1) and Ancient Petitions (now TNA, SC 8), although he was, of course, fully aware of them.²²

However, both scholars missed some significant source material which should under normal conditions have been readily available to them. The most notable omissions are the original wardrobe books in the library of the Society of Antiquaries of London MSS. 119–121, the Wardrobe Books for 28 Edward I and 10 and 11 Edward II; and MS. 122, the chamber account book for 18–20 Edward II. Both knew and consulted the edition of MS. 119 which had been published by the society in the eighteenth century,²³ but neither seems to have looked at MSS. 120, 121 and 122. This is all the more surprising since the contents of these three books had been described by the antiquarian scholar Thomas Stapleton as long ago as 1836.²⁴ Tout knew that there were household records in the library of the Society of Antiquaries and was also aware of Stapleton's essay. However, he may not have appreciated the full extent of the material since he described Stapleton's essay as 'printed fragments' and seems to have been under the impression that they were rolls rather than books.²⁵ Davies made no reference either to Stapleton or to the Society of Antiquaries manuscripts.²⁶ Wartime conditions, as was the case in the Public Record Office in Chancery Lane, may also have restricted access to the library of the Society of Antiquaries while Tout and Davies were conducting their research.²⁷

²¹ On Davies's use of the unpublished records of the Chancery, Special Collections and Exchequer see Davies, pp. v–vi.

²² Initially I also formed the impression that Tout made less use than Davies of the very important class of Chancery Warrants (now TNA, C 81) but in fact he said much about them as a source: see, e.g., *Place of the Reign*, pp. 4, 154, n.1; and *Chapters*, i. 56–62. In a note to the 1936 edition H. Johnstone referred to the *Calendar of Chancery Warrants, 1244–1326*, which was published only in 1927, too late for Tout to have used (*Place of the Reign*, p. 2). See n. 21 above.

²³ *Liber Quotidianus Garderobae, 28 Edward I*, ed. J. Topham (London, 1787).

²⁴ T. Stapleton, 'A brief summary of the wardrobe accounts of the tenth, eleventh, and fourteenth years of King Edward the Second', *Archaeologia*, xxvi (1836), 318–45.

²⁵ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 48; ii. 300. In *Place of the Reign* he refers to the wardrobe records in the collections of the British Museum but mentions no other non-PRO wardrobe material (p. 4). Tout had also referred to Stapleton's paper in his 1888 *DNB* biography.

²⁶ Cf. Davies, *Baronial Opposition*, where he also refers to the wardrobe records held in the British Museum but like Tout mentions no other non-PRO wardrobe material (p. vi).

²⁷ Towards the end of the First World War the documents in the PRO 'were removed from the danger from enemy aircraft to a temporary hiding-place in the far west' (Tout, *Chapters*, i, pp. vi–vii).

Whatever the explanation, this is not simply a nitpicking exercise, since MSS. 120 and 121 in particular contain very important evidence on the relations between Edward II and the leading magnates at a critical point in the reign. These wardrobe books reveal that Tout's view of Pembroke as the leader of a middle party between the king and his close supporters and his leading opponent, Thomas of Lancaster, was wide of the mark and that in the years 1316–18 a significant number of the leading English magnates, including the earl of Pembroke, made contracts with Edward II for life service in peace and war.²⁸ The contracts also display a greater degree of political skill on the part of Edward II than he is usually credited with.²⁹ Ironically, the whole idea of a middle party, which was put forward first by Stubbs and then developed by Tout in his 1888 *DNB* essay,³⁰ had been based on a single document, an indenture between the earl of Pembroke and Bartholomew de Badlesmere on the one hand and Roger Damory on the other which is now to be found among the exchequer miscellanea as TNA, E 163/4/6. It had originally been discovered by Francis Palgrave and published by him in 1834.³¹

Before coming to Tout's *magnum opus* it is necessary to say a few things about his general characterization of the reign of Edward II. Tout was, of course, perfectly correct about the many personal failings and inadequacies of Edward II that contributed massively to the final disaster of his deposition in 1327. But, as already suggested, he underestimated the ability of the king. It can also be argued that he overestimated the extent and duration of hostility between Edward and the leading magnates.³² Certainly

²⁸ For the details of these contracts, drawn from Society of Antiquaries of London, MSS. 120 and 121, as well as from other sources, see J. R. S. Phillips, *Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke* (Oxford, 1972), App. 3, pp. 312–5.

²⁹ For a fuller treatment of these issues see Phillips, *Edward II*, esp. ch. 7, 'Peace by ordeal, August 1316 to August 1318', pp. 280–327. Of course, Edward II also had an even greater skill at throwing away the fruits of success, as he did between 1318 and 1321 (Phillips, *Edward II*, ch. 8, 'From settlement to civil war, 1318–1322, pp. 328–409) and, most disastrously, after his victory in the civil war of 1321–2 (Phillips, *Edward II*, ch. 9, 'Edward victorious, 1322–1324', pp. 410–54, and ch. 10, 'Edward vanquished, 1324–1326', pp. 455–519).

³⁰ For a discussion of how the 'middle party' interpretation came into being and the contributions to it of Stubbs, Tout and Davies, see Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, pp. 135–41; and W. Stubbs, *Constitutional History of England* (3 vols., Oxford, 1874–8), ii. 342; Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 111–12, 144–5; Davies, *Baronial Opposition*, pp. 429, 433–4, 437.

³¹ *Parliamentary Writs and Writs of Military Summons*, ed. F. Palgrave (2 vols., London, 1827–34), ii. 120. See also Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, App. 4, Document no. 3 (pp. 317–9). For further discussion of the 'middle party', see Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, pp. 141–51; Phillips, *Edward II*, pp. 297, n.1 00 and 303–8; and the chapter contributed to the present volume by P. Dryburgh, 'Tout and the middle party' (pp. 137–52).

³² Although he knew, of course, that baronial opposition was not universal or without differences of opinion, e.g., in his discussion of the ordainers (Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 76–8). This may also help to explain his attachment to the idea of a 'middle party'.

Edward did not apply himself consistently to the work of government, but he was very conscious of his royal dignity and authority and was persistent in his resistance to any real or perceived threats to them. This was shown particularly in his continued attempts to throw off the limits on royal power introduced by the ordinances in 1311.³³ Along the way he displayed a talent for wearing down his opponents and for winning the support of many of the leading magnates by exploiting any divisions in their ranks, most notably through the inability of his first cousin Thomas of Lancaster to win friends and influence people and to take an active and constructive part in government.³⁴ Tout was, of course, conscious of Lancaster's inadequacy and was unsparing in his criticism of him.³⁵ However, in his characterization of the York parliament of 1322, which followed Lancaster's defeat and execution and at which the ordinances were finally revoked, he idealized the occasion when he saw it as confirming the role of the Commons in parliament.³⁶ As this author has argued elsewhere, Edward II was trying to turn the clock back to before 1310–11 rather than to introduce a new emphasis on the authority of parliament or on the role of the 'community' in its future sense of the 'commons'. The essential point was that in Edward's view the ordinances had originally been imposed upon him and, to make it even clearer, he proceeded to confirm and promulgate what he regarded as six 'good points' of the ordinances.³⁷

Edward II was not opposed to reform in principle, but the initiative had to come from the king himself. At the very beginning of the reign the much-quoted fourth clause which was added to the coronation oath

³³ Tout was well aware of this: see, e.g., *Chapters*, ii. 202–3, 231–9; *Place of the Reign*, ch. 3, 'The struggle for the ordinances', pp. 67–99, especially pp. 84–90, notably the following (p. 84): 'The questions remain how far the ordinances were carried out, what permanent improvements sprang from them, and how far they remedied the grievances they were drawn up to redress. To answer these questions fully would be to write the history of the rest of Edward II's reign. How little the ordinances were executed could be read in every page of that history' (pp. 84–90).

³⁴ For this author's own general assessment of Edward II and his reign see the conclusion to *Edward II*, pp. 607–13.

³⁵ E.g., Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 15–6, 94–100.

³⁶ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 31, 136. However, when discussing the approval of the ordinances in the parliament of 1311 he cautioned against treating this as an example of the influence of the 'commons': 'It is almost as absurd to expect formal legislation by the three estates in 1311 as it is to imagine that Edward I created an hereditary house of lords in 1295' (*Place of the Reign*, pp. 79–80). This comment was part and parcel of his general reaction against what he saw as Stubbs's excessive emphasis on the role of parliament.

³⁷ Phillips, *Edward II*, pp. 422–4; and J. R. S. Phillips, 'Parliament in the reign of Edward II', in *Fourteenth Century England*, X, ed. G. Dodd (Woodbridge, 2018), pp. 25–46, esp. pp. 29–32.

in 1308 and in which Edward promised to uphold ‘the rightful laws and customs which the community of the realm shall have chosen’ was in the nature of a coronation charter and had originated from among the king’s close advisers rather than being imposed from outside, as has usually been argued. The clause really harked back to the reign of Edward I and to that king’s attempts to evade the reforms that he had been forced to concede.³⁸

Tout also subscribed to the erroneous belief that the fact that Edward took the oath in French rather than Latin indicated he was badly educated.³⁹ He was probably no better or worse educated than his father before him or his son after him. Edward III took the oath in the same form and language in 1327 and was not accused of illiteracy for doing so. French was the vernacular of the time and was more appropriate for a highly symbolic public occasion than Latin. It now seems likely that the accusation of illiteracy originated with the record of the 1308 coronation made by a Canterbury clerk who wished to display his own superior learning and was being too clever by half.⁴⁰

Edward II’s initial good intentions were, however, soon lost in the clamour over the influence and behaviour of Piers Gaveston and the growing demands for reforms that went far beyond what Edward intended and found acceptable and culminated in the ordinances of 1311. Some of the demands for financial reforms, especially in the use of purveyance, were in fact unachievable without an end to the Scottish war and that was unthinkable to the king and his opponents alike.⁴¹ Despite the uniformly disastrous outcome of his own Scottish campaigns, Edward II had accumulated considerable military experience in his father’s reign and was ready to go to war whenever the political and financial situations in England permitted. He was certainly no coward, as he showed at Bannockburn in 1314.⁴² Edward’s problem was that he was no good at the practice of warfare

³⁸ Phillips, *Edward II*, pp. 140–6.

³⁹ Tout, *DNB* essay on Edward II (1888), p. 40; and *History of England from 1216 to 1377*, p. 237. Surprisingly, however, in his description of the personality of Edward II he makes no mention of this aspect of his character (Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 8–11).

⁴⁰ Phillips, *Edward II*, pp. 53–7. His contributions to the development of colleges at both Oxford and Cambridge also suggest that he had at least an appreciation of learning (Phillips, *Edward II*, pp. 61–3).

⁴¹ See Phillips, ‘Conflict and reform, 1307–1312’, in Phillips, *Edward II*, pp. 161–80. The nature of the problem has been very perceptively described: ‘No regime proved capable of carrying out the programme [of the ordinances]. What was desirable in the ordinances was impractical, and what was practical was undesirable’ (M. Prestwich, ‘The ordinances of 1311 and the politics of the early fourteenth century’, in *Politics and Crisis in Fourteenth-Century England*, ed. J. Taylor and W. R. Childs (Gloucester, 1990), pp. 1–18, at p. 14).

⁴² Tout seems to have adopted this (probably correct) view of Edward II, while accepting that other chroniclers thought differently (Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 10).

and was incapable of learning from his experience. Thus he never succeeded in countering the Scottish use of fast-moving raiding parties that were liable to appear when least expected. He was, in effect, usually fighting the wrong kind of war, although there were signs of a change in tactics in the 1322 campaign.⁴³ Ironically, Edward's only substantial military success came in Ireland with the defeat and death of Robert Bruce's brother, Edward, in 1318. But that was a success achieved in Edward II's name and not by himself.⁴⁴

Edward's supposedly 'insignificant' foreign policy is also wide of the mark.⁴⁵ Recent work by Wendy Childs, for example, has shown the extent of England's foreign relations, from Norway to the Low Countries, the kingdoms of the Iberian Peninsula and Italy.⁴⁶ France especially was the focus of attention throughout Edward II's reign.⁴⁷ Good relations with France were essential to preserving English rule in Gascony and in helping to preserve political stability at home. This policy was largely successful until the accession in 1322 of a new king of France who was bent on asserting his authority over Gascony. When news of the attack on the French *bastide* at St. Sardos reached England in early December 1323 it was received with shock and consternation by Edward and his council: they knew all too well what the consequences were likely to be.⁴⁸ The war in which followed in 1324 shattered Anglo-French relations, while the political situation in England made it impossible for Edward to leave England to defend his overseas possessions.⁴⁹ Tout devoted several pages to a discussion

⁴³ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 203–5. On Edward II's experience of warfare see, e.g., Phillips, *Edward II*, pp. 83–96, 112–6 (before he became king), 167–71 (for 1310–11), 223–37 (1314: Bannockburn), 342–51 (1319), 425–31 (1322). On warfare in general, see C. McNamee, *The Wars of the Bruces: Scotland, England and Ireland, 1306–1328* (East Linton, 1997); M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare in the Middle Ages: the English Experience* (New Haven, Conn., and London, 1996).

⁴⁴ Phillips, *Edward II*, pp. 253–64; and especially McNamee, *Wars of the Bruces*, ch. 5, 'The Bruce intervention in Ireland, 1315–1322', pp. 166–205. Although Tout said very little about Ireland, he was at least aware of the importance of the Scottish intervention in Ireland in 1315 led by Edward Bruce (*Place of the Reign*, pp. 186–7). He wrote slightly more about Wales, about which he had come to know a considerable amount during his years teaching at Lampeter (*Place of the Reign*, pp. 187–90).

⁴⁵ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 31.

⁴⁶ W. R. Childs, 'England in Europe in the reign of Edward II', in *The Reign of Edward II: New Perspectives*, ed. G. Dodd and A. Musson (Woodbridge, 2006), pp. 97–118.

⁴⁷ See especially M. Vale, *The Angevin Legacy and the Hundred Years War, 1250–1340* (Oxford, 1990) and the numerous important essays by E. A. R. Brown.

⁴⁸ Phillips, *Edward II*, p. 462, citing *The War of Saint-Sardos (1323–25): Gascon Correspondence and Diplomatic Documents*, ed. P. Chaplais (London, 1954), p. 179.

⁴⁹ France, Scotland and the papacy were the three forms of external relations which were of constant importance throughout the reign, often interacting both with one another and with events in England itself, as this author tried to make clear in *Edward II*.

of Gascony, but the wider issue of Anglo-French relations and their importance was neglected.⁵⁰

In his 1888 *DNB* essay on Edward II, Tout made the curious remark that 'from 1322 to 1326 Edward reigned in comparative tranquillity under the guidance of the Despensers'.⁵¹ His view was largely unchanged when he published his *History of England* in 1905, except that he put more emphasis on the Despensers.⁵² England was anything but tranquil in the years after Edward II's apparent victory over his opponents in 1322. The savagery and vindictiveness with which he treated his defeated enemies provoked desire for revenge and helped to encourage conspiracies against him and the Despensers. Despite the growing tensions this situation might have continued almost indefinitely if the breakdown in relations with France had not brought matters to a head and led to the final disaster of 1326–7.⁵³

The behaviour of the younger Despenser was a major cause of internal tensions and contributed significantly to the downfall of Edward II and yet Tout could write in *The Place of the Reign* of what he described as Despenser's 'constitutionalism' and even of his 'moderation'.⁵⁴ Despenser's 'constitutionalism' seemed to originate in the famous *homage et serment* declaration distinguishing between the king's person and loyalty to the crown as an institution which was composed by Edward II's opponents in 1308.⁵⁵ The declaration then disappeared from sight until 1321, when its alleged use by the younger Despenser was cited in the charges against him and was also mentioned by the author of the *Historia Roffensis*. Despenser may well have used the declaration to justify himself against charges that he had been usurping the authority of the crown. This has caused some puzzlement among historians, who would naturally have expected the 1321 opponents of Despenser and Edward II to have used the declaration to justify their own actions. However, in 1321 the opposition magnates were instead using Thomas of Lancaster's *Treatise on the Steward* as justification. The *homage et serment* declaration therefore became surplus to requirements and could plausibly be attached to the younger Despenser, who might accordingly

⁵⁰ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 191–202. This is not altogether a fair comment since Tout had earlier written much more about France in his *DNB* biography and in his *History of England*; and in *Place of the Reign* he referred to the then recent work of French historians on Anglo-French relations (p. 191, n.1).

⁵¹ *DNB* (1888), xvii. 46; vi. 463 of the 1908 edition.

⁵² 'They [the Despensers] ruled over England for nearly five years in comparative peace' (Tout, *History of England*, p. 291).

⁵³ See Phillips, *Edward II*, ch. 8, 'Edward victorious, 1322–1324' pp. 411–54; ch. 9, 'Edward vanquished, 1324–1326', pp. 455–519.

⁵⁴ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 15, 136–8; *Chapters*, ii. 136.

⁵⁵ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 136; Phillips, *Edward II*, pp. 147–9.

be described by a twentieth-century historian as ‘constitutional’.⁵⁶ His ‘moderation’ seems to have consisted of his failure to pursue any possible claim to the earldom of Gloucester.⁵⁷ Instead, Despenser was little better than an unscrupulous bully who used his influence over the king to gain lands and wealth for himself. The ‘Despenser regime’, as it has been called, was marked by rapacity and brutality, with an appearance of legality which hid the reality of fraud, threats of violence and the abuse of legal process.⁵⁸ He was aptly described by more than one chronicler as behaving as if he were a second king.⁵⁹ There was no need for him to secure the Gloucester earldom, since the death of his father, who was in his sixties, could be expected in the not too distant future and would in any case bring him the earldom of Winchester.⁶⁰ He may, as Tout himself suggested, have harboured ambitions of an even grander title, like that of the earldom of March which was to be created for Roger Mortimer early in the reign of Edward III.⁶¹ Moderation is not a word readily applied to the younger Despenser.

Tout’s overall assessment of the reign of Edward II was that his very weakness as king was of constitutional significance since ‘a strong successor to Edward I might have made England a despotism; his [Edward I’s] weak and feckless son secured the permanence of Edwardian constitutionalism’.⁶² Although Tout did not write any extended discussion of the place of parliament in Edward II’s reign, since he was consciously reacting against what he regarded as the overemphasis on parliament by Stubbs and the neglect both by him and also Maitland of the development and functions of administration,⁶³ he nonetheless made frequent reference to parliament. He was conscious that although the commons were frequently summoned to attend parliament, the magnates ‘had the last and first word in each

⁵⁶ Phillips, *Edward II*, pp. 380–3, 389–93; cf. N. Saul, ‘An early private indenture of retainer: the agreement between Hugh Despenser the younger and Sir Robert De Shirland’, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, cxxviii (2013), 519–34, esp. at pp. 523–5, for a different view of the use of the *homage et serment* document in 1321.

⁵⁷ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 138–9.

⁵⁸ Phillips, *Edward II*, pp. 441–8. See also G. A. Holmes, ‘A protest against the Despensers, 1326’, *Speculum*, xxx (1955), 207–12; N. Saul, ‘The Despensers and the downfall of Edward II’, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xcix (1984), 1–33.

⁵⁹ Phillips, *Edward II*, p. 441.

⁶⁰ Phillips, *Edward II*, pp. 417–8, 441.

⁶¹ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 138; Phillips, *Edward II*, p. 418.

⁶² Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 30.

⁶³ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 1–7. As Tout succinctly put it: ‘Parliamentary sessions were short, and the political conditions while they lasted must be regarded as exceptional rather than normal. On the other hand, administrative machinery was always in operation’ (*Chapters*, i. 5).

discussion'.⁶⁴ As already noted, he idealized the role of the commons in the parliament of 1322; and he did so again when he remarked that 'the next epoch-making assembly, the parliament of January 1327 ... witnessed again the solemn participation of all three estates, including even the Welsh representatives, in the first formal deposition of a king by legislative act'.⁶⁵ He concluded that Edward II's reign 'was in constitutional history a real turning-point in the history of England'.⁶⁶ A turning point it certainly was, but not in the way that Tout argued. The parliament of 1327 was of doubtful legality since it was summoned without the king's personal approval and held in his absence; and was accompanied by intense political pressure on the part of the magnates inside parliament and by the Londoners outside to ensure that Edward II should no longer be king. Even then, there were some among the bishops and probably many others too who were intensely unhappy with the course of events. The fiction that Edward II had willingly resigned his crown was just that: it was clear to anyone with the desire to see that Edward had been deposed.⁶⁷ The real 'constitutional' significance of Edward II's reign, if it can be called 'constitutional', was that an anointed king had been removed from his throne by means that did not bear too close a scrutiny and that a baleful precedent had been set for the future.

Finally, Tout's greatest contribution to the history of the reign of Edward II was his *Chapters in the Administration of Medieval England*.⁶⁸ This is a remarkable feat of scholarship which elucidated the structure and development of the royal household and its place in the wider system of royal administration in great detail, not only for the reign of Edward II but over a very long period of time. Tout's approach can be criticized on the grounds that it can be rather arid and that, as Powicke commented in 1931 (though not mentioning Tout specifically), it could turn into 'a pedantic chase after the insignificant'.⁶⁹ It can also be criticized for neglecting 'the importance

⁶⁴ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 30; cf. the discussion of the role of the magnates in parliament and in the reign of Edward II generally (Phillips, 'Parliament in the reign of Edward II', esp. pp. 30–2).

⁶⁵ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 136–7.

⁶⁶ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 31.

⁶⁷ Phillips, *Edward II*, pp. 520–39; Phillips, 'Parliament in the reign of Edward II', pp. 33–6.

⁶⁸ See P. B. M. Blaas, *Continuity and Anachronism: Parliamentary and Constitutional Development in Whig Historiography and in the Anti-Whig Reaction between 1890 and 1930* (Boston, Mass., 1978), ch. 6, D, 'T. F. Tout and his administrative history' (pp. 355–61).

⁶⁹ F. M. Powicke, *Modern Historians and the Study of History: Essays and Papers* (London, 1955), p. 192, cited in Blaas, *Continuity and Anachronism*, p. 363. There is a lengthy discussion of administrative history and its limitations in Blaas, *Continuity and Anachronism*, ch. 6, E, 'The reaction: the limits of administrative history and the illusions of specialization' (pp. 361–73).

of patronage and personal relationships to the conducting of government business'.⁷⁰ Nonetheless, Tout's *Chapters* was an achievement that should be given full recognition.⁷¹ It was also a feat of endurance which clearly took a toll on Tout. In his presidential address to the Royal Historical Society in 1928, the year before his death, and shortly before his departure for a visit to the United States, he remarked that he was 'working night and day in seeing through the press two more volumes of a book whose composition has lain heavily on my soul for the last twenty years'.⁷²

In his introductions to both *The Place of the Reign* and the first volume of *Chapters* he emphasized what he considered to be the central importance of the study of the royal administration and especially of the royal household.⁷³ Tout was influenced in this view by the publication in 1908 of the French scholar Eugène Déprez's book on English diplomatic, *Études de diplomatie anglaise, de l'avènement d'Édouard Ier à celui de Henri VII (1272–1485)*, described by Tout in his review that same year in the *English Historical Review* as a study of 'the documents issued under the various "small seals" which, from the thirteenth century onwards, steadily encroached upon the province of the "great seal" and increased both the flexibility and the formalities of English official procedure'.⁷⁴ It is clear, however, from the review that Tout already knew a great deal about the subject and was thinking, if only subconsciously, about the great project which was soon to preoccupy him and to fill the rest of his academic life. He was greatly influenced by a comparison of the development of the French and English monarchies, seeing the one as following an 'institutional' path and the other essentially a 'constitutional' route.⁷⁵ He believed that the English monarchy could have gone the way of France and turned into an autocracy without the administrative reforms of the reign of Edward II and that the reign was therefore a turning-point in an administrative as well as a constitutional sense.⁷⁶

⁷⁰ Slee, 'T. F. Tout', *ODNB*, p. 92.

⁷¹ As well as an expression of gratitude and relief that someone else has undertaken the task.

⁷² T. F. Tout, 'Presidential address: the human side of medieval records', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 4th ser., xi (1928), 1–16, at p. 1.

⁷³ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 23–4, 26–8; *Chapters*, i, pp. v–vi; 1–9; *Chapters*, ii, 188–9.

⁷⁴ Tout, review of E. Déprez, *Études de diplomatie anglaise, 1272–1485*, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xxiii (1908), 556–9, at p. 556.

⁷⁵ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 36–7. His interest in French history and in the growth of France's royal administration can be traced back as far as 1889 (Blaas, *Continuity and Anachronism*, ch. 6, C, 'T. F. Tout and the French histoire événementielle' (pp. 350–5)).

⁷⁶ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 29. For further comparisons between England and France, see also *Place of the Reign*, pp. 148–9 and Tout's short book, *France and England: their Relations*

Tout also concluded that '[t]he machine of state, as left by Edward II, retained its general shape for the rest of the middle ages'.⁷⁷ Whatever the truth of this, certainly the royal household and its management were important political issues at several stages of the reign: in 1311 after the publication of the ordinances; in 1314 after the disaster of Bannockburn; in 1316 when Lancaster was appointed head of the council; and in 1318 after the Treaty of Leake.⁷⁸ It is noticeable, however, that even when Edward II was forced to change the personnel of his household administration, those appointed were often men he already knew well and had worked with. Actual reform of the household also took place in 1318 and again in 1323 and 1324. In 1318 it was essentially a matter of the detailed revision of structures that already existed rather than any revolutionary programme of reform; and it was significant that the commission appointed at the York parliament of 1318 to carry out the reform was content to delegate the task to existing officers of the royal household, all of whom were personally acceptable to the king.⁷⁹

Just as Tout saw the younger Despenser's behaviour as following a constitutional path, so he also regarded Despenser as an agent of reform.⁸⁰ While it is certainly true that a great deal of administrative reform took place in both the household and the exchequer in the years after 1322 and that Despenser frequently acted as if he were a chief minister, it is hard to see Despenser as a reformer: he was too busy making himself rich by any means that came to hand. Where it is possible to agree with Tout is his remark that '[t]he real reformers were rather to be found among the official class, the permanent civil service as we should call it, set free by the weakness both of the king and magnates, to work out their own ideas upon the lines suggested by their practical experience and with a minimum of external control'.⁸¹ This was probably the origin of important items such as the *Modus Tenendi Parliamentum* and the lesser known *Vetus Codex* (TNA, C 153/1), both of them produced around 1320–1 and both concerned with the procedures and

in the Middle Ages and Now (Manchester, 1922), based on lectures given at the University of Rennes in 1921. For a recent treatment of the question, see *Government and Political Life in England and France, 1300–1500*, ed. C. Fletcher, J. P. Genet and J. Watts (Cambridge, 2015).

⁷⁷ Tout, *Chapters*, ii. 188–9.

⁷⁸ On administrative reforms in general during the reign of Edward II, see Tout, *Place of the Reign*, ch. 5 and App. I, 'The household ordinances of Edward II' (1318 and 1323), pp. 241–84; and *Chapters*, ii, sect. 2, 'General view of the political and administrative history of the reign of Edward II', pp. 188–202.

⁷⁹ Phillips, *Edward II*, pp. 239–40 (1314), 330–3 (1318).

⁸⁰ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 31, 137–8, 143–4, 157; *Chapters*, ii. 189.

⁸¹ *Chapters*, ii. 189. See also T. F. Tout, *The English Civil Service in the Fourteenth Century* (Manchester, 1916), repr. from the *Bull. John Rylands Libr.*, iii (1916), 86–214; Phillips, *Edward II*, pp. 443–5; Phillips, 'Parliament in the reign of Edward II', pp. 44–5.

Thomas Frederick Tout (1855–1929): refashioning history for the twentieth century

records of parliament.⁸² A modern analogy might be the officials of the French administration after the defeat of 1940 who used the opportunity of a political vacuum to make administrative reforms of their liking.⁸³

Tout expressed the hope that his work would be followed by a series of monographs on specialized aspects of administrative history; that did not materialize to any significant extent.⁸⁴ He also hoped that a detailed history of the reign of Edward II by his sister-in-law Hilda Johnstone would soon appear. In 1946 she was to publish *Edward of Carnarvon*, a detailed and invaluable study of the future Edward II's early years based on the extensive records of Edward's household in the Public Record Office.⁸⁵ Further work on the reign of Edward II was to appear in the 1970s but its approach was radically different from that of Tout, addressing the neglect of 'the importance of patronage and personal relationships to the conducting of government business' already mentioned through a series of biographical studies of some of the leading figures, such as the earls of Lancaster and Pembroke and the bishop of Exeter.⁸⁶ It was not until 2003 that Roy Haines produced the first substantial study of the reign as a whole.⁸⁷

⁸² For a recent discussion of this topic, see Phillips, 'Parliament in the reign of Edward II', 'Appendix: some after-thoughts on the *Modus Tenendi Parliamentum*' (pp. 41–6).

⁸³ P. Burrin, *Living with Defeat: France under the German Occupation, 1940–1944* (London, 1995), pp. 70–1.

⁸⁴ Exceptions, at article rather than monograph length, are to be found in Tout's *Festschrift, Essays in Medieval History presented to Thomas Frederick Tout*, ed. A. G. Little and F. M. Powicke (Manchester, 1925): e.g., D. M. Broome, 'Exchequer migrations to York in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries', pp. 291–300; M. Sharp (*née* Tout), 'The administrative chancery of the Black Prince before 1362', pp. 321–34; W. T. Waugh, 'The administration of Normandy, 1420–1422', pp. 349–60.

⁸⁵ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 24–5; but Tout also explains why this had not been possible (p. 25, n.2).

⁸⁶ J. R. Maddicott, *Thomas of Lancaster, 1307–1322: a Study in the Reign of Edward II* (Oxford, 1970); Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*; M. Buck, *Politics, Finance and the Church in the Reign of Edward II: Walter Stapeldon Treasurer of England* (Cambridge, 1983). It is worth noting that, while accepting to some degree Stubbs's opinion that there was a lack of 'great men' during the reign of Edward II, Tout also commented that 'as far as the rank and file goes, both the barons who won the Great Charter, and their grandsons who laid low the power of the Crown in the Mad Parliament (the Oxford Parliament of June 1258), were every whit as stupid and as greedy, as narrow and as self-seeking as were the mass of the lords ordainers'. This did not, however, matter since in his opinion the people who really counted were 'the rank and file who guided the administrative machinery' (*Place of the Reign*, pp. 21–2). However, one has the feeling at times that Tout was not wholly convinced by his own argument and felt that he should have devoted more attention to the behaviour and motivation of individual magnates.

⁸⁷ R. M. Haines, *King Edward II: His Life, His Reign, and Its Aftermath, 1284–1330* (Montreal and London, 2003).

Nonetheless, anyone who has worked on the reign of Edward II has reason to be grateful to T. F. Tout for his fundamental work, for ‘blazing a track through ... jungle’, as H. W. C. Davis aptly put it.⁸⁸ Although it is possible to criticize his work on the reign of Edward II both on points of detail and on general conceptions, it is also essential to remember that he *was* a pioneer and that he provided a working narrative and interpretation of the reign which lasted for two generations.⁸⁹ He was a great scholar who had the misfortune to go out of fashion and who has consequently been underrated both in his own achievements and in his influence on others. Now is certainly the time to put matters right.

⁸⁸ Cited in Slee, ‘T. F. Tout’, *ODNB*, lv. 92.

⁸⁹ His published essays, the fruit of his research and of many public lectures, also made an important contribution: for the historian of Edward II one of the most notable is his unravelling of the circumstances of Edward II’s death (‘The captivity and death of Edward of Caernarvon’, in *Collected Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout*, iii. 145–90).

8. Tout and the royal favourites of Edward II

J. S. Hamilton

In the preface to the first edition of *The Place of the Reign of Edward II in English History*, T. F. Tout remarked: 'I sincerely trust that both the book and the appendices will be found of some use to future workers on the period'.¹ Certainly they have been. With regard to the reign of Edward II, Tout observed that 'it is one of the comforting lessons of history that the dull reigns of the indifferent kings are as worthy of study as the most famous and splendid periods'.² Tout's work has inspired a vast expansion of work on the reign, much of it in the form of political biography of the leading figures, including the king himself. Elsewhere in the *The Place of the Reign of Edward II* Tout went on to say that 'a strong successor to Edward I might have made England a despotism; his weak and feckless son secured the permanence of Edwardian constitutionalism'.³ Spoken as a true student of Stubbs, Tout never strayed far from his passion for administrative history and he noted that in the reign of Edward II 'there was a striking continuity in the administrative personnel all through the reign'.⁴ In an echo of Stubbs he said that these administrators 'were but little disturbed when an unpopular favourite whose enormities loomed large in the public eye, a Gaveston or a Despenser, was hurled overboard to lighten the ship of state'.⁵ Nevertheless, Tout recognized the centrality of the role played by the various favourites of Edward II and that they were not mere caricatures to be dismissed out of hand. Through the application of 'modern scientific methods of historical study' he transformed our assessment of their significance.⁶ If more recent scholarship at some points has departed from his assessment of their particular roles and constitutional significance,

¹ T. F. Tout, *The Place of the Reign of Edward II in English History* (2nd edn., rev. by H. Johnstone, Manchester, 1936), pp. vii–viii.

² Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 21.

³ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 30.

⁴ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 26–7.

⁵ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 27.

⁶ A. A. Taylor, 'The career of Peter of Gavaston and his place in history' (unpublished University of London MA thesis, 1939), p. 28.

his work is still a fundamental starting point for an examination of the impact of each of these individuals in what may have been the reign of an ‘indifferent king’, but was certainly not ‘dull’.

Not everyone – then or now – would agree with all parts of Tout’s assessment of Edward II: ‘If he did not like work, he was not very vicious; he stuck loyally to his friends and was fairly harmless, being nobody’s enemy so much as his own’.⁷ Ask the contrarians if he was ‘not very vicious’. But loyalty was the lodestone of Edward’s moral compass. This can be illustrated not only in his behaviour with regard to his favourites, as we shall see, but also in his response to perceived breaches of faith to himself and even those committed against his greatest nemesis, Thomas of Lancaster. Given the long-standing animosity between the two royal cousins, one might have expected the king to take delight in the revolt of Lancaster’s erstwhile retainer Adam Banaster in October 1315 – and certainly that was what Banaster himself expected – but as John Robert Maddicott, following G. H. Tupling, has clearly demonstrated, in fact the king provided support to Lancaster in this instance and the exchange of letters between them at this time may be described as easily the most cordial they ever produced.⁸

The first great favourite of the reign of Edward II was of course Piers Gaveston.⁹ Tout’s somewhat charitable, and thoroughly Victorian, dismissal of Gaveston was not unlike his disregard for Edward II himself:

The worst that can be certainly said against him is that he was not a serious politician, that he never aspired to office in the state, that he had too keen an eye to the main chance, that he looked too closely after the financial interests of his Gascon kinsfolk, that his head was so turned by his elevation that he became

⁷ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 11.

⁸ J. R. Maddicott, *Thomas of Lancaster 1307–1322: a Study in the Reign of Edward II* (Oxford, 1970), pp. 174–6; G. H. Tupling, *South Lancashire in the Reign of Edward II: as Illustrated by the Pleas at Wigan Recorded in Coram Rege roll no. 254* (Manchester, 1949). See also, A. Spencer, ‘Thomas of Lancaster in the *Vita Edwardi Secundi*: a study in disillusionment’, in *Thirteenth Century England XIV*, ed. J. Burton, P. Schofield and B. Weiler (Woodbridge, 2013), pp. 155–68, at p. 160. Examples of this correspondence between Lancaster and the king include The National Archives of the UK, SC 1/35/155 and SC 1/21/190.

⁹ For a broad historiographic review and theoretical consideration of the concept of the favourite in the later middle ages, see K. Oschema, ‘The cruel end of the favourite. Clandestine death and public retaliation at late medieval courts in England and France’, in *Death at Court*, ed. K.-H. Spieß and I. Warntjes (Wiesbaden, 2012), pp. 171–95. While foreshadowing Oschema’s judgement that the moralizing narrative tradition of late medieval chroniclers ‘contributed to the construction of the “favourite” as a moral category rather than a historic one’ (p. 192), Tout demonstrated that we can still reconstruct the historical figures of these favourites, particularly for the reign of Edward II, in considerable detail and moved them back into the realm of historical study.

offensively bumptious, and that he had a pretty but dangerous gift of affixing stinging nicknames alike on his friends and enemies.¹⁰

This was, however, balanced by his perceptive insight into Gaveston's relationship with the Caillau (Calhau) family in Bordeaux, although Tout's initial observations were further developed in the second edition of *The Place of the Reign of Edward II in English History* by Hilda Johnstone and can certainly be taken farther now.¹¹ Tout noted the role that Bertrand Caillau, Gaveston's nephew, a valet of the king's household, played as a financial agent for the favourite¹² and pointed to the fact that both Bertrand's father and his cousin Arnaud had been mayors of Bordeaux.¹³ Another Arnaud Caillau was admitted into the royal household as *miles simplex* on 7 March 1313 and received robes in that capacity at least until winter 1315 (8 Edward

¹⁰ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 12. Tout also rightly commented that Gaveston had been 'singularly unfortunate in the modern writers who have essayed to depict his character and career' (*Place of the Reign*, p. 12), referring to W. P. Dodge, *Piers Gaveston: a Chapter of Constitutional History* (London, 1899) and M. Dimitresco, *Pierre de Gavaston: sa biographie et son rôle* (Paris, 1898).

¹¹ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 12, n. 1.

¹² Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 83–4 and 83 n. 3. Bertrand very clearly also functioned as a financial agent for the king. On 1 Apr. 1310 he received customs issues from the Frescobaldi into the wardrobe (*Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1307–1312*, p. 224); and in Feb. 1312 the king acknowledged a debt of 429*l* 13*s* 10*d* to Anthony Pessaigne of Genoa for monies advanced to Caillau for the purchase of horses for the king's use and arrears in his wages for service in Scotland (*CPR, 1307–12*, p. 433). It is likely that another Gascon, Bertrand (or Berducus) de Marsan, was a relative of Gaveston and certainly functioned in some capacity as his agent. In September 1311 he was sent, along with Gaillard and Bertrand Assaillit, to join Gaveston and 'attend to his affairs' (*Calendar of Close Rolls, 1307–13*, p. 225). We next find Assaillit and Marsan having been arrested in Plymouth by William Martin – the same man charged by the lords ordainer to arrest Gaveston if found in the south-west – with 1,000 marks that had been entrusted to them by the king, who ordered their release (6 Apr. 1312) and free passage across the sea. It would seem that Gaveston's affairs at this time, as repeatedly alleged in the chronicles, did indeed include shipping money overseas (*CCR, 1307–13*, p. 417). Their attorneys later also acknowledged the return from Martin of 129 pieces of tin, as well as a large assortment of garments, armour, weapons and luxury goods (*CCR, 1307–13*, p. 582). According to *The Bruce* Edmund [*recte* Reymund] de Caillau, a king's sergeant-at-arms, said elsewhere to be Gaveston's nephew, was wounded in 1316 by a Scottish raiding party in Scaithmoor near Berwick (J. Barbour, *The Bruce*, ed. W. M. Mackenzie (London, 1909), bk. xv, ll. 320–4). Cf. the *Scalacronica*, where it is reported that all of the Gascons were killed in this encounter (T. Gray, *Scalacronica 1272–1363*, ed. and trans. A. King (Woodbridge, 2005) p. 77). See also *Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland*, ed. J. Bain (5 vols., Edinburgh, 1881–8), iii. no. 470 (pp. 89–90 and p. xxiv).

¹³ Arnaud's career as mayor has been studied by J. Kicklighter, 'Arnaud Caillau, Maire de Bordeaux, Agent d'Édouard II en Gascogne', *Annales du Midi*, xcix (1987), 283–302.

II).¹⁴ In April 1313 he became seneschal of Saintonge and keeper of Oléron; and during the war of St. Sardos, a decade later, he was one of the younger Despenser's many Gascon informants, an interesting link between the two great favourites of the reign.¹⁵ Tout did not, however, comment on the prominence of Gaveston's brother Arnaud-Guilhem de Marsan, who served briefly as seneschal of Agenais early in the reign and who was listed among the household bannerets in March 1313.¹⁶

On Gaveston's lieutenancy in Ireland, Tout had little to say, although he did note that it was 'unique', without really defining his use of the term; presumably he was referring to the difference in the terms of appointment that had been conferred upon Richard de Burgh, earl of Ulster, as king's lieutenant in Ireland on 15 June 1308 and the terms of Gaveston's subsequent appointment on the following day.¹⁷ While de Burgh was

¹⁴ TNA, E 101/375/8., fo. 5; E 101/378/6; Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 76 and nn. 1–2. Another Caillau, Forcius, was listed among the *servientes ad arma* present at court at Christmas 1315 (TNA, E 101/377/1).

¹⁵ *Gascon Rolls 1307–1317 preserved in the Public Record Office*, ed. Y. Renouard (London, 1962), pp. 239–40, no. 871–3. Arnaud was an active correspondent of Hugh Despenser the Younger during the war of St. Sardos (*The War of Saint-Sardos (1323–1325): Gascon Correspondence and Diplomatic Documents*, ed. P. Chaplais (London, 1954), nos. 76, 116, 140, 162; TNA, SC 1/50/91, 1/58/42, 1/54/18).

¹⁶ On 27 June 1308 Arnaud-Guilhem de Marsan was appointed seneschal of Agenais. Probably in response to conflict with Amanieu d'Albret, he was removed from this office by John de Hastings, seneschal of Gascony and Aquitaine later in 1308, but restored to this position in Dec. 1310, only immediately to resign it to the earl of Richmond (P. Chaplais, *Piers Gaveston: Edward II's Adoptive Brother* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 73–4). In 1309 Marsan requested letters of warrant to the treasurer of the Agenais to deliver the profits of the seal of the court of the Agenais, as well as possession of Gosse and the castle of Sort (TNA, SC 8/174/8655). The king responded positively by ordering the treasurer of the Agenais, John de Hustwait, to deliver the issues of the seal, as well as ordering letters under the great seal to address the disputed lands. Even more intriguing is a petition from Oct. 1311 in which Arnaud-Guilhem first of all requests permission to exchange lands on the edge of St-Sever and the Bazadais so that he might hold them without disagreement. Second, he notes that the king has granted him an annual rent of 100 marks for his sustenance, but he wonders if the gift is still valid as he understands that the ordainers have ordained that all the king's gifts are to be annulled (TNA, SC 8/240/11971). The king nonetheless confirmed this grant. Both Arnaud-Guilhem de Marsan and another brother, Guilhem-Arnaud de Gavaston, were included in the public act of banishment from Guyenne and Gascony published on behalf of the king of France on 4 Jan. 1313 (J. Dumonteil, 'Acte de bannissement publié a Agen de divers habitants de Guyenne et de Gascogne qui avaient pris parti contre le roi de France (4 Janvier 1313 N.S.)', *Documents pour servir à l'histoire du Département des Pyrénées-Atlantiques: publication des Amis des Archives des Pyrénées-Atlantiques*, iv (1983), 3–11. For his designation as a banneret, see TNA, E 101/378/6.

¹⁷ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 341. See J. S. Hamilton, *Piers Gaveston, Earl of Cornwall 1307–1312* (Detroit, Mich., 1988), pp. 56–7; Chaplais, *Piers Gaveston*, pp. 49–51.

given general authority, Gaveston was granted regal powers. For instance, the favourite could appoint and/or remove justices, sheriffs, bailiffs and other ministers, as well as present to churches or other benefices in the king's stead. In fact, however, as Pierre Chaplais has shown, the terms of Gaveston's appointment replicate those of William fitz Audelin, the first royal lieutenant of Ireland, appointed by Henry II, so in that sense the appointment was not unique.¹⁸

Tout took greater interest in another royal office with which Gaveston has been associated, both by contemporary chroniclers and modern historians: that of chamberlain, an office that would provide a favourite with an administrative role within the household.¹⁹ Perhaps it is tempting to find a common link between Gaveston and the younger Despenser through this office, but Tout did not endorse the view that Gaveston was ever chamberlain of Edward II.²⁰ The editor of the most recent edition of the *Vita Edwardi Secundi*, Wendy Childs, has agreed that the use of *camerarius* by the author is not a technical term, especially in regard to the household of Edward of Caernarvon as prince of Wales.²¹ But Chaplais has made a forceful argument in favour of Gaveston having held the office of chamberlain from sometime in 1307–8 onwards, suggesting that John de Charlton, whom Tout identified as chamberlain between 1310 and 1318,²² acted merely as Gaveston's deputy.²³ Although both Seymour Phillips and Chris Given-Wilson appear to have accepted this argument,²⁴ it does not fit with the portrait of Gaveston that is to be found in both the chronicles and record sources; and John de Charlton has elsewhere revealed himself to have

¹⁸ Chaplais, *Piers Gaveston*, p. 49.

¹⁹ For arguments in favour of Gaveston having served as chamberlain, see Chaplais, *Piers Gaveston*, pp. 99–108; S. Phillips, *Edward II* (New Haven, Conn., 2010) pp. 137, 364; C. Given-Wilson, *Edward II: the Terrors of Kingship* (St. Ives, 2016), p. 13.

²⁰ He does allow the possibility on one occasion in *Place of the Reign*, p. 169, but elsewhere, particularly in a lengthy note on p. 12, dismisses this as 'more than doubtful'.

²¹ *Vita Edwardi Secundi*, ed. W. Childs (Oxford, 2005), pp. 4–5 and n. 3. For another chronicler's use of the term *camerarius* in regard to Gaveston, see *Annales Paulini*, in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Edward I and Edward II*, ed. W. Stubbs (2 vols., London, 1882), i. 258, pp. 255–370.

²² Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 81, 93, n. 1, 116 and n. 2, 169, 315; T. F. Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Medieval England: the Wardrobe, the Chamber, and the Small Seals* (6 vols., Manchester, 1920–33), ii. 198, 205, 208, 224–6, 234, 237, 239, 241–2, 296–7, 303, 319, 327, 332–5; vi. 45.

²³ Chaplais, *Piers Gaveston*, pp. 102–6. This author agrees with Tout that it is unwise to put much trust in Geoffrey le Baker's description of the younger Despenser succeeding to the office of chamberlain directly from Gaveston (Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 12).

²⁴ Phillips, *Edward II*, pp. 137–64; Given-Wilson, *Edward II*, p. 13.

been quite capable of obtaining royal favour in his own right.²⁵ Tout appears to have been correct on all counts here, which is not to say that Gaveston did not control access to both the king and his patronage, only that he neither required nor desired any official capacity to do so.

One of the great debates that have enlivened the study of the reign of Edward II ever since Tout centres on the question of personality versus constitutional principle: to what extent was either the driving force in the politics of the reign and specifically in the struggle for the ordinances?²⁶ By March 1310 Edward found himself in a position not unlike that of Henry III a half-century earlier. In agreeing to the election of a body of 'prelates, earls and barons, [with] full power to ordain and establish the estate of [his] household and realm',²⁷ Edward II's kingship was compromised and would remain so for all of the next decade. The driving force behind the drafting and subsequent efforts to implement the ordinances was the king's cousin, Thomas, earl of Lancaster. But Thomas was no Simon de Montfort, no matter how much he wished to align himself with his predecessor as earl of Leicester and hereditary steward of England. Tout described Lancaster as:

that most impossible of all mediæval politicians: ... Sulky, vindictive, self-seeking, brutal and vicious, he had just enough sense to realize that the duty of an opposition is to oppose, but he had not application or intelligence enough to understand that, when the opposition leader gets the reins of power into his own hands, his business is to govern the state, not to thwart his personal enemies.²⁸

Tout correctly noted the significance of the 'household ordinances', which at the time he felt had not been sufficiently studied, noting that 'they deal almost entirely with the followers and kinsfolk of Gaveston, the alien farmers of the customs, and the members, great and small, of the king's household'.²⁹ These six ordinances were actually issued a day before the ordainers were

²⁵ T. F. Tout, 'John de Charlton', *Dictionary of National Biography* (63 vols., Oxford, 1885–1900), x, 125–7. Cf. J. F. A. Mason, 'Charlton, John, first Lord Charlton of Powys (d. 1353)', in *ODNB* <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/5165>> [accessed 4 Apr. 2017].

²⁶ In 1983 M. Buck observed that the political history of the reign of Edward II 'has been orientated away from constitutionalism towards an interpretation in which the struggle for patronage and power centring upon the court takes pride of place' (M. Buck, *Politics, Finance and the Church in the Reign of Edward II: Walter Stapeldon, Treasurer of England* (Cambridge, 1983), p. 116).

²⁷ *Foedera, Conventiones, Litterae et Cuiuscunque Generis Acta Publica*, ed. T. Rymer (4 vols. in 7, London, 1816–69), ii, pt. 1, 105.

²⁸ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 17. But see more recently, Spencer, 'Lancaster in the *Vita Edwardi Secundi*'.

²⁹ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 96.

formally elected, demonstrating just how central these personal animosities were to the reforming agenda of the baronial opposition.³⁰ As Tout noted, '[t]he principle which inspired them all was the transference of power from the king and his friends to baronial nominees, and the drastic purging of the royal household of its irresponsible and unworthy elements'.³¹ And if Tout's emphasis on the household in constitutional terms was misplaced when he said that 'the point in which the ordinances largely differed from the provisions of Oxford lies in the immense particularity with which the men of 1311 pressed for radical reform of the royal household',³² he was indeed correct in how very particular, and personal, they were. After all, the sage author of the *Vita Edwardi Secundi* noted with regard to the final ordinances that 'the ordinance which expelled Piers Gaveston from England seemed more welcome to many than the rest'.³³

Gaveston's early return from his third and final exile – in contravention of the ordinances – was the straw that broke the baronial camel's back. But as Tout shrewdly observed, '[i]t is as the enemy of baronial pretensions, rather than as the royal minion or the upstart, that the magnates pronounced the doom of Gaveston'.³⁴ His execution, rightly, was seen as a watershed. Tout understood the admonition of the author of the *Vita* as reflecting baronial opinion: 'Let English courtiers henceforth beware lest, trusting in the royal favour, they look down upon the barons. For they are the king's chief member, without which the king cannot attempt or accomplish anything of importance. Therefore those who belittle the barons without doubt despise the king and show themselves guilty of treason'.³⁵ However, he was less sure that Gaveston was guilty of treason.³⁶ Instead, he emphasized the 'treachery' of having ignored the terms of Gaveston's capitulation and how this led to a 'permanent schism among the higher barons that was never quite repaired'.³⁷ It also opened the door, of course, to the later use of treason as an irresistible weapon of royal revenge, as the case of Andrew Harclay, even

³⁰ See Hamilton, *Piers Gaveston*, pp. 88–9.

³¹ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 85.

³² Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 91–2.

³³ Childs, *Vita Edwardi Secundi*, pp. 34–5.

³⁴ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 14. There is a considerable literature on the concept of the favourite, especially on the Continent. See n. 9 above. An extensive review of the historiography of Gaveston as a favourite in English sources from the 14th to the early 20th centuries, including Tout, can be found in Taylor, 'Peter of Gavaston', pp. 1–28.

³⁵ Childs, *Vita Edwardi Secundi*, pp. 48–9.

³⁶ See G. Lecuppre, 'Faveur et trahison a la cour d'Angleterre', in *La trahison au Moyen Age. De la monstruosité au crime politique, Ve-XVe siècle*, ed. M. Billore and M. Doria (Rennes, 2009), pp. 197–214.

³⁷ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 89–90.

more than the execution of Thomas of Lancaster, would later demonstrate.³⁸

Tout made the interesting observation that Bannockburn succeeded where the ordainers had hitherto failed in purging the household. Edmund de Mauley, the steward of the household, was killed and Roger Northburgh, keeper of the privy seal, and his two clerks were captured (with the privy seal).³⁹ Yet Lancaster, even at the height of his power and despite his pretentious use of his role as steward as ‘a new weapon for purging the court’,⁴⁰ was unsuccessful in his aims according to Tout: ‘From February 1316, to the summer of 1318 it cannot be said that earl Thomas took a single effective step towards the enforcement of the ordinances or the removal of the “inconvenient” knights and clerks of the royal household’.⁴¹

This chapter will not discuss Tout’s elaboration of the middle party in any detail, as this has been expertly covered by Seymour Phillips and Paul Dryburgh elsewhere in this volume.⁴² But it was certainly the case that in William Montagu, the younger Hugh d’Audley, Roger Damory and the younger Hugh Despenser in particular the king once again indulged his proclivity for surrounding himself with congenial companions and rewarding them all too lavishly. Montagu may have developed the role of the steward of the household into a ‘channel for patronage’, but his removal from court in November 1318 to serve as seneschal of Gascony and Aquitaine deprived the king of a talented military leader.⁴³ Roger Damory, with whom Montagu was later alleged by Thomas of Lancaster to have plotted against his life, was certainly a creature of the court, being described by the author of the *Vita* as ‘a poor and needy knight’ prior to his rise to prominence.⁴⁴ Damory’s path at court was probably opened by his brother Richard Damory, who had served as sheriff of Oxford and Buckingham in the initial crisis years of 1308–10, received robes as a household knight at Christmas 1315 and would

³⁸ M. Strickland, “All brought to nought and thy state undone”: treason, disinvestiture and disgracing of arms under Edward II’, in *Soldiers, Nobles and Gentlemen: Essays in Honour of Maurice Keen*, ed. P. Coss and C. Tyerman (Woodbridge, 2009), pp. 279–304.

³⁹ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 92.

⁴⁰ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 107.

⁴¹ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 106.

⁴² S. Phillips, ‘Tout and the reign of Edward II’, pp. 107–21; and P. Dryburgh, ‘Tout and the middle party’, pp. 137–52. See also J. R. S. Phillips, ‘The “middle party” and the negotiating of the Treaty of Leake, August 1318: a reinterpretation’, *Hist. Research*, xlvi (1973), 11–27.

⁴³ A. Gross, ‘Montagu, William, second Lord Montagu (c.1285–1319)’, in *ODNB* <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/19000>> [accessed 16 May 2017]. Montagu died in Aquitaine in October 1319, playing no further role in the court politics of Edward II.

⁴⁴ Childs, *Vita Edwardi Secundi*, p. 209.

later serve as steward of the household between 1322 and 1325.⁴⁵ Roger may first have come to the king's attention at Bannockburn, after which his rise was rapid, culminating in April 1317 when he was married to Elizabeth de Clare, co-heiress to his former lord, the earl of Gloucester, and niece of the king. The extent of the patronage he received during this period led to Lancaster's animosity as well as a famous indenture, in the enormous amount of £10,000, which Damory entered into on 24 November 1317 and by which Aymer de Valence and Bartholomew de Badlesmere sought to restrain his avarice.⁴⁶ Tout saw this indenture as directing Damory to use his influence 'to persuade [the king] to be governed by the advice of Pembroke and Badlesmere, and to trust their counsels beyond those of all other people on earth';⁴⁷ and as the legal underpinning of the middle party against the pretensions of Thomas of Lancaster, an interpretation that held sway well into the second half of the twentieth century. But Damory would soon be driven into opposition by the unchecked greed of another favourite, the younger Despenser, and having turned to Lancaster and the baronial opposition, he died in the aftermath of his capture at Tutbury in March 1322. Maddicott has remarked that '[h]is rapid rise and precipitate fall typified the fate of others who had had the misfortune to enjoy Edward's patronage'.⁴⁸

Hugh Audley the younger also entered the royal household as a knight by the eighth year of the reign (8 July 1314 – 7 July 1315), following his father, who had joined the household by November 1311.⁴⁹ In 1317 he, too, married a Clare co-heiress, Margaret, widow of the late Piers Gaveston. But as the flow of patronage was more and more restricted by and to the younger Despenser, like Damory, Audley joined the revolt against the Despensers in 1321. Having been deprived of his lands, he fought on the side of the earl of Lancaster at Boroughbridge in the following year, where he was taken prisoner, spending the rest of the reign in captivity, but, remarkably, surviving – no doubt in deference to his wife and perhaps also the memory of her first husband, Gaveston – to be elevated to the earldom of Gloucester in 1337 and living until 1347.

⁴⁵ TNA, E 101/377/1; Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 315; Tout, *Chapters*, vi. 42.

⁴⁶ TNA, E 163/4/6, printed in J. R. S. Phillips, *Aymer de Valence, earl of Pembroke, 1307–1324* (Oxford, 1972), App. 4. The significance of the indenture is discussed at length in Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, pp. 134–41, 146–7.

⁴⁷ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 104.

⁴⁸ J. R. Maddicott, 'Damory [Amory], Sir Roger (*d.* 1322)', in *ODNB* <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/37338>> [accessed 16 May 2017].

⁴⁹ Brit. Libr. Cotton MS. Nero C VIII fo. 92r.; TNA, E 101/378/6.

The fact that members of the king's inner circle should have deserted him is significant and points to a dramatic change in the dynamics of the reign. As suggested earlier, loyalty was Edward II's most attractive quality and it had seen him through a number of earlier crises. Through all the vicissitudes he had suffered from the very beginning of the reign until 1321, he had commanded loyalty from his household: administrative, military and social, the *familia* broadly defined. Alistair Tebbitt has demonstrated that the household knights formed the core of Edward's armies in the Scottish campaigns of 1310–11, 1319 and even 1322 (although by then there had been a significant turnover in their composition) and were essential to both the suppression of the revolt of Llewelyn Bren in 1316 and in efforts to stabilize the Scottish border between 1314 and 1319.⁵⁰ Moreover, the household knights had served the king loyally in the early crises of the reign in 1308 and 1312. It was different, however, in 1321, when many former and current household knights fought against the king – or, more accurately, against the Despensers.⁵¹ Even so, after the recall of the Despensers from exile it was the reconstituted household retinue, in whom the king continued to have great faith, which led the royal campaign against the contrarians to great success between November 1321 and March 1322. Perhaps too great.

Mark Buck has written that '[p]olitics is the art of healing breaches where possible; but, where that is not possible, it involves excluding wreckers'.⁵² In 1312 the baronial opposition had set out to exclude the wreckers, namely Gaveston and his affinity. In 1321–2 Edward II sought to do the same on a massive scale and with grand theatricality. In 1312 Gaveston had been forced to surrender his *cingulum milicie*, his belt of knighthood, before his execution, but nothing more.⁵³ Nor had Lancaster been formally degraded, although his 'trial' and execution were shocking in their own right.⁵⁴ But the Lancastrian supporters who were executed after Boroughbridge – in

⁵⁰ A. Tebbitt, 'Household knights and military service under the direction of Edward II', in *The Reign of Edward II: New Perspectives*, ed. G. Dodd and A. Musson (Woodbridge, 2006), pp. 76–96.

⁵¹ J. S. Hamilton, 'A reassessment of the loyalty of the household knights of Edward II', in *Fourteenth Century England VII*, ed. W. M. Ormrod (Woodbridge, 2012), pp. 47–72. B. Wells-Furby has argued convincingly to see the contrarians not as a party of Marcher lords as has been traditional, but rather as disaffected courtiers (B. Wells-Furby, 'The contrariant uprising of 1321–2: a new perspective', *Trans. Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeol. Soc.*, cxxx (2012), 183–97).

⁵² Buck, *Politics, Finance and the Church*, p. 116.

⁵³ Childs, *Vita Edwardi Secundi*, pp. 44–5.

⁵⁴ Strickland argued that Edward II considered Lancaster to have been degraded, based on his later refusal to allow Henry of Lancaster to use his late brother's arms (Strickland, "All brought to nought", p. 155).

unprecedented numbers – were made to wear ‘cotes quartiles’ reminiscent of those so recently worn to the ‘parliament of the white bend’ in August 1321, when the king’s opponents had marched on London to demand the exile of the Despensers.⁵⁵ The symbolism was not lost on contemporaries, nor was the gruesome public display of the remains of contrarians, clearly meant to overawe the entire kingdom.⁵⁶ The brutality of the regime was taken a notch higher in 1323 when the hero of Boroughbridge, Andrew Harclay, was executed for treason following his ritual degradation. Harclay’s treatment has been seen as vicious and it was, just as Edward I’s treatment of William Wallace had been in 1305. But the judgment on Harclay was, in the mind of Edward II, clearly about broken faith. He was still clinging to a notion of loyalty that others could no longer associate with the royal court: ‘And the lord the King’s will is that ... the order of knighthood – by which you undertook thine honour and worship upon thy body – be all brought to nought, and thy state undone, that other knights of lower degree may after thee beware; ... and that all may take example by thee, their lord afterward truly to serve’.⁵⁷ Matthew Strickland has noted that Harclay’s case was the first ‘in which a formal and judicially pronounced degradation of rank preceded execution for treason’.⁵⁸ It would not be the last and it brought with it the seeds of the regime’s own destruction. To quote Given-Wilson once more, ‘[t]he grimly inventive repertoire of punishments meted out by both sides during Edward’s reign proclaims it as an age of visceral hatreds and almost unparalleled savagery within the English ruling class’.⁵⁹

And so we come to the third of the favourites married to one of the Clare co-heiresses, the younger Despenser. With regard to Gaveston, Tout’s broad assessment has largely stood the test of time; this is not so clearly the case with Despenser.⁶⁰ Early on in *The Place of the Reign of Edward II* Tout stated that:

⁵⁵ Strickland, “All brought to nought”, pp. 300–3; Given-Wilson, *Edward II*, p. 67.

⁵⁶ C. Valente, *The Theory and Practice of Revolt in Medieval England* (Aldershot, 2003), p. 129.

⁵⁷ *The Brut or The Chronicles of England*, ed. F. W. D. Brie (2 vols., London, 1906, 1908), i. 227. The charges of broken faith and treason are apparent also in the condemnation of contrarians (G. Haskins, ‘Judicial proceedings against a traitor after Boroughbridge, 1322’, *Speculum*, xii (1937), 509–11).

⁵⁸ Strickland, “All brought to nought”, p. 286.

⁵⁹ Given-Wilson, *Edward II*, p. 105.

⁶⁰ Although Tout tends to lump the two Despensers together, as in the *Place of the Reign*, where he remarks that ‘the Despensers thus remained reformers to the end’ (p. 137), it is the younger Despenser who receives the bulk of the coverage and credit and whom Tout argued against being called a favourite at all. For the elder Despenser as favourite, see. M. Lawrence, ‘Rise of a royal favourite: the early career of Hugh Despenser the elder’, in Dodd and Musson, *The Reign of Edward II: New Perspectives*, pp. 205–19.

There is more to be said for the younger Hugh le Despenser than there is for Gaveston. Indeed it is hard to see how this son of the mighty baron, who had devoted his life to the service of the great Edward, was in any invidious sense a favourite at all. At least he was not so till the year 1321. He was doubtless greedy and ambitious, but he had brains enough to formulate something like a theory of constitutional law'.⁶¹

And later on Tout concluded that: 'There is nothing astonishing in intelligent champions of strong monarchy being greater reformers than a conservative aristocracy ... It is enough, however, to show that the Despensers and their followers were not mere creatures of court favour but politicians with ideas, which however unpopular among the magnates, were valuable and attractive in themselves'.⁶² Natalie Fryde took vigorous exception to this assessment, stating that '[i]t is necessary to refute this straight away. There is not the slightest evidence to show that the Despensers were interested in or involved with administrative reform'.⁶³ Similarly, Nigel Saul has remarked that 'the notion that the two [Despensers] and their clerical advisers were deeply preoccupied with the day-to-day minutiae of household reform or the keeping of exchequer records seems a faintly dated one'.⁶⁴ The Despensers have appropriately attracted much more scholarly work than Gaveston and the picture that has been developed is a powerful challenge to many of Tout's assumptions about the nature and purpose of administrative reform in the final decade of the reign.

Tout attributed considerable importance to the household ordinance of York (6 December 1318) and credited the primary authorship to the younger Despenser (as chamberlain), Bartholomew Badlesmere (as steward), Roger de Northburgh (as treasurer) and Gilbert de Wigton (as controller of the wardrobe).⁶⁵ And yet, if this is taken as a significant achievement, one must note that there is little original in the ordinance and that another household ordinance was required by 1323 as the earlier plan was being ignored. Tout's view of the younger Despenser's use of the office of chamberlain, in an administrative capacity, was unconvincing,⁶⁶ as was his detailing of the favourite's reforming credentials. Gerald Harriss and Mark Buck have each challenged Tout's depiction of the wardrobe and his conception of a division

⁶¹ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 15.

⁶² Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 158–9.

⁶³ N. Fryde, *The Tyranny and Fall of Edward II 1321–1326* (Cambridge, 1979), pp. 7–8.

⁶⁴ N. Saul, 'The Despensers and the downfall of Edward II', *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xcix (1984), 1–33, at p. 3.

⁶⁵ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 131.

⁶⁶ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 157, 137.

between the public versus private institutions of government.⁶⁷ The fact that a writ of privy seal issued on 25 July 1322 ordered that the contrariant lands be accounted for at the exchequer and not at the chamber is telling in this regard. The reform of the exchequer is embodied in three ordinances dating to 1323, 1324 and 1326, as Tout noted, but as Buck has demonstrated, the movement to reform the exchequer, focused particularly on estreats, dated back to 1316, prior to the rise to prominence of the younger Despenser.⁶⁸

But in the 1320s popular opinion was certainly clear that the Despensers were the driving force behind the king's *duricia*, as the *Vita* described it,⁶⁹ and the *Scalacronica* agreed.⁷⁰ The ambition of the Despensers – and although the two men are generally viewed rather differently, in some sense the elder Despenser must also be seen as a favourite of Edward II – aligned itself with Edward II's need to reassert royal authority. Martyn Lawrence has made the interesting observation that 'awarding the earldom of Winchester to the elder Despenser not only constituted another part of that family's oft-mentioned endeavours to bully their way to greater power and wealth, but marked the start of a systematic attempt to dismantle everything that [Thomas of] Lancaster represented'.⁷¹ Meanwhile, the remarkable extant correspondence of the younger Despenser from the period of the war of St. Sardos clearly demonstrates his avarice and exploitative nature, but not necessarily any innovative fiscal policy.⁷² The king and favourite were driven to administrative reform because 'during the years of his alleged tyranny Edward II could not compel parliamentary or clerical taxation, not even with the threats of the Despensers and his justices and with the compliance of Archbishop Reynolds and the acquiescence of most of the bishops'.⁷³ But reform there was; and Michael Prestwich agreed with Tout that Despenser was behind it, although not for any reasons of constitutional propriety but simply to raise funds.⁷⁴ This may be true, but as Buck has noted, while 'the impetus for administrative reform and the ultimate responsibility for the

⁶⁷ G. L. Harriss, *King, Parliament and Public Finance to 1369* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 208–14; M. Buck, 'The reform of the exchequer, 1316–1326', *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xcvi (1983), 241–60; Buck, *Politics, Finance and the Church*, pp. 163–96.

⁶⁸ Buck, 'Reform of the exchequer', pp. 245–7; Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 142.

⁶⁹ Childs, *Vita Edwardi Secundi*, pp. 230–1.

⁷⁰ Gray, *Scalacronica*, p. 191.

⁷¹ M. Lawrence, 'Edward II and the earldom of Winchester', *Hist. Research*, lxxxi (2008), 732–40, at p. 739.

⁷² Chaplais, *The War of Saint-Sardos*, nos. 71, 74, 77. His avarice has also been examined by E. B. Fryde, 'The deposits of Hugh Despenser the younger with Italian bankers', *Econ. History Rev.*, n.s., iii (1951), 344–62.

⁷³ Buck, 'Reform of the exchequer', p. 254.

⁷⁴ M. Prestwich, *Plantagenet England 1225–1360* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 208–10.

stringency of fiscal policy lay ... with the king and his favourites ... the detailed working out and implementation of policy rested in the hands of the professional civil service, with men like Walter of Norwich and William Everdon'.⁷⁵

When we turn to detailed studies of the personnel and practice of both central and local governance under the Despensers, we find that the practice of what has been called 'double allegiance', that is, the retaining of royal officials as private clients, proved a double-edged sword.⁷⁶ While the Despensers were remarkably successful in imposing their own retainers into the central administration, they were less successful – and seemingly less interested – in doing so at the county level. Of the seventy-three sheriffs appointed between 1322 and 1326, only fifteen can be shown to be derived from the households of either the king or the Despensers. Nevertheless, the Despensers exercised considerable authority at the local level.⁷⁷ They did this largely through the use, or abuse, of the law. As Richard Kaeuper remarked, '[t]he two Despensers were probably the masters in malicious prosecution through oyer and terminer'.⁷⁸ Their heavy-handedness, however, actually hardened resentment against them and contributed to their ultimate fall, as well as that of the king. Interestingly, along with the king they also controlled the castles of England. Between November 1321 and October 1326 there were sixty-seven appointments of constables and no fewer than forty-two of them were *curiales*; and this was especially true of those appointed during the period from December 1325 through the invasion of October 1326.⁷⁹ And yet, few of these men stood beside their patrons in the crisis of 1326. Saul has argued that 'Edward and the Despensers lacked an ideology'.⁸⁰ In the end, Tout was probably correct in thinking that 'the ambition of the Despensers was the ultimate cause of the fall of Edward II',⁸¹ but that ambition had everything to do with wealth and power and little if anything to do with administrative reform, which was merely a means to an end, a very bloody end as it turned out.

⁷⁵ Buck, *Politics, Finance and the Church*, p. 167. Cf. *Place of the Reign*, in which Tout describes Robert Baldock as 'the brain and the hand of the younger Despenser' (p. 137).

⁷⁶ S. L. Waugh, 'For king, country, and patron: the Despensers and local administration, 1321–22', *Jour. Brit. Stud.*, xxii (1983), 23–58; S. L. Waugh, 'The profits of violence: the minor gentry in the rebellion of 1321–1322 in Gloucestershire and Herefordshire', *Speculum*, lii (1977), 843–69.

⁷⁷ Saul, 'Downfall of Edward II', pp. 17–8.

⁷⁸ R. Kaeuper, 'Law and order in fourteenth-century England: the evidence of special commissions of oyer and terminer', *Speculum*, liv (1979), 734–84, at p. 778.

⁷⁹ Saul, 'Downfall of Edward II', p. 29.

⁸⁰ Saul, 'Downfall of Edward II', p. 32.

⁸¹ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 140.

9. Tout and the middle party*

Paul Dryburgh

In the preface to *The Place of the Reign of Edward II in English History*, the published revision of his 1913 Ford lectures, T. F. Tout expressed the following hope: ‘When the detailed monographs, which ... will soon be devoted to this reign, have seen the light, I shall be equally content, whether further investigation confirms or rejects the very provisional theories I have ventured to put forth. But I sincerely trust that both the book and the appendices will be found of some use to future workers on the period’.¹ Tout’s modesty belied a wide-ranging, widely referenced account of England’s most turbulent medieval reign, breaking new ground in archival scholarship and the history of administration and shaping research horizons for generations. Inevitably, though, some of the force of Tout’s theories has ebbed as research into manuscript and record sources is extended and reinterpreted. This is truest with his treatment of the tensions between crown, court and noble society which led to civil war and the first deposition of a post-Conquest English king. Uncharacteristically, perhaps, he conceived these in whiggish terms of their place in long-term bureaucratic and constitutional change, the struggle over royal prerogative and as progressions, or hiccups, on the road towards modern modes of government. Through his analysis Tout famously advanced the theory that a mediating, moderate element of magnate society – the so-called ‘middle party’ – stood between the king and his critics in the central years of his reign. This ‘middle party theory’ might be Tout’s main contribution to the study of the reign and it has, perhaps, not aged well. Modern studies of one of England’s least successful kings focus more on the impact of personality and on power networks and have long since jettisoned ideas of a formal party structure.²

* I am indebted to the kindness of Dr. Bridget Wells-Furby for discussing some of the issues and individuals raised in this chapter with me and for sharing her unpublished research notes on the Badlesmere family and affinity.

¹ T. F. Tout, *The Place of the Reign of Edward II in English History* (Manchester, 1914), p. vii.

² There has been a profusion of academic and popular biographies since the turn of the century, most notably R. M. Haines, *King Edward II: His Life, His Reign and Its Aftermath*,

The intention of this chapter, however, is to unpick just a few of the personal and political connections and take a fresh look at crown-noble relations in the early fourteenth century within a wider, British Isles context. The central years of Edward II's reign witnessed the emergence of an informal, understood alliance of noblemen, many of whose primary interests lay on the fringes of English royal authority. Cultivated by Edward, this group arguably morphed into a more crisply defined royal affinity, developing deeper personal and political links. Those for whom the deteriorating military situation in the war with Scotland posed immediate threats to their personal lordship within and, as importantly, outside England acted to fill a vacuum in royal authority caused by the rift between the king and his leading councillor, his cousin Thomas, earl of Lancaster. In so doing, many seized opportunities to access the intimate royal circle more fully. Those familiar with the debate over the middle party may say, and with some justice, that this chapter treads a well-worn path and adds nothing to the seminal works of Seymour Phillips and John Maddicott.³ But, while its objective is not to return Tout to the pedestal he once occupied, the balance has perhaps tipped too far from his unfashionable views and there are indications his theory still has value as an anchor for understanding the reign.

What was the middle party? Bishop Stubbs, Tout's mentor, coined the concept of a 'mediating party ... of politiques without any affection for the king or any aspirations of freedom, which was simply anxious to gain and hold power'.⁴ It came to prominence, for Stubbs, in the years between Edward's defeat at Bannockburn in 1314 and the civil war of 1321 to 1322 provoked by the machinations of Hugh Despenser, father and son.⁵ Made up of magnates and prelates, it bridged the factionalism and personal hatred between the king and his cousin Thomas, earl of Lancaster, centred on the earl's pursuit of household reform and removal of evil counsellors and favourites and the court's attempts to thwart reform. Stubbs saw moderates

1284–1330 (Montreal, 2003); J. R. S. Phillips, *Edward II* (New Haven, Conn. and London, 2010); K. Warner, *Edward II: the Unconventional King* (Stroud, 2014); C. Given-Wilson, *Edward II: the Terrors of Kingship* (London, 2016); S. Spinks, *Edward II the Man: a Doomed Inheritance* (Stroud, 2017).

³ J. R. S. Phillips, *Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, 1307–24: Baronial Politics in the Reign of Edward II* (Oxford, 1972); J. R. Maddicott, *Thomas of Lancaster, 1307–22: a Study in the Reign of Edward II* (Oxford, 1970).

⁴ W. Stubbs, *The Constitutional History of England II* (4th edn., Oxford, 1896) pp. 357–8; *Chronicles of the Reigns of Edward I and Edward II*, ed. W. Stubbs (2 vols., London, 1882–3), i, pp. cxiii–cxiv. For discussion, see Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, p. 136; R. M. Haines, *The Church and Politics in Fourteenth-Century England. The Career of Adam Orleton, c. 1275–1345* (Cambridge, 1978), p. 118.

⁵ For the best modern narrative, see Phillips, *Edward II*, pp. 238–409.

grasping at power, not principle. This fitted his view of the fourteenth century as ‘a period of private and political faction’ when constitutional change arose ‘from a confused mass of unconscious agencies rather than from the direct action of great lawgivers or from the victory of acknowledged principles’.⁶ The king himself was ‘utterly incapable of recognising the idea of kingship’⁷ and surrounded himself with dishonest, immoral courtiers, ‘the worst of his traitors, the most hateful, the most necessary, supporters and servants of his prerogative’.⁸ Neither king nor favourites roused opposition from the barons other than by acquiring wealth and influence – constitutional and legal change was not principally at issue.

Able to exploit better the *fin de siècle* drive to publish manuscript sources, chancery rolls and other public records, Tout pushed the theory further. In his *Political History of England* of 1905 and *The Place of the Reign of Edward II in English History* (1914), Tout argued that Lancaster’s failure to take on the burden of government after becoming chief councillor in February 1316 induced a group of like-minded magnates and prelates to coalesce to take political power.⁹ His middle party worked with the king to reconcile him with his cousin and then ruled in its own right to bring about constructive reform.¹⁰ It aimed ‘to put an end to faction and anarchy, and set up a government strong enough to keep England in peace and wrest Scotland from Robert Bruce’,¹¹ representing ‘the beginnings of that readjustment of parties by which subsequent progress was to come’ and a milder, more respectful tutelage for a recalcitrant king than his baronial opponents permitted.¹²

This view held sway for almost six decades¹³ until in 1972 Seymour Phillips published a detailed monograph of the kind envisaged by Tout, namely

⁶ Stubbs, *Constitutional History*, pp. 319–20.

⁷ Stubbs, *Constitutional History*, p. 321.

⁸ Stubbs, *Constitutional History*, p. 325.

⁹ T. F. Tout, *The History of England from the Accession of Henry III to the Death of Edward III, 1216–1377* (*The Political History of England in Twelve Volumes*, ed. W. Hunt and R. L. Poole, iii, London, 1905), iii. 265–74; Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 74–132.

¹⁰ For comment, see Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, p. 137.

¹¹ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 118.

¹² Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 74.

¹³ It was an argument developed and nuanced, but not decisively challenged, by J. C. Davies, J. G. Edwards and B. Wilkinson in their closer, evidence-led examination of the Treaty of Leake of August 1318, the agreement which for Tout marked the victory of his middle party, with the king accepting reform (J. C. Davies, *The Baronial Opposition to Edward II: Its Character and Policy* (Cambridge, 1918); J. G. Edwards, ‘The negotiating of the Treaty of Leake, 1318’, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xxx (1915), 569–601; B. Wilkinson, ‘The negotiations preceding the “Treaty” of Leake, August 1318’, in *Studies in Medieval History presented to Frederick Maurice Powicke*, ed. R. W. Hunt, W. A. Pantin and R. W. Southern (Oxford, 1948), pp. 333–53).

his biography of Aymer de Valence, earl of Pembroke, whom Tout had identified as the leader of his middle party.¹⁴ This brought an unparalleled wealth of sources to the study of baronial politics and dovetailed with John Maddicott's study of Thomas of Lancaster published two years earlier. Phillips concluded that Tout's theory was anachronistic in an era when politics was so personal.¹⁵ He demonstrated that Pembroke and other members of his 'party' were royal servants of long standing whose interests complemented those of the king and whose intervention with and support for Edward mitigated his vacillating nature. While the power of those individuals close to the king could vary as circumstances changed and new personalities came to the fore, they would not need to form an independent political group to force themselves upon the king. The politics of Edward's reign was driven by ambitious favourites, their access to patronage and power and the periodically violent reaction of the baronial community, which could be moderated not by a political party but 'a community of like minds'.¹⁶ This revisionist view rightly became the new orthodoxy: recent studies of the higher clergy and other magnates show that personal connections and interests and access, or not, to patronage networks largely dictated the behaviour of the political community during Edward II's reign.¹⁷ But, if we now turn to examine the period and personalities in more detail and within a broader British Isles context, there are grounds to credit Tout with perspicacity.

In a decade during which England experienced climatic catastrophe for three years from 1315 and withering incursions from the Scots after Bannockburn in both northern England and then, from the spring of 1315, Ireland, England could ill afford weak leadership and a divided nobility.¹⁸ Tout believed the middle party fulfilled a moderating, unifying function. He

¹⁴ Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, ch. 5. The author gave a more detailed account of his reinterpretation in J. R. S. Phillips, 'The "middle party" and the negotiating of the Treaty of Leake, August 1318: a reinterpretation', *Hist. Research*, xlvii (1973), 11–27.

¹⁵ What follows is this author's summary of Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, pp. 141–7.

¹⁶ Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, p. 176.

¹⁷ See, e.g., Haines, *Church and Politics*; N. M. Fryde, *The Tyranny and Fall of Edward II, 1321–1326* (Cambridge, 1979); M. C. Buck, *Politics, Finance and the Church in the Reign of Edward II: Walter Stapledon, Treasurer of England* (Cambridge, 1983); J. S. Hamilton, *Piers Gaveston, Earl of Cornwall, 1307–1312: Politics and Patronage in the Reign of Edward II* (Detroit, Mich., 1988).

¹⁸ Perhaps the best survey of the period from multiple perspectives is C. McNamee, *The Wars of the Bruces: Scotland, England and Ireland, 1306–1328* (East Linton, 1998). However, see also Maddicott, *Thomas of Lancaster*, pp. 160–258; Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, pp. 83–177. For the famine, see I. Kershaw, 'The great famine and agrarian crisis in England 1315–1322', *Past & Present*, lix (1973), 3–50.

argued its genesis came in an understanding between the earl of Pembroke and the royal steward, the Kentish knight Bartholomew Badlesmere, in 1317.¹⁹ On 24 November of that year both men bound Roger Damory to themselves in £10,000. Damory, one of the rising stars at court with his brother-in-law Hugh Audley junior and William Montagu, steward of the king's household, agreed to use his influence with the king to persuade him to be governed by the advice of Pembroke and Badlesmere.²⁰ Tout argued this was a coup by Pembroke, 'no partisan of prerogative',²¹ to replace Lancaster, who had become the king's chief councillor in February 1316 but was singularly ineffective in government.²² It was 'a coalition between his friends and the followers of Pembroke. All lovers of order, of moderation, and of the supremacy of the law necessarily made common cause with them'.²³ This coalition originated in an embassy to Avignon early in 1317 to bring the new pope, John XXII, onside in Edward's struggles with his baronage, to excommunicate the Scots and to grant a clerical tax.²⁴ The ambassadors had included Pembroke, Badlesmere and the bishops of Norwich and Ely, to the latter of whom we shall return shortly. These men, all with significant experience of or landed interests in Scotland, Wales and/or Ireland, formed with others the nucleus of Tout's middle party.²⁵

Both indenture and embassy have been investigated by Phillips, Haines and others in the past forty years. Their findings indicate no hostility towards the king, rather a grouping of men drawn ever closer to him in mutual support, as demonstrated by a series of indentures to remain with him in peace and war sealed throughout 1317 by leading earls, including Pembroke and Hereford, and barons led by Badlesmere, Damory, Audley and Montagu.²⁶ Certainly, the experiment of Lancaster leading the administration foundered quickly on the earl's distrust of Edward's good

¹⁹ See Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 114 for what follows.

²⁰ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 116; *Parliamentary Writs and Writs of Military Summons*, ed. F. Palgrave (2 vols., London, 1834), ii, pt. 2, p. 120. See also Stubbs, *Constitutional History*, p. 359.

²¹ Tout, *Political History*, p. 272.

²² Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 115.

²³ Tout, *Political History*, p. 273.

²⁴ Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, p. 14; Haines, *Church and Politics*, p. 112.

²⁵ Haines first made this connection in *Church and Politics*, p. 118. See also Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 112, 114; and Davies, *Baronial Opposition to Edward II*, ch. 5, for earlier arguments. In terms of the episcopal partners in this 'coalition', K. Edwards followed Tout and Davies in assuming leading prelates formed a key element in the middle party (K. Edwards, 'The political importance of the English bishops during the reign of Edward II', *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, lix (1944), 311–47, at pp. 331–2).

²⁶ Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, pp. 148–9.

faith in upholding the ordinances – those measures imposed in 1311 to reform his household, end purveyance, curtail the royal prerogative and cast ‘evil counsellors’ aside²⁷ – and through the earl’s inability to govern and lead a military campaign. In this context, it is worth examining another document which provides evidence for a network of connections relevant to those involved with the supposed middle party.

On 24 June 1316 a marriage settlement was sealed at remote Earnwood in Kinlet, Shropshire. Here, Edmund Mortimer, the teenage heir of Roger Mortimer, lord of Wigmore in the Welsh March and Trim in Ireland, was betrothed to Elizabeth, daughter of Bartholomew Badlesmere.²⁸ The contract had been drawn up on 9 May, only a week after Badlesmere oversaw the contracts of marriage for his second daughter Maud to Robert Fitzpayn and, possibly, of his eldest daughter Margery to William Roos of Helmsley, a banneret of the royal household.²⁹ Both Mortimer and Badlesmere appeared to be tying themselves together by bonds that would transcend the current generation and raise their mutual status. Although both men appear in the household of the king as prince of Wales, their fathers do not appear to have had prior connections.³⁰ Badlesmere had served both Henry de Lacy, earl of Lincoln (d. 1311), and Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester, who was killed at Bannockburn, while Mortimer had spent much of the previous decade in Ireland.³¹ But, the reciprocal recognisances of £20,000 to ensure the marriage proceeded indicate this was more than a private deal.³² A glance

²⁷ For which see Phillips, *Edward II*, pp. 264–8, 274–6, 290–4. For the ordinances, see M. C. Prestwich, ‘The ordinances of 1311 and the politics of the early fourteenth century’, in *Politics and Crisis in Fourteenth-Century England*, ed. J. Taylor and W. R. Childs (Gloucester, 1990), pp. 1–18.

²⁸ The National Archives of the UK, DL 27/93. Elizabeth’s age is unknown but she is thought to have been about three. She was Badlesmere’s third daughter. She does not seem to have given birth to her first child, Roger, until November 1328 (London, British Library, Cotton MS. Nero A iv, fo 59r).

²⁹ Brit. Libr., Harleian MS. 1240, fo. 113v; G. E. Cokayne, *Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom Extant, Extinct, or Dormant* (8 vols., London, 1887–98), xi. 99. For Roos, see Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, p. 313.

³⁰ For Badlesmere, see TNA, E 101/369/11, fo 107.

³¹ Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, p. 144. The connection with Gloucester may perhaps have come via Badlesmere’s marriage in 1303–4 to Gloucester’s cousin, Margaret de Umfraville, *née* de Clare, the widow of the eldest son of the earl of Angus. For Mortimer in Ireland, see P. Dryburgh, ‘The career of Roger Mortimer, first earl of March, c.1287–1330’ (unpublished University of Bristol PhD thesis, 2002), ch. 1, pp. 26–40 < <https://research-information.bristol.ac.uk/files/34486135/DX220713.pdf> > [accessed 15 Dec. 2018].

³² The agreement stated that if the marriage went ahead Badlesmere would pay only £2000, while Mortimer would provide suitable dower. Elizabeth’s dower lands were Stratfield Mortimer (Berkshire), Cleobury Mortimer (Shropshire) and Bridgewater, Odecumbe and

at the witnesses is instructive: Roger Mortimer of Chirk, uncle to the lord of Wigmore, and local clients³³ are understandable, as are Bartholomew and Henry Burghersh, Badlesmere's nephews, and the two Robert Watevilles, at least one of whom was retained by Badlesmere and may have directly represented him *in absentia*.³⁴ The same can be said for their fellow witnesses Thomas Botetourt and Thomas de Lovayne, who, with Robert Wateville and Badlesmere, had acknowledged a debt of 1,750 marks to Roos on 7 October 1316, shortly before the latter's marriage to Margery Badlesmere.³⁵ The presence of Roger Damory and William Montagu, however, is more striking; neither is known for strong affiliations with either Mortimer or Badlesmere. Taken at face value we might associate both men with the *fautores nequiores* who had followed the king's murdered favourite Piers Gaveston and were personally hostile to Lancaster in this period.³⁶ A look at the wider context, though, points to a loose association of politically moderate courtiers emerging at the time, who, though loyal to the king and eager for reward, made concerted efforts to resolve national difficulties.

The year 1316 rapidly became an *annus horribilis* for Edward. Bridled by his acceptance, with parliamentary consent, of Lancaster as his chief councillor at Lincoln on 24 February, his kingship faced internal and external pressures.³⁷ The Mortimer-Badlesmere marriage was sandwiched by rebellion in south Wales and urban dispute in Bristol, in which both men took leading roles, and played out against continued concerns about the state of Ireland.³⁸ Before Lancaster had even arrived at parliament

Milverton (Somerset) (Brit. Libr., Harleian MS. 1240, fo 113v; Add. MS. 6041, fo. 42v; Egerton Roll 8724, mm. 1, 5).

³³ These included Edmund Hakelut, Robert Harley, John and Robert Sapy (Dryburgh, 'Career', ch. 5, pp. 153–205).

³⁴ There is nothing to suggest Badlesmere attended. Indeed, he may well have been involved in the military activities surrounding his long-running dispute with the burgesses of Bristol. He was certainly at Keynsham by 7 July (Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, p. 103). For the contract of retainer with Wateville *a tote sa vie en pees et en guerr' contre totes gentz salve la foi le Roi*, see Brit. Libr., Egerton Roll 8724, m. 6.

³⁵ *Calendar of Close Rolls, 1313–18*, p. 434. Master Richard de Clare was the final witness to this debt.

³⁶ *Flores Historiarum*, ed. H. R. Luard (3 vols., London, 1890), iii. 178.

³⁷ The summonses to parliament for 27 Jan. 1316 are found at Palgrave, *Parliamentary Writs*, ii, pt. 1, pp. 137, 139. On 24 Feb. the bishop of Norwich, at the king's request, proposed that Lancaster become 'de consilio regis capitalis' and 'principalis consiliarius regis efficitur' (*Vita Edwardi Secundi*, ed. N. Denholm-Young (Oxford, 1957), p. 166). Also, 'ordinatum est quod dominus rex sine consilio comitum et procerum nihil grave, nihil arduum inchoaret, et comitem Lancastrie de consilio suo principaliter retineret' (Denholm-Young, *Vita*, p. 172). See also *Chronicles, II*, pp. 218, 224; Tout, *Political History*, p. 265.

³⁸ For what follows see Dryburgh, 'Career', pp. 41–52.

to take up his new role, a detachment of magnates was dispatched to Glamorgan to suppress the rising of Llywelyn Bren, son of the former lord of Senghennydd, who had set the lordship to fire and sword and invested Caerphilly castle, then in Badlesmere's custody.³⁹ An essentially local power struggle in the vacuum created by the vacancy of the earldom of Gloucester suddenly took on national importance. Two armies brought the rebellion to heel, capturing Bren on 18 March. One was headed by William Montagu and Hugh Audley, the other by Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford, perhaps the leading comital figure in the Marches. Other prominent figures were Roger Mortimer, whose arrival at Lincoln from Ireland on 6 February coincided with the mission's launch;⁴⁰ Roger Damory; John Charlton, lord of Powys and royal chamberlain, another witness to the Mortimer-Badlesmere marriage settlement; and other Marcher lords. Tout saw men like Montagu, Damory, Audley and Charlton, who were intimates of the king, as part of his middle party confederacy.⁴¹

In mid July, moreover, a siege ended the long-running dispute between the urban elite of Bristol and Badlesmere, the castle constable.⁴² The royal force included local landowner William Montagu, Roger Mortimer of Wigmore and Maurice Berkeley, to whom Mortimer would soon be united by marriage.⁴³ Badlesmere may have called upon Montagu and Mortimer following his marriage agreement with the latter to assist him as men he could now trust.

The hiatus between the Glamorgan and Bristol campaigns revealed the seriousness of the political situation. A committee to examine reform, upon which Badlesmere and Pembroke sat with leading prelates and the earls of Hereford, Arundel, Richmond and Lancaster, and peace negotiations with the Scots achieved little. Lancaster began to withdraw, citing the king's unwillingness to adhere to reform.⁴⁴ Measures were also taken to shore up the imperilled lordship of Ireland. Numerous letters were sent to Anglo-Irish magnates to embolden them to continue in their loyalty in the face of the Scots' invasion launched in May 1315. Edward Bruce, brother of the king of Scots, had soon been crowned king of

³⁹ J. B. Smith, 'The rebellion of Llywelyn Bren', in *Glamorgan County History*, ed. W. M. Tatersall et al. (6 vols., Cardiff, 1936–88), iii. 72–86.

⁴⁰ TNA, C 53/102, m. 12, nos. 36, 37.

⁴¹ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 114.

⁴² Denholm-Young, *Vita*, p. 73. Pembroke's commission dates to 20 June (*Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1313–17*, p. 489; *Calendar of Fine Rolls, 1307–19*, p. 286).

⁴³ Brit. Libr., Harleian MS. 1240, fo. 39v; Add. MS. 6041, fo. 5v. The agreement for the marriage of Thomas Berkeley to Margaret Mortimer was made by Maurice senior.

⁴⁴ Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, p. 101.

Ireland, had defeated Mortimer at Kells (Meath) in December 1315 and had ravaged the Irish midlands close to Dublin early in 1316.⁴⁵ On 14 May the leading magnate of the midlands, John fitz Thomas, was made earl of Kildare with Mortimer prominent at court.⁴⁶ Men such as Pembroke, lord of the liberty of Wexford, and Badlesmere, who had married into the Clare family and gained an interest in Thomond, might lean on Mortimer for information and advice as someone who had tackled the Scots and knew Ireland intimately. Mortimer and Badlesmere may well both have been connected with Edward II's letter to Pembroke of 11 May asking him to come to him to offer him good and profitable advice.⁴⁷ It is noticeable that on 21 May, days after Pembroke's return to Edward's side, Badlesmere acknowledged a debt to Mortimer of 2,000 marks, probably security for the impending marriage alliance.⁴⁸ It is therefore conceivable that Pembroke could have influenced this agreement.

A similar influence in Irish affairs can be attributed to John de Hothum, the royal clerk upon whom Mortimer, not coincidentally, enfeoffed his estates in the June marriage settlement for the use of his son.⁴⁹ Hothum had returned to court early in 1316 and his information and recent experience probably contributed most to the redrawing of the elite community in Ireland. But he had worked closely with Mortimer during his mission over the winter of 1315/16 to shore up the lordship, with extraordinary powers to supervise the Dublin exchequer, pardon felons for service and broker agreements with those who had, or were about to, proceed against the Scots. Hothum and Mortimer had been in the affinity of Piers Gaveston during his lieutenancy of Ireland in 1308 to 1309 and the only major debt Hothum resipited in the Dublin exchequer was one owed by the lord of Trim, reflective of Mortimer's role in defending the main route towards Dublin from the Scots' base in Ulster.⁵⁰ It is not coincidental that Hothum was elected bishop of Ely around 11 to 14 June 1316, a week before he,

⁴⁵ J. R. S. Phillips, 'The mission of John de Hothum to Ireland, 1315-16', in *England and Ireland in the Later Middle Ages: Essays in Honour of Jocelyn Otway-Ruthven*, ed. J. F. Lydon (Dublin, 1981), pp. 62-85. For the Bruce invasion, see R. F. Frame, 'The Bruces in Ireland, 1315-18', *Irish Hist. Stud.*, xix (1974), 3-37; reprinted in R. F. Frame, *Ireland and Britain, 1170-1450* (London, 1998), pp. 71-98.

⁴⁶ Dryburgh, 'Career', p. 50. Mortimer was certainly in Westminster from 6 to 17 May. He witnessed at least three charters within this period (TNA, C 53/102, m. 5, no. 11).

⁴⁷ Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, p. 101, quoting TNA, SC 1/49/34.

⁴⁸ *CCR*, 1313-18, 339. This was cancelled upon payment.

⁴⁹ *CPR*, 1313-17, 491; Brit. Libr., Egerton Roll 8724, mm. 1-2. The transfer of lands seems to have been expedited on 3 Aug. 1316 (Brit. Libr., Harleian MS. 1240, fo. 40r).

⁵⁰ Dryburgh, 'Career', pp. 26-7; Dublin, National Archives of Ireland, RC 8/4, p. 186, no. 310.

Mortimer and others present in Earnwood ventured to the Marches to seal the Mortimer-Badlesmere marriage.⁵¹

Therefore, the threat of administrative inertia, the possible supplanting at court of Lancaster by Pembroke,⁵² increased political tensions, famine and war appear to have prompted mediation to address broader challenges. Men close to the king but with common interests on the fringes of his authority forged or consolidated relationships in common endeavour. The campaigns of the first half of 1316 provided opportunities to discuss recent and impending developments, the uncertainty of a future dominated by Lancaster; and served informally to harden their resolve to collaborate where necessary. It is therefore arguable that were we still to adhere to Tout's concept of a middle party, which, as discussed, is no longer tenable, this evidence would mean it would pre-date even the Avignon embassy of early 1317 quite considerably. Nonetheless, it seems that the prolonged delicacy of the external situation continued to solidify a nexus of connections among English magnates with interests outside the kingdom and who coalesced around the beleaguered king.

Throughout the summer of 1316 the Scots upped their campaigns in Ireland and northern England.⁵³ In autumn Edward mandated measures that transcended national frontiers to address Bruce's offensive: the earl of Arundel became warden of the Scottish March, which J. S. Hamilton has argued was a vote of no-confidence in Lancaster's defence of the region;⁵⁴ on 23 November Roger Mortimer of Wigmore was appointed lieutenant of Ireland, the title Piers Gaveston had borne in 1308, with a fee of 6,000 marks while his uncle returned as justice of north Wales for life.⁵⁵ This enabled the English crown to co-ordinate through men with close familial and working relationships its response to threats of encirclement across its dominions implicit in a probable liaison between Edward Bruce and Gruffudd Llwyd, a leader of the community of north Wales, revealed in the summer of 1316.⁵⁶ There is, however, another dimension relevant to

⁵¹ Phillips, 'Mission', p. 76.

⁵² Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, pp. 101–2.

⁵³ McNamee, *Wars of the Bruces*, pp. 148–51, 212–4.

⁵⁴ J. S. Hamilton, *The Plantagenets: History of a Dynasty* (London, 2010), p. 124.

⁵⁵ *CPR, 1313–17*, pp. 563–4; *CFR, 1307–19*, p. 312. These grants may owe their inspiration to Pembroke (Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, p. 106; Phillips, 'Mission', p. 76). When the king wished to forward £400 of the 6,000 marks promised for Mortimer of Wigmore's voyage, Pembroke and Badlesmere were commissioned to persuade the royal financiers (*CPR, 1313–17*, p. 608).

⁵⁶ J. B. Smith, 'Gruffudd Llwyd and the Celtic alliance, 1315–18', *Bull. Board of Celtic Stud.*, xxvi (1974–6), 463–78; J. B. Smith, 'Edward II and the allegiance of Wales', *Welsh History Rev.*, viii (1976–7), 139–71. For a detailed analysis of Mortimer of Wigmore's period

discussion of the middle party. The Mortimers' promotions mirrored ever-closer links between the king and a growing group of courtiers willing to serve him who even provided a ready source of military aid and appeared to be working towards similar goals. As Phillips has painstakingly revealed, this period coincides with the drawing of leading nobles into a military and financial relationship with the king which also pre-dates Tout's dating of the embryonic phase of the middle party.⁵⁷ In September 1316 Badlesmere contracted to stay with the king in peace and war with 100 men-at-arms for an annual fee of £600. Six weeks later Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford, contracted to serve for a peace-time fee of 1,000 marks and 2,000 marks in war. Further indentures were sealed over the coming year with men like William la Zouche and Roger Damory, both witnesses to the Mortimer-Badlesmere marriage settlement. A grant on 8 November 1316 to the burgesses of Harlech in Wales was witnessed by the earls of Arundel and Warenne, Bishop Hothum of Ely, Badlesmere, Mortimer of Wigmore and Hugh Despenser junior, who himself had contracted with the king on 10 October. This was yet another indication of how these personal networks surrounded the king and supplied advice on important business while making personal gain.⁵⁸

Mention of Hugh Despenser is important in several contexts. These events run parallel to his meteoric rise and that of Montagu, Damory and Audley, with whom he sealed mutual bonds of loyalty for £6,000 on 1 June 1317.⁵⁹ Their rise was tied to the acquisition of shares in the inheritance of the Clare earldom of Gloucester, the richest prize in the king's gift with estates scattered across England, the Marches of Wales and Ireland. Despenser had long been married to Eleanor, the late Earl Gilbert's eldest sister, but in the early months of 1317 Damory and Audley married the other two sisters.⁶⁰ Partition of the inheritance was ordered on 17 April. This coincided almost to the week with the mission of Roger Mortimer to Ireland, where he might realistically be relied upon to execute the partition once he had restored the lordship to order and foiled the attempted conquest launched by Robert Bruce deep into southern Ireland in the early months of 1317.⁶¹

in office, see P. Dryburgh, 'Roger Mortimer's governance of Ireland, 1317–20', in *Ireland and the English World in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. B. Smith (London, 2009), pp. 89–102.

⁵⁷ For the indentures discussed below, see Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, App. 3, pp. 312–4.

⁵⁸ *CFR*, 1307–19, p. 310; *TNA*, E 101/13/36, no. 139; *CPR*, 1317–21, p. 56; Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, pp. 149, 312, 314.

⁵⁹ *CCR*, 1313–18, p. 477; *TNA*, E 163/3/6, m. 1 (discussed in Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, p. 133).

⁶⁰ J. S. Hamilton, 'Despenser, Hugh, the younger, first Lord Despenser (*d.* 1326)', in *ODNB* <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/7554>> [accessed 23 May 2018].

⁶¹ *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem and Other Analogous Documents Preserved in the Public Record Office, volume VI: Edward II* (Hereford, 1910), no. 129, pp. 81–2. Mortimer

The odd man out of the Clare settlement, William Montagu, steward of the king's household, had, though, in January 1317 married Joan, daughter of the recently deceased lord of western Meath, Theobald de Verdun, which gave him direct interests to lands contiguous with Mortimer's own lordship of Trim.⁶² These developments were, arguably, emblematic of growing collaboration between men whose proximity to the king was becoming assured and others whose competencies and connections compelled them to bolster royal authority. All four men – Damory, Audley, Despenser and Montagu – had contracted to stay with the king by indenture around this time, along with other prominent magnates led by the earl of Hereford.⁶³

The history of Edward II's reign from this point, at least until the civil war of 1321 to 1322, which saw the king break with some of his closest confidants, became increasingly fractious as the king and Lancaster continued to quarrel.⁶⁴ For Tout, this was the period which saw the emergence and victory of his middle party. The dangerous liaisons of April 1317 outlined above coincided with the king naming Lancaster as his enemy for missing council meetings. The earl, conversely, complained of plots against him by the courtiers despite the establishment of a baronial committee in which he pressed for the transaction of business in parliament.⁶⁵ This set the tone for much of the following year, the king and his cousin sparring verbally at a distance, only occasionally, as in Yorkshire in September 1317, almost coming to blows.⁶⁶

Tout argued that Pembroke began to gather allies around him to intervene as an independent force for good government and to negotiate between king, courtiers and Lancaster. He noted the presence in councils and embassies to Lancaster of leading prelates such as Hothum and Alexander Bicknor, archbishop of Dublin, who lent 'a real measure of weight and independence to the new party'.⁶⁷ These ambassadors were joined by the earls of Hereford, Arundel and Warenne, the latter of whom was engaged in a private war with Lancaster, both Mortimers, uncle and nephew, as well as the husbands of the heiresses to the earldom of Gloucester. Together this group of men included many of the lords of a large swathe of the Welsh March. Never

departed for Youghal around 2 April and arrived on 7 April (Dryburgh, 'Governance', p. 89).

⁶² Maddicott, *Thomas of Lancaster*, p. 194.

⁶³ Damory, Audley and Montagu (Jan. 1317); Despenser (Oct. 1316); Hereford (Sept. 1316) (see Phillips, *Edward II*, p. 306).

⁶⁴ Phillips, *Edward II*, pp. 294–321.

⁶⁵ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 106; Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, p. 150.

⁶⁶ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 107.

⁶⁷ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 117.

since 1263, writes Tout, ‘did the Welsh marcher chieftains shew so united a front in rallying round the king’.⁶⁸ This group also includes some of the leading English magnates with lands in Ireland and men like Arundel and Hereford who had long, bitter experience of life on the northern frontier. As we have seen, these connections had been in play for some time and were related to both the wider military scene and patronage networks at court. It is in this context that Tout argued that the indenture between Pembroke, Badlesmere and Damory fired the starting gun for the middle party; and that this marked the union between those closest to the king and more moderate forces – leading prelates and magnates such as the Mortimers – which manhandled Edward over the spring of 1318 and allowed them to negotiate a settlement with Lancaster that witnessed his humiliation and replacement by the middle party.

Tout’s reading of the sources available to him has been challenged as a far wider range of material has been marshalled. Phillips was surely correct that we should assign far more agency to the king than Tout allowed. Edward assembled a coalition of individuals close to him and inimical to Lancaster. This included others whose fear of civil war and of the worsening military situation drove them to gather to him, both to increase their own influence and to help to resist the Scots, who raided deep into England in autumn 1317 and captured Berwick in April 1318.⁶⁹ Edward’s willingness to retain men at large fees served both a military and political purpose and the indenture mentioned above aimed to restrain Damory rather than persuade him to intercede with the king. Edward appears more flexible than the intransigent Lancaster, who held firm to the ordinances and the primacy of parliament.

The detailed narrative of how the middle party (or not) negotiated the peace settlement sealed at Leake between king and earl on 9 August 1318 has been well told elsewhere.⁷⁰ For the purposes of this chapter it is worth noting the prominence of ecclesiastical negotiators. These included not just papal legates but also the archbishop of Dublin, provided to his see by John XXII only in August 1317, and John de Hothum, bishop of Ely, who both sensed the urgency of a settlement for the security of the English royal dominions. It is striking how much agency these men and others with similar experience took in the final, harum-scarum talks in July and August 1318, when both sides stepped back from the abyss. Both prelates, for example, led an embassy on 21 July to Lancaster at Northampton,

⁶⁸ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 117.

⁶⁹ J. R. S. Phillips, ‘Edward II [Edward of Caernarfon] (1284–1327)’, in *ODNB* <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/8518>> [accessed 23 May 2018].

⁷⁰ Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, pp. 153–70; Haines, *Church and Politics*, pp. 121–3. For further references, see nn.14 and 15 above.

together with Pembroke, Arundel, Badlesmere and Roger Mortimer of Wigmore, recalled from his lieutenancy in Ireland specifically to help negotiations.⁷¹ This was the embassy in which Lancaster proposed the council of government to which the king would submit after the settlement, but after which agreement stalled. The assumption is that the king took the advice of Montagu, Damory and Audley, his favourites, to renege on promises that gifts made contrary to the ordinances should be revoked and favourites removed.⁷² However, the behaviour of the envoys themselves is questionable: the day before this embassy Mortimer received the marriage of the heir to the earldom of Warwick in part satisfaction for the debts incurred as keeper of Ireland.⁷³ This was one of the richest prizes in the king's gift and Mortimer, amongst others, may have had cause to view the proposed peace as personally disadvantageous were it executed.⁷⁴ Despite this, he and many of the same associates made a final embassy on 1 August, which preceded a kiss of peace between the king and Lancaster and then the sealing of a settlement near Leicester on 9 August.⁷⁵

The Treaty of Leake is one of those set-piece moments in the reign of Edward II when, apparently, true accord had been brokered and issues of national importance addressed. It is also famous as having signalled for Tout and others the 'triumph' of the middle party when Lancaster, faced by representatives of the party speaking in the king's name, relinquished the capacity to speak for the English baronage.⁷⁶ The agreement enshrined the ordinances and ratified the pardon of Lancaster and his associates. It also instituted what Tout saw as a revolutionary council of eight prelates, four earls and four barons, of whom two prelates, one earl and one baron would sit in permanent council and rotate every quarter; Tout believed it incorrectly, as Goronwy Edwards has shown, to have been a middle-party invention.⁷⁷ Empowered to intervene if

⁷¹ Dryburgh, 'Career', p. 62.

⁷² For analysis, see Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, pp. 169–70.

⁷³ Dryburgh, 'Career', p. 63. Mortimer also received two commissions of *oyer et terminer* on the same day concerning breaches of his parks in Berkshire and for carrying off his goods and assaulting his men at Ludlow in Shropshire (*CPR*, 1317–21, pp. 274, 275). This prompted Edwards to suggest a 'middle party' of a right wing of Arundel, Mortimer and Badlesmere, bent on scuppering the deal, and a left wing of Pembroke and the prelates (Edwards, 'Middle party', p. 377).

⁷⁴ Maddicott, *Thomas of Lancaster*, p. 225.

⁷⁵ For comment see Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, p. 170.

⁷⁶ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 121. The text of the settlement can be found in *Foedera, Conventiones, Litterae et Cuiuscunque Generis Acta Publica*, ed. T. Rymer (4 vols. in 7, London, 1816–69), ii, pt. 1, 370; *Rotuli Parliamentorum*, ed. J. Strachey et al. (6 vols., London, 1767), i, 453–4; *CCR*, 1318–23, pp. 112–4; TNA, E 368/89, rot. 84.

⁷⁷ Stubbs, *Constitutional History*, p. 359; Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 121–3; Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, pp. 170–1.

ordinary acts of royal sovereignty could not be expedited without recourse to parliament, the council also took on household reform, a purge seen by Tout as ‘the virtual suspension of monarchy’.⁷⁸ This constitutional, party-driven approach masked the primacy of personality and personal networks in the settlement. While many of the councillors were moderating influences upon Edward, they were also men such as Pembroke, Hereford and Mortimer of Wigmore who had bound themselves to Edward and each other and yet wider networks by private marital and financial arrangements.⁷⁹ They would act in the king’s interests, broadly drawn. They were also men of administrative experience and long, fruitful service. Only three months after the Leake settlement, for example, forces loyal to Edward II defeated and killed Edward Bruce at Faughart in Ireland; they largely consisted of local levies from Louth and Meath, counties, as this author has argued elsewhere, where the patterns of territorial lordship and loyalty had been transformed by the lieutenancy of Roger Mortimer.⁸⁰

Mortimer joined Hothum, Badlesmere and the long-time royal servant Walter Norwich in a committee of the newly convened council, chaired by Archbishop Melton of York, to examine proposals put forward for reform of finance and administration and abuses in the running of the royal household in a statute issued by the parliament held at York from October 1318.⁸¹ For Tout this marked a watershed, echoing the contemporary author of the *Vita Edwardi Secundi*, who noted that Leake presaged the portentous victory over the Scots, papal excommunication of Bruce and the end of the famine.⁸² Tout believed that in bridling the king and in sidelining Lancaster the council was a humiliation for both and that his middle party brought order to government. Certainly, in 1319 measures to combat the Scots collectively were put in train and a joint mission to retake Berwick launched in the spring. On 15 March 1319 Roger Mortimer was reappointed to the chief governorship of Ireland at the moment preparations were being made for the Berwick campaign, evidence of a co-ordinated military strategy, just as Mortimer was one of the four councillors chosen to stay with the king.⁸³

This chapter commenced with T. F. Tout’s plea for more detailed histories

⁷⁸ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 122.

⁷⁹ As principally outlined by Phillips, *Aymer de Valence*, p. 172.

⁸⁰ Dryburgh, ‘Governance’. For Faughart see G. O. Sayles, ‘The Battle of Faughart, 1318’, in *Robert Bruce’s Irish Wars: the Invasions of Ireland, 1306–29*, ed. S. Duffy (Stroud, 2002), pp. 107–18.

⁸¹ *Statutes of the Realm* (11 vols., London, 1810–28), i. 177; Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 131.

⁸² For a narrative account of these developments, see Phillips, *Edward II*, pp. 319–21; Maddicott, *Thomas of Lancaster*, pp. 188–95.

⁸³ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 270; *CCR, 1318–23*, pp. 61, 129; *CPR, 1317–21*, p. 317.

of the reign of Edward II. Academic and popular works now proliferate and new and often controversial theories abound. This chapter has largely revolved around the connections, horizontal and vertical, among the elite political community in England at moments of acute crisis. There remains much work to be done to extend research into these early fourteenth-century socio-political networks to tease out the dynamics at court and in the country. Tout's middle party theory – one of the most historically controversial theories concerning the reign of Edward II – is one of the longest standing, even if it has now been debunked. There remains a central contradiction in Tout's middle-party theory, too. As he sets out in *The Place of the Reign*, 'political parties, if not already made, were in the making, and if there were more vicars of Bray than there were officials willing to sacrifice themselves for their principles, the strong personal ties which bound vassal to lord, pupil to master, and follower to leader, did largely help to keep up a near approach to consistency among rank and file'. Conversely, he urges, '[w]e must not expect consistent politicians in the fourteenth century; we must not even expect consistent policies in parties'.⁸⁴ An examination of the connections and motivations of those involved in the middle party, as Phillips and others have shown, removes doubt about a party structure in the period. But, if we examine the experience, connections and activities of at least some of these men, though closer ties did not inherently mean constant harmony, we find that there remain in Tout's thesis many kernels of truth and points still worth debating even today.

⁸⁴ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 76.

10. Tout and the higher nobility under the three Edwards

Matt Raven

Through almost all the voluminous published work of Thomas Frederick Tout, the nobility were the great antagonists to the king and thus occupied a crucial role in his writing. Yet of all the aspects of Tout's thought, his perception of the magnates perhaps seems the most outdated to the modern historian, since, after Tout's death, the assumptions framing the study of later medieval political history shifted radically, thanks largely to the legacy of K. B. McFarlane. The purpose of this chapter is to roll back the years and examine Tout's higher nobility – the earls and great barons – under the three Edwards (1272–1377), highlighting the role the nobility of this period played in his thought. To do this is to illuminate a vital aspect of Tout's work. But – more than this – it may be that we can still learn about the great magnates and the ideas, structures and interests surrounding them from the pages of Tout, less often read now than cited.

As has been mentioned, the higher nobility are almost always present in Tout's books. But, while integral, Tout's nobility are rarely truly in focus: they were hugely important to the plot as Tout saw it but did not necessitate the kind of detailed study he mastered for the king, the king's central administration and central administrators. The nobility assumed roles of such importance because they represented one side of a struggle which Tout saw as defining the period on which he had set himself to work. In its most basic formulation, the higher nobility spoke and acted for the constitutionalizing tendencies of the country while the king and his household represented autocracy, backed by bureaucracy. Tout believed this great clash to have accelerated in magnitude and importance over time, after an aristocratic reaction to the despotism of the Angevin kings.¹ The higher nobility led the 'baronial opposition', as Tout termed it, because of the status they derived from their vast landholdings. In a rare essay engaging

¹ T. F. Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Medieval England: the Wardrobe, the Chamber and the Small Seals* (6 vols., Manchester, 1920–33), ii. 150.

M. Raven, 'Tout and the higher nobility under the three Edwards', in *Thomas Frederick Tout (1855–1929): refashioning history for the twentieth century*, ed. C. M. Barron and J. T. Rosenthal (London, 2019), pp. 153–68. License: CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0.

with the higher nobility directly, rather than as secondary figures, Tout wrote that Edward I's earls 'were the natural leaders of the people – the hereditary advisers of the crown'.² This insight never left Tout and reveals his essential understanding of a corporate baronage as the mouthpiece of the nation, set against the autocratic tendencies of the king in a struggle stretching through the middle ages.³ As Tout made clear in 1915 in a review of James Fosdick Baldwin's *The King's Council in England during the Middle Ages*, he considered the later middle ages to be characterized by this split until the Tudor 'new monarchy' prevailed.⁴ This conflict defined Tout's nobility and gave the baronage its purpose and its principles.

This basic model of opposition founded on conflicting constitutional principles and ideas of governance now seems old-fashioned in the extreme, largely because Tout derived this model from Bishop William Stubbs, his former tutor at Oxford.⁵ Tout was far too able a historian to adopt Stubbs's ideas without question: he disavowed Stubbs's parliamentary focus and neglect of administrative history, for instance, as well as numerous points of detail.⁶ Tout became convinced at a relatively early stage that the history of later medieval England should be located more in the workings of medieval government and less in the history of parliament. In 1893 Frederic William Maitland published his important edition of the *Memoranda de Parlamento*, which undermined Stubbs's vision of medieval parliaments by emphasizing the integral place not of the estates but of the king's administrative council in parliament and Tout absorbed this adjustment of Stubbs from Maitland's introduction.⁷ Building on Maitland's revolutionary insight, Tout set himself to work on the actual processes of government and administration. Tout saw that over time the administrative institutions of the realm tended to go 'out of court' and, for him, the great departments of the chancery

² T. F. Tout, 'The earldoms under Edward I', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, viii (1894), 129–55, at p. 131.

³ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 9.

⁴ T. F. Tout, 'Review of J. F. Baldwin, *The King's Council in England during the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1913)', *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xxx (1915), 117–23, at p. 117.

⁵ See C. Carpenter, 'Politics and constitutional history: before and after McFarlane', in *The McFarlane Legacy*, ed. R. H. Britnell and A. J. Pollard (New York, 2005), pp. 175–206, at pp. 179–84; A. G. Little, 'Professor Tout', *History*, xiv (1929–30), 313–24, at pp. 313–4.

⁶ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 2–7. In his memoir of Tout F. M. Powicke wrote 'Tout always regarded Stubbs as his master' (F. M. Powicke, 'T. F. Tout', *Proc. Brit. Academy*, xv (1929), 491–518; repr. in *The Collected Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout* (3 vols., Manchester, 1932–4), i. 1–24, at p. 2).

⁷ *Memoranda de Parlamento*, ed. F. W. Maitland (London, 1893); Tout, *Chapters*, i. 3–4. See G. Dodd, 'Historians of the late medieval English parliament', *History Compass*, xii (2014), 473–88, for a historiographical overview of parliament.

and exchequer assumed a more national and public character than those of the royal household such as the wardrobe and the chamber. Along with the royal council and parliament, this was the institutional environment and scheme of development into which Tout relocated the age-old conflict of monarchy and aristocracy, of king and realm. The barons wanted to control the king by controlling his administration, thus controlling the governance of the realm. The 'state departments' were more amenable to baronial control, so the king tried to bolster the power of the household, through which he wielded a more direct authority. This led in time to the creation of new institutional mechanisms of imparting the royal will, as the king strove to throw off the influence of the barons. By his own admission, Tout's *Chapters* were devised to supplement Stubbs's great work by focusing on administration rather than legislation as the area in which the outlines of later medieval English history could most clearly be seen.⁸ This was all new and hugely innovative: excitingly so, no doubt, to those working at the time. But the crucial thing was that Tout did not question the binary opposition of the aristocracy on one side and the monarchy on the other, nor did he question the grand narrative of a battle for supremacy between constitutionalism and absolutism. Tout moved these battles into virgin territory by locating them within administrative processes and the records of the central government and explored them in unprecedented detail, but he did not disregard them and did not dispute that they had been fought. Like most historians, Tout reflected the basic historiographical interpretations of his age, his teaching and his intellectual environment rather than seeking to overturn those preoccupations.

Across the personal rule of Henry III Tout discerned a period of open conflict between the king and his barons, led at its most intense by the high ideals of Simon de Montfort and incorporating the constitutional restraints Montfort proposed.⁹ Under Edward I these wounds were treated and bandaged, but not healed, from 1272 by the strength of the king's will, from 1282–3 by the reward of lands in the conquered Welsh March and by the opportunities of war, which Tout always recognized as a potential area of shared interest between the king and his barons.¹⁰ This period of harmony was not to last: from the mid 1290s Edward I's reign was characterized by the re-emergence of conflict between the two sides of king and baronage. For Tout, the remarkable thing about this conflict – being perennial and innate – was that it had been so long in the coming:

⁸ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 4–5.

⁹ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 239–43.

¹⁰ Tout, *Chapters*, ii.

On the whole, the wonder is that the king's officials worked harmoniously with the faithful magnates for so long a period. Differences of ideal, already clear enough under Henry III, were now, after nearly a generation of quietude, to assert themselves once more. With the growth of a baronial opposition in Edward's later years, the old contest of autocracy, backed by bureaucracy, claiming to exercise popular control, made itself felt.¹¹

This renewed clash was fought under the massive financial demands of war with Scotland and France, administered in the main not by the exchequer but by the wardrobe as a mobile war treasury. The magnates tried to impose constraints on the king through the departments of state and the king responded by increasingly using the royal wardrobe as an institution through which to prosecute his wars and to conduct the governance of the realm more generally. Tout thought this increasing wardrobe activity 'the king's best defence against the persistent efforts of the magnates in parliament to assert control over the more public machinery of the state'.¹²

The ramifications of this clash in the autumn years of Edward I's reign came to full fruition under his son and successor to the throne, Edward II. Tout was especially interested in Edward II's reign (1307–27), since he saw the events and administrative developments of this period as stemming from a particularly open clash of principles between king and baronage. The character of Edward II, drawn to favourites, socially adrift from his magnates and unable to match the example of his father at his most statesmanlike, forced fundamental questions of constitutional principle to the forefront of political life and made his reign a fertile ground for study. It was these aspects of the reign of Edward II which Tout chose as the subject for his Ford lectures, published as *The Place of the Reign of Edward II in English History* in 1914.¹³

It is important for our purposes to note that Tout saw the reign of Edward II as witnessing 'the more open clash of prerogative and constitution, monarchy and aristocracy'.¹⁴ The same considerations drew J. C. Davies to the reign and Davies's huge monograph on the baronial opposition to Edward II owed much to Tout's work and was conceived very much along the lines laid out by Tout in his Ford lectures.¹⁵ Both Tout's work and that of Davies dwelt on the openness and severity of the opposition to Edward II and his policies and the administrative developments they saw being carried out because of that opposition. These developments were what gave

¹¹ Tout, *Chapters*, ii. 84.

¹² Tout, *Chapters*, ii. 84, 96 (quotation).

¹³ T. F. Tout, *The Place of the Reign of Edward II in English History* (Manchester, 1914).

¹⁴ Tout, *Chapters*, ii. 130.

¹⁵ J. C. Davies, *The Baronial Opposition to Edward II* (Cambridge, 1918), esp. pp. v–vii.

the period its significance and together these studies provided a dominant framework for conceptualizing the reign and its place in English history. Personalities were not neglected by Tout, although they were judged in relation to the objectives Tout ascribed to the two political 'sides' he saw in the period: the supporters of untrammelled kingship who wished to enhance royal authority and the constitutionalists who wished to limit the king's executive power.

The barons, especially Thomas of Lancaster, were characterized by the lowness of their ideals and their personal failings: they represented a moral decline from the high ideals of their thirteenth-century predecessors.¹⁶ Lancaster was 'the most impossible of all medieval politicians', possessing 'neither dignity, policy, patriotism nor common sense', for he managed both to remove the possibility of strong kingship and to wreck the chances of baronial constitutionalism. As for the other earls, in the main 'they were as alike to each other as a series of peas' and 'a very vivid historical imagination' was required to discern any individual characteristics.

In this environment, with the king suffering attacks on his favourites and his household administration by the magnates, and the magnates weakened by their personal failings and factionalism, the administrators rose to the fore and the administrative machinery quickly evolved.¹⁷ The process of departments 'going out of court' and thus becoming more susceptible to baronial influence continued under Edward II. The ordinances of 1311 began a series of attempts to regulate the royal wardrobe and the privy seal; and, in response, the king increasingly used his secret seal as a warrant for the royal will and began to use the chamber over the wardrobe as a vehicle for enforcing the prerogative since it was subject to a lesser degree of baronial control.¹⁸ In between the two extremes of Edward II and his favourites and Thomas of Lancaster and the ordainers a 'middle party', led by Aymer de Valence, earl of Pembroke, and embodied in an indenture of 1317 between Pembroke, Bartholomew Badlesmere and Roger Damory, was thought to have formed with the intention of governing the king along politically moderate lines.¹⁹ Tout thought that this 'middle party' brought a measure of peace to the kingdom in the years 1318–23 – but that the return to power of the Despensers from 1322 and Pembroke's death in 1324 led to renewed hostilities and, ultimately, to the king's deposition in late 1326. The reign

¹⁶ For this and the following two sentences, see Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 17–8.

¹⁷ See, e.g., Tout, *Chapters*, ii. 189; Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 24.

¹⁸ Tout, *Chapters*, v. 164–71; Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 168–80; Tout, *Chapters*, ii. 224–360.

¹⁹ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, pp. 111–45; Tout, *Chapters*, ii. 204–10. For the 'middle party', see J. R. S. Phillips, *Edward II* (2010), pp. 303–8.

of Edward II saw the continuing development of governmental institutions and formed a key phase in Tout's account of the nobility under the three Edwards. For Tout, the failings of king and magnates alike in the first three decades of the fourteenth century made permanent the constitutional tendencies of the council, the chancery and the exchequer, which had been discernible but not fully established by 1307, and thus secured the future development of England's constitutional monarchy.²⁰

Under Isabella and Mortimer, who deposed Edward II and installed themselves in his place by controlling the young Edward III, the battle for supremacy continued, as a Lancastrian party standing for conservative constitutionalism fought on under Thomas of Lancaster's brother, Henry.²¹ Like Thomas, Henry failed to install a government conducted along the oligarchic Lancastrian ideals set out in the ordinances of 1311 and Mortimer and Isabella ruled the realm according to their own whims, with little regard for the wider realm and with an eye on enriching themselves. But, after Edward III assumed personal power in a coup at Nottingham Castle in October 1330, he temporarily overcame the natural opposing tendencies of royal and aristocratic power. This was achieved by a union of temperament, a shared interest in social pursuits and by the 'balancing act' of royal patronage which Tout believed 'almost fused into unity the court and the baronial parties'.²² The late 1330s saw a concerted attempt by the barons to control the king and the personnel of his wardrobe in response to the king's attempts to govern in accordance with the Ordinances of Walton, issued on 12 July 1338.²³ These ordinances set out the primacy of the privy seal in administration by making administrative action by the exchequer, the chancery and the council contingent on the privy seal's authority. Since the privy seal was kept close to the king's person and the king was on campaign in the Low Countries, the ordinances subjected the domestic administration to close supervision by the king and the household men with him overseas. To Tout, the Walton ordinances represented an attempt at 'severe executive control' to be exercised by the king and his curial advisors over the exchequer, the chancery and the domestic council of absence set up to govern in the early years of the Hundred Years War. The struggle initiated by the attempted implementation of the Walton ordinances led to conflict with the home council and Archbishop John Stratford, who embodied the Lancastrian constitutional tradition, through a series of parliaments held in 1340–1.²⁴

²⁰ Tout, *Place of the Reign*, p. 33.

²¹ Tout, *Chapters*, iii. 1–30.

²² Tout, *Chapters*, iii. 31–68 (quotation at pp. 36–7).

²³ The ordinances are printed in Tout, *Chapters*, iii. 143–50.

²⁴ Tout, *Chapters*, iii. 69–142.

Generally, however, a kind of truce prevailed for the majority of Edward III's reign:

Neither undiluted household administration, nor frank and full baronial constitutionalism of an oligarchic sort, were found in practice to be possible. The two antagonistic elements went on, for two more generations, side by side. They lived happily enough together, so long as a common national enemy and common social and economic aims kept up a rough good feeling between them.²⁵

This watchful peace continued until the politics of party opened up around the king once again in the 1370s, as they had during his period of minority and, to a lesser extent, from 1338 to 1341. The king was cut off from the established aristocracy by a clique of courtiers, a new Lancastrian party under the protection of John of Gaunt, whose aims were diametrically opposed to the old Lancastrian party headed by Thomas of Lancaster under Edward II.²⁶ The aging king's physical and mental decline removed the personal element covering up the natural divide of crown and aristocracy and a clique of courtiers – William Latimer, Richard Lyons and Alice Perrers – monopolized the counsels and power of the king. By the Bad Parliament of 1377, the baronage more generally was once again in its traditional state of opposition.²⁷ The fundamental breach between the conditions of monarchy and aristocracy was no longer bridged by Edward III's concessions and conciliatory nature. And, for Tout, the struggle of aristocracy and monarchy continued after Edward's death in 1377 into the reign of Richard II, whose autocratic tendencies and desire to govern through his household reached tipping point with his tyranny from 1397 to 1399, which resulted in Richard's deposition by the Lancastrian constitutionalist Henry, earl of Derby.²⁸

There are several themes running through this narrative that are of especial importance when we consider Tout's attitude towards the nobility. First is his adherence to the common nineteenth- and early twentieth-century assumption that there were discernible political proto-parties, or 'sides', in medieval English history which foreshadowed later political parties. For Tout, the parameters of historical conflict were set by the two 'sides' we have already met: the royal, autocratic side and the constitutional, baronial side. This idea led to a stark separation between 'court' and 'country' – much like that later postulated by historians of the seventeenth century, notably

²⁵ Tout, *Chapters*, iii. 140–1.

²⁶ Tout, *Chapters*, iii. 288–318.

²⁷ Tout, *Chapters*, iii. 318.

²⁸ Tout, *Chapters*, iv. 1–68.

Perez Zagorin and Hugh Trevor-Roper.²⁹ The country was represented by the great lords and, as the fourteenth century progressed, the commons in parliament. The claim of the higher nobility to advise the king was based on their traditional role as the mouthpieces of the community of the realm. The country was inherently at odds with the court; this was the fundamental tension inherent in the outline of administrative and political developments from 1272 to 1377 sketched above. The division between court and country was so strong that periods of political harmony had to be explained by the unusual compromise achieved by these elements of society: in the case of the mid to late 1340s, for example, Tout thought ‘the sharp line which had divided the court and constitutional parties became obliterated’.³⁰ Similarly, in the crisis of 1371 Tout thought that ‘the motives of the actors and the policy they upheld are difficult to discern. Even the traditional parties of court and country are hard to disentangle’.³¹ This division into ‘court’ and ‘country’ was the nucleus of the party system itself and of a later conflict between whigs and tories.³² The delineation of political society into such broad camps would not survive the assault of detailed work into the aristocracy of later medieval England undertaken after Tout’s death, just as the attempt to locate the origins of the troubles of the seventeenth-century in a split between court and country failed to withstand further scrutiny. Political life was too complex for such broad strokes and alliances and actions too variable for demarcation into court and country.

Second, the baronage was contrasted to the hard-working and professional civil servants Tout saw at work during the later middle ages, many of whose records he mastered and whose professionalism in the face of kings and barons alike he commended. Tout viewed these administrators as the heroes of the age, carrying the government of the country forward despite the endless squabbling of the king and barons. After many years of

²⁹ P. Zagorin, ‘The court and the country: a note on political terminology in the earlier seventeenth century’, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, lxxvii (1962), 306–11; P. Zagorin, *The Court and the Country: the Beginning of the English Revolution* (New York, 1969); H. Trevor-Roper, ‘The general crisis of the 17th century’, *Past & Present*, xvi (1959), 31–64, repr. in H. Trevor-Roper, *The Crisis of the Seventeenth Century* (New York, 1967), pp. 43–82.

³⁰ Tout, *Chapters*, iii. 171.

³¹ Tout, *Chapters*, iii. 275.

³² Tout maintained: ‘To a limited extent there was the nucleus of a party system, to say nothing of a pretty rank growth of faction. The chronic struggle between courtiers and barons of the opposition, the contest between bureaucracy and aristocracy, which we can discern all through the fourteenth century, foreshadows to a modest extent the more recent strife between Whig and Tory. But these factions represent tendencies rather than organised parties’ (T. F. Tout, *The English Civil Service in the Fourteenth Century* (Manchester, 1916), p. 17).

working with the vast series of records these men generated and left behind to posterity – records described by Tout as ‘old friends’ – he concluded that the government of England was, by the beginning of the fourteenth century at the latest, in the hands of a civil service.³³ For Tout, this ‘civil service’ was a permanent one, discernibly embryonic of the modern civil service. It was these faceless men who reformed the administration: ‘The real reformers were ... found among the official class, the permanent civil service as we should call it, set free by the weakness both of the king and the magnates, to work out their own ideas upon the lines suggested by their practice and with a minimum of external control’.³⁴ Tout clearly felt an affinity to the civil servants of the middle ages and we may reasonably assume from the evidence of his work that he concentrated his attention on the men who displayed qualities he recognized and admired.³⁵ Tout’s civil service was a ‘public’ one, fused more to the state and the nation than to any lord, including the person of the king. This view of the civil service has not survived the findings of more recent historians, who have highlighted the myriad connections criss-crossing royal and magnate administrations under the three Edwards.³⁶

When looking at the focal points of Tout’s work it is important to remember that, although he disavowed teleology, Tout thought studying the middle ages important because they contained the origins of so much of the modern world – from the beginnings of the shiring system of local government to the outlines of the modern bureaucratic state – recognizable to himself and his contemporaries.³⁷ The later medieval nobility did not, however, feature in this landscape, since they were fighting a battle of principle long since left behind and they remained on the peripheries of his research focus: hugely important but not reserved for detailed, individual

³³ T. F. Tout, ‘Presidential address: the human side of mediæval records’, *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, xi (1928), 1–16, at p. 1; T. F. Tout, ‘Literature and learning in the English civil service in the fourteenth century’, *Speculum*, iv (1929), 365–89, at p. 366.

³⁴ Tout, *Chapters*, ii. 189.

³⁵ For Tout’s early interest in joining the civil service of his own day, see Powicke, ‘Memoir’, p. 3; R. A. Griffiths, ‘Public and private bureaucracies in England and Wales in the fifteenth century’, *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, xxx (1980), 109–30, at p. 110.

³⁶ J. L. Grassi, ‘Royal clerks from the diocese of York in the fourteenth century’, *Northern History*, v (1970), 12–33; Griffiths, ‘Public and private bureaucracies’; C. Smith, ‘A conflict of interest? Chancery clerks in private service’, in *People, Politics and Community in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. J. Rosenthal and C. Richmond (Gloucester, 1987), pp. 176–91; W. M. Ormrod, ‘Accountability and collegiality: the English royal secretariat in the mid-fourteenth century’, in *Écrit et pouvoir dans les chancelleries médiévales: espace français, espace anglais*, ed. K. Fianu and D. J. Guth (Louvain-La-Neuve, 1997), pp. 55–85.

³⁷ T. F. Tout, ‘The place of the middle ages in the teaching of history’, *History*, viii (1923), 1–18, at pp. 9–15.

study. Indeed, at times Tout slips into a Stubbsian caricature of the nobility: the ‘unintelligent barons’, the ‘slow-witted barons’, the barons who ‘retained their dislike of the expert’.³⁸ This view was to find its ultimate expression in a memorable phrase of V. H. Galbraith, a former pupil of Tout, who asserted that the magnates of the later middle ages were ‘men of arrested intellectual development who looked to those below them in the social scale for the intelligence necessary to order and govern society’.³⁹ As with so much else, it was left to K. B. McFarlane, that self-appointed destroyer of received opinion, to overturn this prejudice, long after Tout himself had passed away.⁴⁰

Tout’s focus on administration and his view of a baronage resting firmly within Stubbsian parameters led to the rejection of his work by subsequent generations of historians, who turned away from the whig constitutionalism of their predecessors. A glimpse of this process can be seen in one of A. L. Rowse’s various autobiographies when he recalls his time as an undergraduate at Oxford in the early 1920s: ‘Here I was, who found constitutional history particularly heavy going, in time ploughing through the whole of Stubbs, the whole of Maitland and, believe it or not, the whole of the interminable Tout, who was then coming out in many volumes on administrative history’.⁴¹ Clearly, Rowse was not impressed by this diet of constitutional and administrative history. Like Rowse, Hugh Trevor-Roper was an influential example of a new type of historian not content to study the dry bones of the English constitution. The appointment of Trevor-Roper to the regius chair of modern history at Oxford in 1957 was, as Trevor-Roper himself remarked, notable in breaking the pattern set by the last two holders of the chair, F. M. Powicke and V. H. Galbraith, both of whom had been Manchester-trained pupils of Tout.⁴² Trevor-Roper himself actively dissented from the type of history practised by Tout and his followers, although if he had read Tout a little more closely he might have avoided the same trap of ‘court’ versus ‘country’ into which he, too, fell; and his election signified his victory over the practice of medieval history studied in the Tout tradition.⁴³ In any case, the sheer size of Tout’s *Chapters*,

³⁸ Quotations from Tout in *Chapters*, ii. 326; Tout, *Chapters*, iii. 22, 281 respectively.

³⁹ V. H. Galbraith, ‘A new life of Richard II’, *History*, xxvi (1942), 223–39, at p. 227.

⁴⁰ K. B. McFarlane, *The Nobility of Later Medieval England: the Ford Lectures for 1953 and Related Studies* (Oxford, 1973), pp. 228–47, discussing Tout’s views at p. 229.

⁴¹ A. L. Rowse, *A Cornishman at Oxford: the Education of a Cornishman* (London, 1965), p. 53.

⁴² Carpenter, ‘Politics and constitutional history’, p. 183.

⁴³ See, e.g., the unsent letter from Trevor-Roper to J. C. Masterman, discussing the succession to the regius chair on Galbraith’s retirement (*One Hundred Letters from Hugh Trevor-Roper*, ed. R. Davenport-Hines and A. Sisman (Oxford, 2014), pp. 56–62).

in particular, at five volumes of text and another of appendices and index, presented an obstacle in itself to widespread continued use. The historian of the seventeenth-century civil service, Gerald Aylmer, who acknowledged an important intellectual debt to Tout, cheerfully admitted that even he had only read two-thirds of Tout's *Chapters* as an undergraduate, in order to highlight the unnatural diligence of another early modern historian, J. P. Cooper, who had read all six volumes while still at school.⁴⁴

But of much greater direct relevance than Rowse and Trevor-Roper is the work of K. B. McFarlane and the legacy of his teaching through the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s; and it is to the McFarlane legacy that it is now necessary to turn.⁴⁵ As is now adequately clear and frequently noted, McFarlane inspired generations of historians to invert the kind of assumptions held by Stubbs and Tout. According to McFarlane, the constitutional battle for supremacy was a tyrannical historiographical construct and the king and his nobility had a community of interest at the heart of their relationship rather than a long-standing opposition. The nobility, not the administrative machinery of royal government, became the primary focus of research and the magnates emerged from the shadows to take the stage, relegating for a time the working of institutions to the wings of historical study. We should note, however, that close reading of Tout shows that he, at times, veered towards the conclusions McFarlane and his followers later made orthodoxy. Tout's perceptions of the nobility were more nuanced than is often realized: he was too good a historian to ignore evidence, even if he was ultimately unable to reconcile this evidence with his grand narrative of conflict between baronial opposition and royal absolutism and bureaucratic government. In some of his judgments on Edward I's relations with his magnates, for example, we hear that the king was 'only from one point of view in opposition to his magnates' and that 'King and barons were, in short, joint partners in a common enterprise. That enterprise was none other than the government of England'.⁴⁶ How modern that sounds and how similar to the community of

⁴⁴ G. E. Aylmer, *The King's Servants: the Civil Service of Charles I, 1625–1642* (London, 1961), pp. 3, 5, 422–31; G. E. Aylmer, 'J. P. Cooper as a scholar', in J. P. Cooper, *Land, Men and Beliefs: Studies in Early-Modern History*, ed. G. E. Aylmer and J. S. Morrill (London, 1983), pp. ix–xiii, at p. ix.

⁴⁵ See esp. C. Richmond, 'After McFarlane', *History*, lxxviii (1983), 46–60; G. L. Harriss, 'The dimensions of politics', in *The McFarlane Legacy*, ed. Britnell and Pollard, pp. 1–20; Carpenter, 'Politics and constitutional history'; E. Powell, 'After "after McFarlane": the poverty of patronage and the case for constitutional history', in *Trade, Devotion and Governance: Papers in Later Medieval History*, ed. D. J. Clayton (Stroud, 1994), pp. 1–16; P. Coss, 'From feudalism to bastard feudalism', in *Die Gegenwart des Feudalismus*, ed. N. Fryde, P. Monnet and O. G. Oexle (Göttingen, 2002), pp. 79–107.

⁴⁶ Tout, *Chapters*, ii. 151.

interest revealed by McFarlane. Unfortunately for Tout's historiographical legacy, this statement was preceded by another, which claimed: 'Edward I was every inch a king, and at every stage of his reign regarded the feudal magnates as his natural opponents. But his personal friendliness with some of the great earls, the fairness and moderation shown in most dealings with them, and, above all, his absorption in great military and diplomatic adventures made it easy for king and magnates to work together'.⁴⁷ Similarly, Tout anticipated almost every historian of Edward III up to the present day by highlighting the harmony achieved in the upper echelons of society by the shared interest in the Hundred Years War and the king's use of royal patronage.⁴⁸ These insights, revolutionary as they might have been had Tout followed them up, were engulfed by his grand narrative. Tout was unable to reconcile the idea of magnate interests paralleling those of the monarchy with his assumptions and attempted to do so by following an unworkable separation between the 'practical' views of the king as the greatest magnate and the 'principles' of his lofty office: a separation of 'public' and 'private' that few modern historians would follow.

Since Tout ultimately continued to work and write within the legacy of Stubbs and as part of a tradition of scholarship which applied anachronistic modern ideas of a march towards constitutionalism to the middle ages, he was part of the historiographical edifice which McFarlane and his pupils tore down. We can see this process in an embryonic stage of development in a private letter of 1964 in which McFarlane reflected on his new research student, John Robert Maddicott. Maddicott, wrote McFarlane, wanted to write a life of Thomas of Lancaster: 'At first I thought this rather an ingenuous notion but he may win me round. He is setting about it so professionally, knocking corners off Tout and Conway Davies every week'.⁴⁹ A devastating blow was dealt to Tout's interpretation of the age of the three Edwards in the early 1970s when Maddicott and J. R. S. Phillips published monographs on leading nobles in the reign of Edward II, which, as we have seen, was a period crucial to Tout's view of later medieval history.⁵⁰ Revealingly, in their prefaces both Maddicott and Phillips acknowledged the huge debt they owed to Tout's work but disavowed his interpretation.⁵¹

⁴⁷ Tout, *Chapters*, ii, 151.

⁴⁸ See esp. Tout, *Chapters*, iii, 31, 188; Tout, *Chapters*, iv, 113. Cf. M. Prestwich, *Plantagenet England: 1225–1360* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 266–7, 281–3, 290; W. M. Ormrod, *Edward III* (2011), pp. 104, 363–7, 595–600.

⁴⁹ K. B. McFarlane, 'Letter to Roger Highfield, 17 November 1964', in *Letters to Friends, 1940–1966*, ed. G. L. Harriss (Oxford, 1997), p. 226.

⁵⁰ See the summary by Phillips, *Edward II*, pp. 29–30, discussing work on Edward II.

⁵¹ See the prefaces to J. R. Maddicott, *Thomas of Lancaster, 1307–22: a Study in the Reign*

They then proceeded to demonstrate why the period could not be viewed in the way Tout had seen it. Both these historians emphasized personality and politics far more than Tout and removed the focus on the constitutional conflicts Tout saw as integral. Phillips, in particular, showed that the ‘middle party’ Tout had assumed to exist did not match up to the historical events it was supposed to explain and could not, therefore, be used as category of historical analysis. Maddicott and Phillips came to their conclusions independently of each other, but taken together their books constituted a powerful wave of revisionism.⁵² This shift in emphasis and interpretation did not go unchallenged. In the pages of *Speculum* Bertie Wilkinson, a former pupil of Tout and a historian fundamentally committed to Tout’s views, mounted a rear-guard defence in his reviews of both of these new monographs and questioned the increasing tendency to marginalize traditionally central constitutional episodes in favour of a focus on personalities and personal interests.⁵³ But, ultimately, studies such as those by Maddicott and Phillips – along the lines laid out not by Tout but by McFarlane – set the tone for historical writing on the higher nobility under the three Edwards up to the present day. Like Stubbs and his *Constitutional History*, Tout and his *Chapters* appear at the start of an article or an essay or a book on the medieval nobility merely as a citation of a discredited bygone era.⁵⁴ Some will use him for information on the nobility; none for interpretation. Tout’s nobility, it has been realized, did not square up to the nobility of the later middle ages.

And yet it may be that we can still learn from Tout in the post-McFarlane world of nobility studies, where individuality, patronage, politics and chivalry are emphasized. The first thing we might take from Tout is simply the idea of a baronage encased in a set of ideas revolving around their position in society. Tout wrote of ‘prevalent theories of government’, of the ‘baronial theory of government’ and ‘the baronial view’.⁵⁵ We may not agree with Tout’s idea of a

of *Edward II* (Oxford, 1970), pp. vii–ix; J. R. S. Phillips, *Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke 1307–1324: Baronial Politics in the Reign of Edward II* (Oxford, 1972), pp. vii–ix.

⁵² See the preface to Maddicott, *Thomas of Lancaster*, p. viii.

⁵³ B. Wilkinson, review of J. R. Maddicott, *Thomas of Lancaster, 1307–22: a Study in the Reign of Edward II*, *Speculum*, xlvii (1972), 781–3; B. Wilkinson, review of J. R. S. Phillips, *Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke 1307–1324: Baronial Politics in the Reign of Edward II*, *Speculum*, xlix (1974), 752–3. Revealingly, the dust jacket to a 1958 book by Wilkinson describes him as ‘one of the most brilliant pupils of the celebrated historian, T. F. Tout’ (B. Wilkinson, *Constitutional History of Medieval England, 1216–1399*, iii: *The Development of the Constitution* (London, 1958)).

⁵⁴ To take one recent example: A. Gundy, *Richard II and the Rebel Earl* (Cambridge, 2013), pp. 3–4.

⁵⁵ Tout, *Chapters*, ii. 1, 150; Tout, *Chapters*, iii. 135.

‘baronial theory of government’ which revolved around forcing constitutional constraints on the king, or with the assumptions which led him to write of a baronial theory of government in the first place. However, when we consider the place of the magnates in contemporary political thought it seems clear that the barons considered themselves integral to the processes of governing because they stood at the apex of a hierarchical society they thought was structured towards the common good. And – importantly – they were thought of in this way by others, including some of their social inferiors.⁵⁶ This is not so far from Tout as one might think. Clearly, there were theories of government which were developed, used and negotiated by political society in later medieval England. Considering, as Tout did, the actions of the magnates under the three Edwards against a framework of expectations about noble conduct could very usefully supplement our understanding of the Edwardian aristocracy. And – like Tout – we might see these projections of the ideology of noble conduct obligated through status and rank as being in dialogue with other ideas about the nature of nobility and the place of the magnates in the polity. Opposed to the ideas espoused by the magnates on the virtue innate within their blue blood was another train of thought which they found extremely distasteful. For some, noble virtue could also be found in those at the bottom of society, who might also claim to have the common good of king and realm at heart. This side of the dialogue most clearly bursts forth in 1381, when the rebels proclaimed themselves the king’s ‘true commons’, for they were virtuous not in blood but in spirit.⁵⁷

At his best, Tout considered both a framework of principles and the fast-moving and shifting politics of baronial life:

There was soon opened up [under Edward II] a free field for that renewed conflict of king and barons which had begun in the declining years of Edward I. On its higher side this struggle represented the clash of the conflicting ideals of autocracy and aristocracy; on its lower a series of constantly fluctuating personal rivalries and hereditary feuds. It was seldom that these lower considerations allowed opportunity for a conflict of principle, for it was rarely the case that each side could marshal its forces for a straight conflict.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ E.g., by the parliamentary commons in the assembly of Jan. 1348 (*Parliament Rolls of Medieval England*, ed. C. Given-Wilson et al. (Scholarly Digital Editions CD-ROM version, Leicester, 2005), ‘Edward III: Parliament of Jan., 1348’, ed. W. M. Ormrod, text/translation, item 5).

⁵⁷ See *The Peasants’ Revolt of 1381*, ed. B. Dobson (2nd edn., London, 1983), pp. 123–211; J. Watts, ‘Public or plebs: the changing meaning of ‘the commons’, 1381–1549’, in *Power and Identity in the Middle Ages: Essays in Memory of Rees Davies*, ed. H. Pryce and J. Watts (Oxford, 2007), pp. 242–60, at pp. 248–50.

⁵⁸ Tout, *Chapters*, ii. 190.

Some of the language and much of the interpretation we would wish to leave behind; there are moral assumptions and value judgments in the categories of 'higher' and 'lower' sides and (as has already been discussed) the renewed conflict of autocracy against constitutionalism alluded to by Tout is now redundant as a paradigm of historical interpretation. However, the dialogue of interacting ideas played out against the variances of personality is written through Tout's *Chapters*; and this model of a dynamic pool of languages and of ideas about government which reveal some of the guidelines of political life, which in turn related to and grew out of political action, provides a fruitful template for considering the higher nobility under the three Edwards.⁵⁹

Second, the post-McFarlane emphasis on landed society and the shires has come not in tandem with continued work on the central administration, but at the expense of such work. There is no modern monograph on the exchequer, for instance, to supersede the eighteenth-century work by Madox.⁶⁰ Works centring on patronage abound and these concentrate on lands given, wardships received and so on, in the correct belief that the power conveyed by land was something that mattered greatly to the nobility. But this is not perhaps the whole story of favour and disfavour; and the study of the aristocracy might profit from renewed attention to the allowances and networks of favour running through the processes of central institutions.⁶¹ For magnates, getting what was due to them was surely no small matter and this often required the active support of the crown. Tout viewed the administration as an area of perennial conflict between king and barons; historians have rejected much of this but, in pursuit of a complete history of the nobility, we should not also reject Tout's close study of administrative processes.

The higher nobility in Tout's work occupy a somewhat paradoxical position. They stand outside the main scope of Tout's research and the focus of his work, while simultaneously being integral to his interpretations of the entire age. To Tout, the great magnates comprised one side of the struggle defining the later medieval period: they were one proto-party vying

⁵⁹ See Powell, 'After "after McFarlane"'; and Carpenter, 'Politics and constitutional history'.

⁶⁰ T. Madox, *History and Antiquities of the Exchequer of the Kings of England* (London, 1711). A chapter authored by D. Broome on the exchequer was planned as part of the *English Government at Work* series but was prevented by the war (*The English Government at Work, 1327–1336*, ii: *Fiscal Administration*, ed. W. A. Morris and J. R. Strayer (Cambridge, Mass., 1947), p. v).

⁶¹ E.g., G. L. Harriss, 'Preference at the medieval exchequer', *Hist. Research*, xxx (1957), 17–40.

for supremacy. As such, they are among the most old-fashioned aspects of Tout's thought and the part of his work that has proved least influential for subsequent generations of historians, who consciously rejected the interpretations of the place of the higher nobility they found in Tout. But perhaps this chapter has also highlighted some valuable aspects of Tout's nobility: the way in which he studied the nobility and the place the higher nobility held in Tout's work required Tout to engage in a symbiosis of intellectual, administrative and political history which, as a model, should be of enduring value. His *Chapters* still deserve to be read – properly read – in the post-McFarlane world of political history.

III. Tout as an administrative historian

II. Tout and the exchequer

Nick Barratt

To understand how government functioned throughout the middle ages, most researchers turn to Tout's six-volume *Chapters in the Administrative History of Medieval England*,¹ the cornerstone of scholarship in this field that has stood the test of time for nearly a century. In the context of this chapter's title, our focus is primarily on volumes 1 and 2, in which Tout set out the complicated relationship between the crown and the various institutions that emerged to manage and audit its finances – in particular the treasury, chamber, exchequer and wardrobe. Tout's approach to the intricate workings of the machinery of government was framed by Reginald Poole's examination of 'The exchequer in the twelfth century'² in the Ford lectures at Oxford in 1911–12. Poole sketched the origins of the exchequer, not just from its inception under Henry I as an expediency to facilitate 'remote-control' government while the king juggled the demands of the Anglo-Norman realm, but also in the wider context of twelfth-century intellectualism. For example, Poole recalled how ancient accounting methods associated with the abacus found their way to England via Arabic texts disseminated through the interaction of the Muslim and Christian worlds in Spain and throughout the Mediterranean.³

In terms of the exchequer's historiographic tradition we can go back further than Poole. Victorian interest in constitutional history was epitomized by Joseph Hunter's research on the archives of the exchequer in the early to mid nineteenth century,⁴ leading to the subsequent creation of the Pipe Roll Society in 1884 and the production of written guidance on how to use pipe rolls for research.⁵ However, the nineteenth-century drive

¹ T. F. Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Medieval England: the Wardrobe, the Chamber and the Small Seals* (6 vols., Manchester, 1920–33).

² R. L. Poole, *The Exchequer in the Twelfth Century* (Oxford, 1912).

³ Poole, *The Exchequer*, pp. 50–7.

⁴ E.g., *Magnum rotulum scaccarii vel Magnum rotulum pipa de anno tricesimo-primo regni Henrici Primi (ut videtur) : quem plurimi hactenus laudarunt pro rotulo quinti anni Stephani Regis*, ed. J. Hunter (London, 1833).

⁵ One of the earliest productions of the Pipe Roll Society was vol. iii, *Introduction to the Study of the Pipe Rolls* (London, 1884), with the preface noting that it was aimed at assisting

to publish official records for wider academic access did not always result in harmonious scholarship. Attempts to produce an edition of the *Red Book of the Exchequer* in the late 1880s and early 1890s⁶ led to an increasingly bitter dispute between intended co-editors Hubert Hall and J. H. Round, prompting the latter to write after he had left the project: ‘It has now been definitely shown that it is possible, in England at any rate, to publish a work of historical importance, for permanent and universal reference, so replete with heresy and error as to lead astray for ever all students of its subject, and yet to run the gauntlet of reviewers, not only virtually unscathed, but even with praise and commendation’.⁷ The heated debate over a single, albeit important, document revealed the environment in which Tout shaped his views on the exchequer’s history, publicly siding with Hall in print but finding technical fault with many of his conclusions.⁸

Yet Hunter’s use of the exchequer’s output to understand its functionality was by no means new or revolutionary. Thomas Madox’s *History and Antiquities of the Exchequer*, published in 1711,⁹ was the culmination of a growing fascination with the public record throughout the seventeenth century that led to the creation of the post of historiographer royal in 1660, with the incumbent paid £200 for his services to the crown along with a butt of fortified wine to help while away the days.¹⁰ Naturally, Madox was somewhat biased in his deep affection for the exchequer, being steeped in its history through his earlier employment as clerk in the lord treasurer’s remembrancer office, the home of the institution’s archives. He was certainly not the first exchequer official to eulogize about its technical functions in detail. The bedrock of our knowledge about the way the institution operated in the twelfth century is the *Dialogue of the Exchequer*, the remarkable treatise written around 1176 by the treasurer Richard fitz Nigel that described the exchequer’s practices, records and officials. Given his family pedigree as the great-nephew of Roger, bishop of Salisbury – the architect of the system of audit who first assembled the barons of the exchequer to oversee business

‘those beginners who have had no opportunity of making themselves acquainted with the text, arrangement, form and general nature of the early pipe rolls’.

⁶ *The Red Book of the Exchequer*, ed. H. Hall (London, 1896).

⁷ J. H. Round, *Studies on the Red Book of the Exchequer* (London, 1898), pp. v–vi.

⁸ The details of the dispute are summarized in M. Proctor, ‘The Red Book of the exchequer: a curious affair revisited’, *Hist. Research*, lxxxvii (2014), 510–32, with reference to Tout’s contribution on p. 527.

⁹ T. Madox, *The Histories and Antiquities of the Exchequer of the Kings of England* (London, 1711).

¹⁰ Madox served as historiographer royal from 1714–27, succeeding the noted antiquarian Thomas Rymer.

and dispense justice – fitz Nigel was fully aware of the traditions of his office and naturally lavished great attention on every bureaucratic detail that he observed and in which he participated. Fittingly, Madox was the first to publish an edition of the *Dialogue* as an appendix to the *History and Antiquities* in 1711, with a critical edition appearing in 1902 by Hughes, Crump and Johnson,¹¹ modified further by Carter and Greenway in 1983.¹² Emily Amt's recent work, published in 2007 alongside Stephen Church's edition of the *Disposition of the King's Household*, remains the latest word on the history of the venerable institution in the twelfth century.¹³

Tout clearly saw himself as the successor to Bishop William Stubbs¹⁴ and Frederick Maitland,¹⁵ who had explored the wider origins of the twelfth-century English administrative system – the consequence of Henry II's efforts to rebuild the machinery of government, creating a new class of professional bureaucrats, justices and lawyers drawn from the Church and increasingly the knightly classes. Given the work of Stubbs and Maitland, alongside the output of Madox and the other historians mentioned earlier, Tout recognized that 'there is probably not much fresh to be learnt as to the history of the exchequer up to the end of the twelfth century'.¹⁶ However, he remained a great fan of the institution and chided Madox for writing that 'before the end of King Henry the Third's reign it fell in great measure from its ancient grandeur, and from thence forward continued in a state of declension'.¹⁷ 'On the contrary', Tout retorted, 'it remained the government department with the longest history, the most glorious traditions and the most elaborate organisation. It was still primarily the finance ministry of the crown' and 'during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries it remained very much what it had been in the twelfth'.¹⁸

This was a bold statement to make and all the more remarkable given Tout's confession that 'of all the central institutions of the state the exchequer is the one with which the present work has the least concern'.¹⁹

¹¹ *De necessariis observantiis scaccarii dialogus, Commonly Called Dialogus de scaccario*, ed. A. Hughes, C. G. Crump and C. Johnson (Oxford, 1902).

¹² *Dialogus de Scaccario*, ed. C. Johnson, F. E. L. Carter and D. E. Greenway (Oxford, 1983).

¹³ *Dialogus de Scaccario: the Dialogue of the Exchequer and Constitutio Domus Regis: Disposition of the King's Household*, ed. E. Amt and S. D. Church (Oxford, 2007).

¹⁴ W. Stubbs, *Constitutional History of England* (3 vols., Oxford, 1874–8).

¹⁵ F. W. Maitland, *The Constitutional History of England* (Cambridge, 1909).

¹⁶ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 13.

¹⁷ Maddox, *Histories and Antiquities of the Exchequer* (2nd edn., London, 1769), ii. 2.

¹⁸ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 14.

¹⁹ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 14.

Instead, Tout focused his attention on other departments, albeit noting the exchequer's omnipresent interest in their functions. As a result, only a spectral history of the exchequer emerges from his *Chapters*, flickering like Banquo's ghost in and out of the chronological narrative that increasingly centred on the wardrobe and chancery, as well as the various methods by which they authenticated their output through the use of different seals. This was not for want of anything more to say. By his own admission, 'there remain many fruitful fields of research still open in connection with the later activities of the exchequer. Such investigation will, however, be immensely facilitated when a larger proportion of the exchequer archives is made more accessible by calendars and summaries, such as those already in course of issue as regards the rolls of the chancery'.²⁰

Indeed, one almost begins to gain the sense that Tout was somewhat overwhelmed by the sheer volume of material that had survived, in contrast to the early records for the royal household. 'Materials for its study still survive in extraordinary abundance', he sighed.²¹ It may be that these vast archives defeated even Tout's prodigious ability to plough through records and discern the intricate interplay between institutions and individuals. Rather ruefully, he wrote: 'The broad lines of late medieval finance reveal themselves with difficulty to those who perforce must study them in vast and unwieldy manuscript rolls'²² – a sentiment with which many of us today who have tried to generate data on the state of royal finance in the thirteenth century can agree. Buoyed by the output of the Pipe Roll Society, Tout looked forward optimistically to the day when more material would appear in print: 'As the opening up of the exchequer records may well be expected to be undertaken, in the good days after the war, there is some temptation to postpone the minute examination of the later activities of the great board of finance until they can be more easily studied than is the case at present'.²³

We turn therefore to others to pick up the baton. Sir James Ramsay, one of Tout's contemporaries, spent many years working through the pipe rolls to assess how much money was raised by Henry II and his successors, but was also disturbed by the inconvenience of war and the fear of zeppelin raids around Chancery Lane, with the result that it has become customary at this stage of any chapter touching upon state finance

²⁰ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 13.

²¹ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 1.

²² Tout, *Chapters*, i. 13.

²³ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 13.

to note that he ‘guesstimated’ the levels of revenue recorded in the pipe rolls during John’s quest to raise revenue after 1203.²⁴ Mabel Mills undertook pioneering work on exchequer practice and procedure, looking at some of the reforms introduced from 1232 to 1242 and tackling the breakdown of exchequer administrative practice during the Barons’ Wars of the 1250s and 1260s.²⁵ Sydney Mitchell’s work on taxation was primarily drawn from exchequer rolls, but did not necessarily focus specifically on the history of the institution.²⁶ In more recent times, Bob Stacey and Mark Ormrod have delved deeper into the records, again in the pursuit of a greater understanding of royal revenue and state finance in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, providing commentary on the exchequer receipt rolls published by the Pipe Roll Society²⁷ alongside broader work relating to the rise of indirect and direct taxation under Henry III and the three Edwards.²⁸ Michael Prestwich similarly drew upon various exchequer series when writing about the way in which the Edwardian war machine was financed,²⁹ concluding that Edward I got into severe financial difficulties – a theme that Gerald Harriss touched upon when writing in the 1970s about the links between king, parliament and public finance to the mid fourteenth century.³⁰

We are therefore fortunate that modern scholars have returned to the arena of financial and administrative history, with particular focus on the

²⁴ Ramsay wrote: ‘The pipe rolls are not added up; they give no totals. The adding of manuscript figures is very laborious’ (J. H. Ramsay, *A History of the Revenues of the Kings of England* (Oxford, 1925), p. vi).

²⁵ M. H. Mills, ‘The reforms at the exchequer (1232–1242)’, *Trans. Royal. Hist. Soc.*, 4th ser., x (1927), 111–33; M. H. Mills, ‘“Adventus vicecomitum”, 1258–72’, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xxxvi (1921), 481–96.

²⁶ S. K. Mitchell, *Studies in Taxation under John and Henry III* (New Haven, Conn., 1914).
²⁷ *Receipt and Issue Rolls 26 Henry III* (Pipe Roll Society NS4 9, 1992).

²⁸ R. C. Stacey, *Politics, Policy and Finance under Henry III 1216–1245* (Oxford, 1987); W. M. Ormrod, ‘Royal finance in thirteenth century England’, in *Thirteenth Century England V*, ed. W. M. Ormrod, P. R. Coss and S. D. Lloyd (Woodbridge, 1995), pp. 141–64; W. M. Ormrod, ‘The English state and the Plantagenet empire, 1259–1360: a fiscal perspective’, in *The Medieval State: Essays Presented to James Campbell*, ed. J. R. Maddicott and D. M. Palliser (London and Rio Grande, 2000), pp. 197–214; W. M. Ormrod, ‘State-building and state finance in the reign of Edward I’, in *Harlaxton Medieval Studies I: England in the Thirteenth Century*, ed. W. M. Ormrod (Stamford, 1991), pp. 15–36.

²⁹ M. Prestwich, *The Three Edwards: War and State in England 1272–1377* (London, 1980); M. Prestwich, ‘Exchequer and wardrobe in the later years of Edward I’, *Hist. Research*, xlv (1973), 1–10.

³⁰ G. L. Harriss, *King, Parliament and Public Finance in Medieval England to 1369* (Oxford, 1975).

challenges of the exchequer that Tout rather ducked – James Collingwood,³¹ Richard Cassidy,³² Tony Moore,³³ Ben Wild,³⁴ Adrian Jobson³⁵ and my own forays into this territory over the last twenty years,³⁶ to name a few who have interrogated the ‘vast and unwieldy’ manuscript records to write about some of the technical aspects of the wardrobe and exchequer during the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. The main focus has been on times of crisis, when the disruptive forces of reform from 1258 onwards imposed new administrative practice upon the institution with mixed results, followed by the complete collapse of normal audit practice during the military campaigns of 1264 and 1265. Tout was correct when he noted there was little more to be gleaned about the functions of the twelfth-century exchequer and, indeed, that there is plenty more to write about history of the institution in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. However, Tout’s assumption that the exchequer stood still in the thirteenth century is patently inaccurate and makes his omission of a detailed history of the exchequer even more disappointing, given no complete study has yet emerged to fill the gap. At least more material is appearing online – the Henry III fine rolls project,³⁷ showing the importance of scholarly calendars and critical interpretative material; as well as the unindexed images of many pertinent records, such as the memoranda rolls produced by the Anglo-American Legal Tradition website.³⁸

³¹ J. A. Collingwood, ‘Royal finances in the period of baronial reform and rebellion 1258–1270’ (unpublished University of London PhD thesis, 1996).

³² R. Cassidy, ‘Adventus vicecomitum and the financial crisis of Henry III’s reign 1250–1272’, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, cxxvi (2011), 614–27.

³³ A. R. Bell, C. Brooks and T. K. Moore, ‘Credit finance in thirteenth-century England: the Ricciardi of Lucca and Edward I, 1272–94’, in *Thirteenth Century England XIII*, ed. J. Burton et al. (Woodbridge, 2011), pp. 101–16.

³⁴ *The Wardrobe Accounts of Henry III* (Pipe Roll Society NS5 8, 2012); B. L. Wild, ‘Royal finance under King Henry III, 1216–72: the wardrobe evidence’, *Econ. History Rev.*, lxx (2012), 1380–1402.

³⁵ A. L. Jobson, ‘John of Crakehall: the “forgotten” baronial treasurer, 1258–1260’, in Burton et al., *Thirteenth Century England XIII*, pp. 83–99.

³⁶ N. Barratt, ‘The revenue of King John’, in *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, cxi (1996), 835–55; N. Barratt, ‘Finance on a shoestring: the exchequer in the thirteenth century’, in *English Government in the Thirteenth Century*, ed. A. Jobson (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 71–86; N. Barratt, ‘Counting the cost: the financial implications of the loss of Normandy’, in *Thirteenth Century England X*, ed. M. Prestwich, R. Britnell and R. Frame (Woodbridge, 2005), pp. 31–40; N. Barratt, ‘Crisis management: baronial reform at the exchequer’, in *Baronial Reform and Revolution in England 1258–1267* (Woodbridge, 2016), pp. 56–70.

³⁷ *Henry III Fine Rolls Project* <<http://www.finerollshenry3.org.uk/home.html>> [accessed 10 Dec. 2018]; and *The Growth of Royal Government under Henry III*, ed. D. Cook and L. J. Wilkinson (Woodbridge, 2015).

³⁸ Anglo-American Legal Tradition <<http://aalt.law.uh.edu>> [accessed 10 Dec. 2018]. Note Tout’s plea that ‘before the war there was some prospect that a systematic attempt to

We now know that the reign of King John was of fundamental importance in framing concepts around measured and accountable government; the origins of the separation of the public purse, required to govern the commonwealth of the realm, from the private income and expenditure of the royal household; and the sentiment that the crown should live within its means. Indeed, it was John's use of the exchequer as the embodiment of royal will, using the judicial powers of distraint alongside archived institutional memory to pursue the collection of old debts, extract new revenue and bind his leading subjects to him through arbitrary fines for the goodwill of the king, that proved so unpopular.³⁹ Yet let us not forget that it was John's father, Henry II, who first demonstrated the potential of the exchequer as a devastating political weapon in October 1164, when its archives were inspected to produce evidence of financial malpractice against Thomas Becket during his tenure as chancellor, with demand after demand for repayment of loans, expenses and receipts that had languished on the rolls designed to force his resignation as archbishop of Canterbury.⁴⁰

John's failure to turn cash into military success abroad ultimately cost him dear. On his return from the Continent towards the end of 1214, royal authority in the shires melted away amid the growing political crisis and revenue levels plummeted. The key clauses of Magna Carta set stringent financial parameters under which royal government was largely forced to operate during the first four decades of Henry III's reign, in particular fixing the levels of relief and regulating the feudal relationship between the king and his leading subjects. In this sense, Tout's observation that the exchequer operated pretty much as it did in the twelfth century was broadly accurate, as no new revenue streams were investigated to plug the hole in royal finance until the accession of Edward I. By 1225, the annual pattern of business was re-established and the network of royal officials were operating in the shires once more – albeit with greater levels of expectation amongst local communities over their professional conduct post-Magna Carta. Yet two important changes can be discerned below the surface of the records: first, the exchequer year was now exactly that, a twelve-month programme of business when debts were discussed, receipts taken and audits performed rather than the primary focus on the Michaelmas and Easter terms and the *adventus vicecomitum*.

calendar them in print might soon be undertaken. Is it too rash to hope that this project will some day be revived?' (*Chapters*, i. 42).

³⁹ Barratt, 'Revenue of King John'.

⁴⁰ For the litany of charges raised against Becket, see W. L. Warren, *Henry II* (2nd edn., New Haven, Conn., 2000), pp. 486–7.

The thousands of annual transactions recorded on the memoranda rolls contain an overwhelming amount of data that continues to confound the ability of the modern historian fully to process – echoing the plea made by Tout for proper academic calendars as opposed to unstructured online images – but the expansion and increasing complexity of these important documents reflected a growing sophistication in the business of the institution throughout the century.

In contrast, the decline of the pipe rolls as an accurate indication of the state of royal finance reflected another important shift in the way the financial machinery operated under Henry III. The treasurership of Philip Lovel perfectly illustrates the increasing strain that had been placed upon the exchequer during the subsequent decades and which culminated in the financial crisis of the 1250s, when – put crudely – income failed to match the expenditure of the royal household and dynastic ambitions of Henry III abroad. Lovel was instructed by the king to raise money from the shires to repay the growing queue of the crown's creditors, as well as to undertake key fiscal initiatives such as the creation of a gold coinage in 1257, to stand surety for the king's loans and conduct inquisitions, to provide Henry with regular advice and to carry out mundane tasks such as delivering parchment and wax to the king⁴¹ or attending to the preparations for royal feasts.⁴² This interpretation of the role of treasurer was vastly different to anything fitz Nigel would have recognized during his lifetime. This author has demonstrated elsewhere that Lovel's handling of the claims of Simon de Montfort as the main – or at least most vocal – crown creditor was a key factor in the way the political temperature was raised on the eve of the 1258 crisis, leading to Lovel's fall from power in October of the same year.⁴³ Equally, the pressure Lovel exerted upon the royal officials in the shires during the 1250s resulted directly in increased levels of malpractice that the reformers swore to address. However, it is also clear that subsequent reforms of established exchequer practice introduced by Lovel's baronially appointed successor John de Crakehall simply made matters worse.⁴⁴ Attempts to introduce greater scrutiny of the sheriffs burdened the overworked exchequer staff with more bureaucracy than they could cope with – the memoranda rolls contain long lists of arrears from the audit of the county farm that mounted up year on year from 1258 onwards; consequently, fewer county audits took place and despite the edict that 'all

⁴¹ *Calendar of Close Rolls, 1257–1259*, p. 79.

⁴² *CCR, 1254–1256*, p. II.

⁴³ Barratt, 'Crisis management', pp. 68–9.

⁴⁴ Jobson, 'John de Crakehall', with a counter argument in Barratt, 'Crisis management'.

issues of the land' should go to the exchequer⁴⁵ there was no discernible increase in revenue aside from the cash windfall resulting from the seizure of the revenues of the bishopric of Winchester from Aymer de Valences.⁴⁶

Mabel Mills has demonstrated the virtual collapse of exchequer business after 1263, amply borne out by memoranda roll evidence;⁴⁷ and Cecil Meekings described the way in which former wardrobe clerk John de Chishull started the process of clearing up the mess after he was appointed treasurer in 1270, removing dead or desperate debts from the pipe rolls.⁴⁸ John de Chauncy continued Chishull's work, shifting responsibility for the collection of revenue from wardships from sheriffs to escheators in 1275 and insisting that the wardrobe presented its accounts to the exchequer – an important point to which this chapter will shortly return. John de Kirkby was the driving force behind the statute of Rhuddlan in 1284, which overhauled accounting practice by stripping county farms out of the pipe rolls into a separate *corpus comitatibus*.⁴⁹ He also produced the first statement of estimated annual royal revenue, which Mills has analysed to highlight the woeful state of crown finances.⁵⁰ Kirkby clearly reached the same conclusion, as the following year he embarked upon a 'quest' to chase as many old debts as possible. Finally, Kirby's successor in 1290, William March, continued the overhaul of the exchequer by bringing taxation and foreign receipts back under his control and away from the wardrobe, where they had increasingly been deposited to repay loans taken out by Edward I from the Italian banking houses. The memoranda rolls were restructured to reflect the expanding exchequer business, trebling in size; tallies were assigned with a date when they were struck; and a new set of records, the *jornalia* rolls, were created to reflect daily treasury transactions and balances. Tout's claim that the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century exchequer remained essentially the same institution as that described by fitz Nigel therefore cannot be upheld.

Tout largely recognized this himself when he turned his attention to the rise of the wardrobe as a key financial department during the reign of Edward I, primarily in the context of the Welsh, Gascon and Scottish wars that required the collection and disbursement of vast sums of cash outside

⁴⁵ Tout, *Chapters*, i, 297.

⁴⁶ Barratt, 'Crisis management', p. 66.

⁴⁷ Mills, 'Adventus vicecomitum'.

⁴⁸ C. A. F. Meekings, 'The pipe roll order on 12 February 1270', in *Studies Presented to Sir Hilary Jenkinson*, ed. J. Conway Davies (Oxford, 1957), pp. 222–53.

⁴⁹ Barratt, 'Finance on a shoestring', pp. 78–9.

⁵⁰ M. H. Mills, 'Exchequer agenda and estimate of revenue, Easter term 1284', in *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xl (1925), 229–34.

England whilst the king was on campaign. The gradual loss of exchequer control over the wardrobe can be traced to Henry III's reign, with much of the ire of the baronial reformers in 1258 focused on the way the wardrobe received revenue that was properly within the exchequer's sphere of influence, in particular foreign receipts, rather than via cash transfers under writs of liberate drawn from the treasury. This is a pivotal moment in the history of state finance. The reformers were articulating a belief that the exchequer had evolved into a quasi-public institution, responsible for ensuring a clear and transparent division between revenue diverted for state affairs and monies allocated by the exchequer to the wardrobe for the crown's personal use in running its household and building projects, such as Westminster abbey. This was a remarkably modern concept, foreshadowing the limits imposed by parliament on crown revenue in 1697 and enshrined in the 1760 Civil List Act and its successors. Suffice it to say that the thirteenth-century reformers failed to achieve their desired fiscal control, resulting in Chauncy's attempt to ensure wardrobe accountability in 1275 and March's measures of 1290.

Tout devoted large passages in volume 2 to the interrelationship between wardrobe and exchequer and reached the conclusion that 'a study of the issue and receipt rolls of the exchequer for the period between 1295 and 1307 suggests that the exchequer gradually abdicated the administration and distribution of the national revenue in favour of the wardrobe'.³¹ The underlying cause is identified as Edward's initial reliance on overseas loans from Italian banking houses to underwrite his crusading debts and thereafter his campaigns against the Welsh, as the wardrobe became the primary repayment vehicle via the proceeds of customs duties and indirect taxation, as well as the means of taking large sums of money to the battlefield. During the political crises from 1297 onwards and the growing indebtedness of the crown throughout the Scottish wars of the early 1300s, the financial system became horrendously complex, mainly due to the emergence of a fluid credit market where assigned tallies and wardrobe debentures were used as bills of exchange, passing debt from creditor to creditor as the crown anticipated revenue in advance of actual payment in an attempt to maintain cash liquidity. Tout described the system in some detail and reached the damning verdict that Edward had run up large debts and lost control of government and 'thus tamely and ingloriously the great king's reign came to an end with broken-down finances',³² a judgment that historians such as Ormrod and Prestwich have confirmed. Equally, Tout stated that 'the very

³¹ Tout, *Chapters*, ii. 96.

³² Tout, *Chapters*, ii. 129.

officers of a precise and orderly king dared no longer deal in a business-like fashion with the debts and expenses, and all the checks which prudence and jealousy suggested were disregarded'.⁵³ Consequently, a formal audit was abandoned, with the accounts eventually signed off in the early years of Edward III, negligence on a scale that Tout deplored:

So the wars and trouble of the end of Edward I's reign soon resulted in the removal of that exchequer control which meant to the financiers of those times much what parliamentary control used to mean to our older statesmen. To save the form of exchequer audit, the wardrobe accounts were hung for a quarter of a century ... even then the belated exchequer scrutiny was restricted and formal.⁵⁴

Yet is this fair? Was Edward I responsible for the financial confusion that apparently characterized the last years of his reign? Was state finance 'broken'? Or was Tout projecting a personal disapproval of the apparent loss of financial control during a period of warfare, referred to in his implicit criticism of contemporary politicians contained in the above quotation? Ben Wild's work on wardrobe finance has challenged Tout's view on the Edwardian system of financial governance, showing that 'the foundations for the financial system developed by the three Edwards, which was more reliant on credit and sources of ready cash, were laid under Henry III'.⁵⁵ Equally, there had always been delays in assembling the relevant materials for auditing wardrobe income and expenditure before Edward's reign, as Tout's analysis of the Henrician wardrobe also confirmed, with the result that audits usually covered multiple years at a time. Furthermore, Tout's explicit criticism that the wardrobe had usurped the role of the exchequer fails to address the interrelationship between key personnel across both institutions. March moved from the wardrobe to the exchequer in 1290 to usher in a period of reform and continued to work closely with Walter Langton, the new keeper of the wardrobe after the translation of his predecessor William of Louth to bishop of Ely. In turn, Langton made the same journey to the exchequer in 1295 and operated the financial machinery during Edward's years of crisis in tandem with his successor at the wardrobe, John de Droxford.

Close examination of the daily treasury balances tucked away in the *jornalia* rolls⁵⁶ shows that Edward was extremely cash-poor in 1302–3

⁵³ Tout, *Chapters*, ii. 129.

⁵⁴ Tout, *Chapters*, ii. 129.

⁵⁵ Wild, 'Royal finance under King Henry III', abstract, in *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, lxxv (2012), 1380–1402, at p. 1380.

⁵⁶ The National Archives of the UK, E 405/1.

compared to 1295–6, when the king built up large reserves of coin via the exchequer – a result of the reforming work of March and Langton.⁵⁷ However, the demands of war and the political opposition from 1297 meant that Edward no longer enjoyed any room to manoeuvre, with the result that his cash liquidity dried up with no easy access to a new credit market after his treatment of the Riccardi and expulsion of the Jews. Whilst Edward was negotiating with the Frescobaldi to re-establish loans to the crown, Langton and Droxford concocted a system that enabled the king to anticipate ‘normal’ revenue in advance, delivered where he needed it most. They used high-value writs of liberate to bypass the need to receive cash at the exchequer before issuing it again; and created a new form of credit market via dated tallies and wardrobe debentures that could be presented to the exchequer in lieu of cash payment, enabling Edward to continue to operate efficiently.⁵⁸ To the eyes of the modern historian, trying to unpick the various transactions that were masked by a series of false entries in the exchequer receipt rolls to keep up the appearance that money flowed into and out of its coffers, the system does appear to be confused, complicated and uncoordinated. As Tout wrote when trying to quantify levels of state finance during this period, ‘the bewildering and varying number of accounts, the feeling that you have never got even all the recorded facts before you, is another difficulty’.⁵⁹

Yet it is possible to trace the paper trail that was created to keep track of the sources of royal revenue, despite Tout’s rather glum note that ‘the extreme difficulty of getting at the bottom of the confusions and intricacies of medieval finance will be only too likely to plunge anyone attempting the rash task into a sea of personal errors for which he can only ask indulgence’.⁶⁰ This chapter offers one example of how the system worked in practice. On 17 April 1301 the exchequer receipt roll recorded a number of entries marked as paid in the wardrobe, including £26 from William de Rodeston for the issues of his bailiwick. These sums contributed £775 out of a daily total of £885 – thus it is fair to assume that £110 was handed over in cash. *Jornalia* roll receipts totalled £915, so an additional £30 in cash was deposited that was not recorded on the exchequer receipt rolls; and the daily treasury balance correspondingly rose by £140 from £28 to £168. In the wardrobe account book the daily receipts from the treasury for 17 April totalled £775, including the £26 accredited to William de Rodeston. The full entry states that ‘William de Roddeston bailiff of Wudestok paid money 26 March at

⁵⁷ Barratt, ‘Counting the cost’, pp. 38–9.

⁵⁸ Barratt, ‘Finance on a shoestring’, p. 80, n. 50, for a summary of relevant articles.

⁵⁹ Tout, *Chapters*, ii. 86.

⁶⁰ Tout, *Chapters*, ii. 87.

Evesham, in one tally made to him from the exits of his bailiwick'. When the wardrobe journal for March 1301 was checked, William's entry appeared. He would have been handed a wardrobe debenture dated 26 March which was handed into the exchequer on 17 April to be assigned a tally for production at his eventual audit. However, the king pocketed the cash immediately and went on with his business without having to wait for the money to be sent to London, recorded and sent back to him again.⁶¹

Instead of a morass of confusion, we have an elegant system run by its two architects, Langton and Droxford, who knew what they were doing. Under their stewardship of state finance, the wardrobe and exchequer became two halves of one system, which had the sole purpose of providing revenue to Edward as quickly as possible while continuing to track the payments of crown debts in real time. Furthermore, the financial data support the conclusion that they were successful in their aim. Turning once more to the jornalia rolls, Edward enjoyed increasing levels of cash liquidity towards the end of his reign as daily treasury balances once again rose to levels close to those prior to 1297 – a clear sign that indebtedness was not a problem from which he suffered: there was over £5,000 cash in the treasury when he died. State finance was not 'broken': it was just more complicated and interconnected in terms of the mechanisms by which revenue was received or accounted for. The problems that Tout identified at the end of Edward's reign related more to the nature of the written evidence than the system itself or any lack of control by the men who operated it. Only their removal from office after Edward's death and replacement by officers chosen by Edward II who were not part of the system led to confusion and the accounting lag that Tout described. The crisis to which Tout and his successors alluded was not necessarily one of cash liquidity, or even systemic confusion within the departments of state, but of cumbersome, retrospective audit processes catching up with the speed of fiscal innovation that emerged during the last decade of Edward I's reign.⁶²

So where does this leave us? Whilst the core of Tout's work remains solid, there is plenty of scope to embellish our knowledge of the exchequer throughout the thirteenth century and refine his conclusions about its relationship with the wardrobe at the start of the fourteenth century – particularly in the light of the changes that were made to the operating system and record keeping under the 1323 ordinance of Cowick. The exchequer was clearly far more complicated, sophisticated and integrated,

⁶¹ Barratt, 'Finance on a shoestring', p. 83.

⁶² The V and T in Fischer's famous equation $PV=MT$, where the velocity of money in the system was directly linked to the number of transactions.

Thomas Frederick Tout (1855–1929): refashioning history for the twentieth century

not the same as the twelfth century but certainly not in ‘a state of declension’ either.⁶³ Maybe there is someone brave enough to walk in Tout’s footsteps and take on his challenge: to complete the work started by Maddox all those centuries ago and finally to reveal ‘the most glorious traditions’ of ‘the most elaborate organisation’.⁶⁴

⁶³ Maddox, *History of the Exchequer* (1769), ii. 2.

⁶⁴ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 14.

12. Tout and seals

John McEwan

Modern sigillographers trace the origins of their discipline to the early modern era, but they are also indebted to the work of more recent scholars, such as T. F. Tout. P. D. A. Harvey and Andrew McGuinness have argued that until the early twentieth century ‘interest in seals, though widespread and of long standing, was ... almost entirely antiquarian and descriptive’.¹ Then a few pioneering scholars, including Tout, began to use seals to address broader historical problems. Inspired by the work of such scholars as Eugène Déprez, Tout decided to investigate ‘the machinery and daily routine of mediaeval executive government’.² Seals were an important part of that ‘machinery’; and Tout contended that departments of the royal administration, such as the wardrobe and the chamber, depended for their ‘effectiveness’ on ‘having the custody, and therefore the use, of special royal seals’.³ Consequently, to understand the development of the royal administration, Tout argued, it was important to understand its use of seals. Tout not only contributed to sigillography through his work on the seals of the royal administration, but he showed how sigillography could be used to help to advance a related branch of historical research. However, in order fully to assess Tout’s impact on sigillography it is also important to consider his role in shaping how scholars access sigillographic information. Tout challenged repositories to take into consideration the needs of scholars such as himself. The limitations of early twentieth-century information technology meant that this was difficult for repositories to do. With the advent of electronic data management systems, however, repositories may now be able to fulfil Tout’s vision and offer scholars the tools they need to follow Tout’s lead.

¹ P. D. A. Harvey and A. F. McGuinness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals* (London, 1996).

² T. F. Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Mediaeval England; the Wardrobe, the Chamber, and the Small Seals* (6 vols., Manchester, 1920–33), i. 7; E. Déprez, *Études de diplomatique anglaise, de l’avènement d’Édouard 1^{er} à celui de Henri VII (1272–1485)* (Paris, 1908).

³ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 22–3.

When Tout began to work on royal seals they were already, by contemporary standards, well described and catalogued.⁴ The seals of the English kings and queens had long been considered important by scholars, so they had been largely identified. In 1887 Alfred and Allan Wyon published a luxuriously illustrated book entitled *The Great Seals of England* which offered readers photographs of seals of monarchs ranging from Edward the Confessor to Victoria.⁵ Some of those photographs were of casts (modern copies) rather than the original wax impressions. Those casts had been fabricated by enterprising men such as the conservator and businessman John Doubleday, who was associated with the British Museum.⁶ Doubleday made casts of seals in the museum for the museum, but he also offered the casts for sale to other institutions and the public.⁷ The first volume of the British Museum's catalogue of seals, which was also published in 1887, opened with a long section devoted to seals of the English monarchs and their officers.⁸ Consequently, when Tout started his research into medieval royal seals, he could easily discover what the seals that interested him looked like and he could locate examples. Yet Tout argued, as will be discussed in more detail below, that the way repositories were presenting seals and sigillographic information made it difficult for scholars to use seals in historical research.⁹ Tout challenged repositories to change course, but he was hardly a revolutionary: rather, he was harkening back to the very earliest years of sigillography, in the early modern era, when seals first came to be of interest to scholars.

⁴ Scholars have long struggled to define 'seal'. In the mid twentieth century Jenkinson observed that 'there are difficulties; not only ... in respect to the technical terms covering various sealing processes such as the attachment of the seal to the document but even in respect of the word "seal" – *sigillum* – itself'. Jenkinson proposed to define the 'practice of sealing' as 'the making of a personal mark upon some soft material by means of a hard engraved negative' but he noted that he used the word 'seal' for the 'impression which is or was attached to a document, and "matrix" for the implement which makes it' (C. H. Jenkinson, *A Guide to Seals in the Public Record Office* (2nd edn., London, 1968), p. 3; see also Harvey and McGuinness, *British Medieval Seals*, p.1).

⁵ A. B. Wyon and A. Wyon, *The Great Seals of England: from the Earliest Period to the Present Time, Arranged and Illustrated with Descriptive and Historical Notes* (London, 1887).

⁶ P. R. Harris, *A History of the British Museum Library, 1753–1973* (London, 1998), p. 229.

⁷ Anon., 'Miscellaneous communications from an American naval officer, travelling in Europe; forwarded from the Mediterranean, May, 1834', *Amer. Jour. Science and Arts*, xxvii (1835), 74–83, at p.75.

⁸ W. de Gray Birch, *Catalogue of Seals in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum* (6 vols., London, 1887–1900), i. 1–156. The seals are now part of the collection of the British Library.

⁹ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 26.

In medieval England seals served a number of functions, including to authenticate or validate a wide range of different types of formal documents, but in the sixteenth century scholars began to use seals to study such topics as heraldry and genealogy.¹⁰ However, studying seals was challenging because although many medieval seal impressions survived, they were appended to records scattered across many collections. Consequently, antiquaries began to search for medieval seals and as they proceeded they took notes, thus making compilations of sigillographic information. As a herald, Nicholas Charles (bap. 1582, d. 1613) needed information on the history of heraldry and particular families and his notes show that in his research he consulted medieval seals.¹¹ One of Charles's enduring contributions is his pen-and-ink record of an early fourteenth-century document, now in The National Archives, which preserved dozens of seals of England's leading men.¹² Subsequent antiquaries continued their predecessors' work. In the mid seventeenth century William Dugdale (1605–86) and a number of other antiquaries decided that a sigillographic reference work which brought together depictions of a significant number of seals would have value. As a result of their discussions, around 1640 a draughtsman was commissioned to draw a series of charters, focusing on examples in the library of Christopher Hatton (bap. 1605, d. 1670).¹³ Today the work is known as *Sir Christopher Hatton's Book of Seals* and it remains important, partly because some of the seal impressions depicted have since been damaged or lost, so are now best evidenced by its illustrations.¹⁴ In the eighteenth century scholars continued carefully to select the seals they published, but they also became interested in the how editions of seals should be organized, as the work of John Anstis (1669–1744), a herald and antiquary, reveals.¹⁵ His notebooks demonstrate that he was interested in such questions as when seal usage became common in England, what laws governed their use and what relationship existed between social status and the use of heraldic devices.¹⁶ To answer his questions, he needed a substantial body of evidence organized

¹⁰ Harvey and McGuinness, *British Medieval Seals*, p.22.

¹¹ London, British Library, Cotton Julius C. VII; N. Rogers, 'Charles [Carles], Nicholas (bap. 1582, d. 1613)', in *ODNB* <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/5150>> [accessed 19 Dec. 2018].

¹² H. de Walden, *Some Feudal Lords and Their Seals* (London, 1904); The National Archives of the UK, E2 6.

¹³ L. C. Lloyd and D. M. Stenton, *Sir Christopher Hatton's Book of Seals* (Oxford, 1950), p. xx.

¹⁴ Harvey and McGuinness, *British Medieval Seals*, p. 23.

¹⁵ S. Handley, 'Anstis, John (1669–1744)', in *ODNB* <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/584>> [accessed 19 Dec. 2018].

¹⁶ Brit. Libr., Stowe MS. 665; Stowe MS. 666.

in a particular way. Anstis's notes suggest he was thinking about classifying seals: 'seals of the crown, seals of the nobility, seals of knights and private persons, seals of ladies, seals of ecclesiastics, seals of communities, seals of officers'.¹⁷ By the end of the eighteenth century scholars were beginning to consider the prospect of creating large collections of seals that could be used to study particular issues or questions.

To create large collections of seals for research purposes, scholars would need to adopt new methods of recording seals. Until the nineteenth century British scholars had recorded seals largely by depicting them, which was a laborious process that resulted in impressionistic images, but in the nineteenth century they turned to casting and photography. In 1922 Hilary Jenkinson offered a description of a method of taking a cast of a seal used at the Public Record Office: '[O]il the seal with olive oil and take a mould by means of liquid plaster applied with a brush ... From this mould casts may be taken in sulphur, again applied with a brush in a liquid state: the cast being ultimately backed with plaster'.¹⁸ The British Library (previously the British Museum) acquired a significant collection of seal casts from John Doubleday by 1837 and by 1877 a separate collection, focused on Scottish seals, from Henry Laing.¹⁹ Since multiple casts can be made from the same mould, dealers in seal-casts, such as Doubleday and Laing, helped various institutions to create reference collections.²⁰ From a

¹⁷ Brit. Libr., Stowe MS. 665, fo. 22.

¹⁸ H. Jenkinson, *A Manual of Archive Administration Including the Problems of War Archive Making* (Oxford, 1922), p. 64. See also I. Villela-Petit, 'Les techniques de moulage des sceaux du XVe Au XIXe siècle', *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, clii (1994), 511–20, at p. 515. For a description of a modern method of casting seals, see J. Melvyn, 'Seal repair, moulds and casts', *The Paper Conservator: Journal of the Institute of Paper Conservation*, i (1976), 12–8. In France there were experiments in casting seals in the early nineteenth century and the National Archives of Belgium established a casting workshop in 1864 (A. Coulon, *Le Service sigillographique et les collections d'empreintes de sceaux des Archives nationales: Notice suivie d'un Catalogue du Musée sigillographique* (Paris, 1916), p. 24; M. Libert, 'The seal casts collection and the digitisation of the sigillographic collections of the National Archives of Belgium', *Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University*, lxiii (2017), 255–66, at p. 256).

¹⁹ Brit. Libr., 'Catalogue of John Doubleday's Collection of Casts of Seals. Presented to the Department of Manuscripts, 1837'; Brit. Libr., 'H. Laing, Collection of Seals, 1877'.

²⁰ Anon., 'Miscellaneous communications', p. 75. In 1850 Laing was offering copies of his collection of medieval and early modern Scottish seals, 'arranged in a well-finished, superior Oak Cabinet' for £42. In an advertisement he claimed that 'a Cabinet containing the whole Collection cannot fail to be a valuable acquisition in any Library, affording both assistance to the labourious inquirer into the early history of the country, and instruction and amusement to the lover of art'. A copy of this advertisement is bound into the opening of a catalogue held by the British Library: H. Laing, *Descriptive Catalogue of Impressions from Ancient Scottish Seals, Royal, Baronial, Ecclesiastical and Municipal Embracing a Period from A.D. 1094 to the Commonwealth* (Edinburgh, 1850).

researchers' perspective the casts had many advantages, but they also had some limitations. Conscientious dealers such as Doubleday and Laing kept records on which seals they had cast, but since they had often been granted privileged access to those seals, it was not easy for other people to follow in their footsteps and consult the originals. Without looking at the originals, it was difficult to appreciate the type of document to which the seals had once been appended. Moreover, although casts helped to make medieval seals more widely known, the seals in the collections of casts were not necessarily representative of those that survived. Despite the limitations of casts, they do preserve a three-dimensional record of the relief of a seal impression, so as a record of a seal impression they are superior to drawings.

Sigillographers also started to use photography to record seals on a large scale in the nineteenth century. For example, Walter de Gray Birch's late nineteenth-century catalogue of seals now in the British Library (previously the British Museum) includes a set of plates presenting photographs of seals.²¹ William Greenwell and C. H. Hunter Blair's *Catalogue of the Seals in the Treasury of the Dean and Chapter of Durham* (1911–21), another multi-volume work, offers more than a thousand black-and-white photographs of selected seals from the catalogue.²² Greenwell and Blair grouped seals together on plates to encourage scholars to make certain types of comparisons: there are plates with royal seals, but also those of bishops, institutions, members of the nobility and even a few of seals of people from outside the nobility. The introduction of photography was important, but photography was a technology with its own limitations. Printing photographs was costly, so only selected seals were imaged. Photographs, like line drawings, cannot effectively capture the three-dimensional qualities of seal impressions. Moreover, when sigillographers published photographs they did not necessarily show the seals as features of documents. Instead, they tended to crop away the documents so that the images of the seals could be placed on plates, surrounded by photographs of similar seals, thereby creating an image reminiscent of a drawer of seal casts. However, the result of photography projects, together with the manufacturing of seal casts, was that scholars could now conveniently consult large numbers of seals.

Repositories used casting and photography to create sigillographic reference works that separated seals from their documentary contexts, but the original seals and documents were typically preserved in their original form. However, at some repositories, such as the Bodleian Library, curators

²¹ The plates are located at the end of each volume of the catalogue.

²² W. Greenwell and C. H. Hunter Blair, *Catalogue of Seals in the Treasury of the Dean and Chapter of Durham*, *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 3rd ser., vii–xvii (1911–21).

decided to detach the seals from their documents.²³ By the later nineteenth century, the Bodleian Library had accumulated an important collection of medieval deeds which preserved more than 3,000 seal impressions. In 1878 the seals were described by W. H. Turner and H. O. Coxe as ‘worthy of special attention, some of them being, so far as is known, unique specimens of their kind’.²⁴ By the end of the century the decision had been taken to transform the way in which they were stored. In 1900 the curators announced that ‘the many hundreds of loose charters and rolls relating to the United Kingdom [had been] ... bound up’.²⁵ In the process, the parchments were pressed flat, mounted on sheets and then bound together into large volumes containing dozens of documents. To preserve the seals, they were removed from the documents by cutting through the tags and cords which appended them to the records.²⁶ The seals were then stored in boxes. While the seals were removed to conserve them, their removal transformed the seal impressions from features of documents, as they had been intended by their original owners, into fully independent works.

Sigillographers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries such as Walter de Gray Birch seem to have accepted the separation of seals from their documents on both the physical and the conceptual level. Born in 1842, little more than a decade before Tout, Birch studied at Cambridge before assuming a post in the British Museum, where he worked in the manuscript section until his retirement.²⁷ Like Tout, he published extensively in the field of medieval studies, producing numerous editions and catalogues as well as articles and books on a range of topics. He edited the *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* and was a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. However, the focus of his research was medieval seals and one of Birch’s contributions to scholarship was his catalogue of seals in what is now the British Library (previously the British Museum). Birch’s catalogue is a monumental work with more than 16,000 entries.²⁸ Birch was a diligent and careful cataloguer: his transcriptions of the legends on the seals are generally reliable and his descriptions of their

²³ The detaching of seals was a common practice at this time (M. Pastoureau, *Les Sceaux* (Turnhout, 1981), p. 46).

²⁴ *Calendar of Charters and Rolls Preserved in the Bodleian Library*, ed. H. O. Coxe and W. H. Turner (Oxford, 1878), p. xx.

²⁵ Oxford University, ‘Annual report of the curators of the Bodleian Library’, *Oxford University Gazette*, cmlxxxvii (1900), 541–9, at p. 547.

²⁶ For an account of the removal of a seal from a document for conservation purposes at the Bodleian, see H. H. E. Craster, ‘Discovery of a nearly complete specimen of the first great seal of Charles II, A.S. 1649’, *Bodl. Quart. Record*, vii, supplement (1905), 199–200.

²⁷ ‘Dr. W. de Gray Birch’, *The Times*, 13 March 1924, p. 16.

²⁸ More ambitious sigillographic cataloguing projects were underway in France and other European countries in this period (Pastoureau, *Sceaux*, pp. 50–2).

graphical content are founded on careful observation. Birch died in 1924, but his catalogue of seals is an enduring legacy, for it remains the standard point of entry into the British Library's collection.

The catalogue was organized to facilitate the work of researchers with particular interests. In the introduction to his history of seals published in 1907, Birch asserted that 'a general knowledge of seals is indispensable, not only to the antiquary, but to the connoisseur and art student'.²⁹ Birch argued that they needed to be familiar with seals because seals 'illustrate the manners and customs of the epochs' and, moreover, 'heraldry, genealogy, pedigrees and other literary quests are often rendered more easy by the occurrence of a seal'.³⁰ However, it was in the domain of art history, he contended, that seals could make the greatest contribution for, he claimed, 'the shapes, devices, forms and styles, which successively came into vogue and fell into disuse with our ancestors, are one and all illustrated by seals far better than by any other class of antiquarian relics'.³¹ This set of assumptions about both the scholarly use of sigillographic information and the types of people interested in seals informed his design of the catalogue. Birch had no intention of cataloguing all the seals in the collection, as that would have been a gargantuan undertaking, but neither did he intend to catalogue a representative sample. Instead, he selected the seals of notable people, perhaps because the seals tended to be of a superior grade of workmanship, but also because the people were more likely to be of interest to those scholars pursuing biographical or genealogical research. Birch also organized the seals according to their motifs and by the person or corporate entity associated with them, reflecting an approach to seal classification reminiscent of the scheme proposed by Anstis. As Birch offered very large numbers of seal descriptions, users can quickly survey a significant number of examples. However, Birch's catalogue, through its design, suggested that the natural approach to studying seals was to compare them with other seals. For scholars such as Tout, who were interested in diplomatics and administrative history, this was not the ideal type of catalogue.

Tout began to study the seals of the royal administration at a moment when sigillography was attracting considerable support from repositories. He could consult major catalogues of important collections, such as Birch's catalogue of seals held by the British Library, while the publication of another important catalogue, that of Durham cathedral's collection, was in progress.³² In the early stages of preparing the *Chapters in Administrative*

²⁹ W. de Gray Birch, *Seals* (London, 1907), p. v.

³⁰ Birch, *Seals*, p. 22.

³¹ Birch, *Seals*, p. 22.

³² Greenwell and Blair, *Catalogue of Seals*.

History Tout intended to make seals a focus of the work. In the preface Tout explains that his working title was 'The Wardrobe, the Chamber and the Small Seals'. As his research progressed, he decided he needed a title which communicated that his broader aim was to contribute to administrative history, so *Chapters in Administrative History* became the title and his working title the subtitle. Nonetheless, Tout was not interested in pursuing sigillographical research in the mode of his contemporaries. He related: 'I am interested in seals less because of their rarity or beauty than because they are an essential element in the minor historical problems which I have amused myself in investigating'. He added: 'I have nothing of the seal collectors' special knowledge, and I have only a faint interest in the details of his quest'.³³ Tout argued that the historical significance of seals could not be found in the study of seals 'for their own sake'. Instead, he wanted to study each seal 'in relation to the instrument that it authenticates, when it is neither physically nor morally cut off from its natural place at the foot of its document and relegated to a show-case by itself'.³⁴ Tout felt compelled to mention the cutting off of seals from their documents, both 'morally' or 'physically', because this was what his contemporaries were doing.

Tout's use of illustrations is one indication of how he set himself apart from sigillographers such as Birch. Tout planned to include some illustrations in the first volume of the *Chapters in Administrative History*, but when it came time to publish in 1920 the illustrations were not ready, so Tout proceeded without them. Tout asked his readers to excuse the lack of illustrations, citing the 'good practical reason' of the 'difficulties of selecting and reproducing such illustrations in war-time'.³⁵ He suggests that the illustrations would appear in the second volume, but it was not until 1930, with the fifth volume, that the illustrations were printed. Tucked away in the appendices at the very end of the volume were a set of eight plates that presented photographs of about two dozen seals.³⁶ That the plates were in an appendix, rather than the main body of the work, was an indication of their importance. For Tout, the iconography, shape, size and stylistic characteristics of the seals were significant but they were not critical to his argument. Indeed, Tout describes their purpose as adding 'a certain element of interest' to his book.³⁷ This was an important contrast with contemporary sigillographers. When they investigated the historical meaning of a seal, or a group of seals, they might look for seals with comparable features to

³³ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 26.

³⁴ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 26.

³⁵ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 26.

³⁶ Tout, *Chapters*, v. 443–57.

³⁷ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 26.

establish whether the features in question were representative or exceptional in a particular historical context.³⁸ Another approach was to elucidate the meaning of an image on a seal by identifying comparable examples of the image in other media, such as illuminated manuscripts, painted glass, tombs or sculpture.³⁹ Such scholarship demanded illustrations, as they were an important way to convey to readers information about the contents of the images presented on seals. By contrast, Tout aimed in the first instance to establish where, when, why and by whom each seal was used. These were questions that any scholars interested in a seal might consider, but for Tout these were critical issues, which he addressed through a methodical survey of the written records. In the place of the analysis of sigillographic iconography supported by printed illustrations, Tout offered readers lists of men who used particular seals and descriptions of the circumstances in which they employed those seals.

Tout departed from prevailing approaches to sigillography, but the exceptional seals he studied demanded a distinctive approach. From the twelfth century kings might have several seals, including a large and imposing double-sided seal used to authenticate official documents intended for public consumption, such as grants, but also a smaller seal to authenticate more private correspondence.⁴⁰ These seals might have particular images or writing that identified them as royal seals, but this was not the only way in which they differed from the seals of humbler people. As the royal administration developed over the following centuries, English kings acquired further seals as part of the process of delegating power to administrators. By the end of the middle ages the royal administration was a complex institution involving many men, but power within the administration continued to revolve around the custody of royal seals. Yet most seals that survive from medieval England were used by people outside the nobility to authenticate formal documents, such as property conveyances. Although it was possible for relatively humble people to have multiple seals consecutively and even concurrently, it was not the normal practice. Consequently, royal seals differed from those of common people partly because much of the king's power was expressed through his bureaucracy rather than the king in person and this raised complicated issues of delegation and authority. In the *Chapters in Administrative History*

³⁸ C. H. Hunter Blair, 'Armorial upon English seals from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries', *Archaeologia*, lxxxix (1943), 1–26.

³⁹ For a modern application of such an approach, see E. A. New, 'Episcopal embodiment: the tombs and seals of bishops in medieval England and Wales', in *The Prelate in England and Europe 1300–1560*, ed. M. Heale (Woodbridge, 2014), pp. 191–214.

⁴⁰ Harvey and McGuinness, *British Medieval Seals*, p. 35.

Tout uncovered the history of a number of these royal seals, which he termed ‘the small seals’.

For sigillographers Tout made an important contribution to sigillographic knowledge through his work on royal seals, but his methods, founded in administrative history, would not be easy to apply to other seals. Royal archives preserved an exceptional number of records that enabled Tout to reconstruct in detail how they used their seals. Yet for seals used by individuals, particularly those outside the nobility, the amount of information was comparatively limited. Nonetheless, there was usually some information as medieval English seals commonly survived as features of documents. However, as the work of cataloguers such as Birch suggested, even the minimal amount of information that did exist was not being used to its full extent. Birch diligently offered dates for the impressions of seals he recorded and he provided the document reference numbers, but the catalogue format he adopted did not accommodate much information about the people using the seals and offered nothing about the contexts in which seals were used or their intended recipients. The implication of Tout’s work on royal seals was to show that it was useful to consider, before assessing a seal’s historical significance, who was using a seal, what types of document it was used to authenticate and who the intended recipients of those documents were.

To pursue his research Tout needed finding aids that set seals in their documentary contexts, but repositories did not have the information technology they needed to create such finding aids on a large scale. In the seventeenth century Dugdale, Hatton and their contemporaries had approached seals as features of documents and created reference works to support their research, but they had only recorded small samples of seals. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries scholars wanted access to much larger numbers of seals, but it was difficult to create large sigillographic reference works that combined information about seals and the documents to which they were appended. Seal catalogues bring together information from multiple seal impressions appended to multiple documents, so seal catalogues are structured differently from those of documents, which can presume each document is a unique and distinct record.⁴¹ Cataloguers can link catalogues of documents and seals through cross-references, but this is a challenging undertaking in analogue finding aids because both sets of catalogues have to be complete before the cross-references are inserted. Birch struggled with this problem, as did his contemporaries. At the National

⁴¹ J. A. McEwan, ‘The past, present and future of sigillography: towards a new structural standard for seal catalogues’, *Archives and Records*, xxxix (2018), 224–43.

Archives (previously the Public Record Office) in the early twentieth century, William St. John Hope established a card index of the seals as a step towards compiling a catalogue of the collection.⁴² However, the number of seals in the collection was almost overwhelming. The Ancient Deeds collection, for example, only one of many collections rich in seals at the National Archives, was estimated to contain more than 25,000 seals.⁴³ Rather than wait for the completion of the seal catalogue, the National Archives published a catalogue of the ancient deeds early in the twentieth century.⁴⁴ In a similar fashion, at the British Library the finding aid for the Harley charter collection was a provisional catalogue in manuscript form which offered a description of the contents of the charters, including their dates, parties and locations. The catalogue noted where a charter preserved a seal, but it did not provide the seal catalogue number. Yet when the seal catalogue was eventually completed, the charter catalogue was not revised. Consequently, it remained difficult for users to navigate between them. The structure of the catalogues thus encouraged scholars to study either seals or the documents and discouraged them from considering their relationships. At both the National Archives and the British Library the seal and document catalogues were complementary, but because they were created at different times they were not effectively linked together. For scholars such as Tout, such reference works made clear the scale of the surviving records, but their structure also made it difficult to pursue research that involved considering seals in their documentary contexts.

At the end of the twentieth century archivists began to adopt technology that promised to enable them to create new types of catalogues and finding aids. Digital photography decreased the cost of the process, making it suddenly practical to photograph entire collections.⁴⁵ At the National Archives the seals in the duchy of Lancaster (DL2 5) collection were photographed systematically and are now accessible online.⁴⁶ Novel

⁴² Jenkinson, *Guide to Seals*, p. x.

⁴³ Jenkinson, *Guide to Seals*, p. x.

⁴⁴ *Descriptive Calendar of Ancient Deeds in the Public Record Office* (6 vols., London, 1890–1915). In the later twentieth century, the National Archives did produce several volumes of their catalogues of seals, both in print and digital forms: R. H. Ellis, *Catalogue of Seals in the Public Record Office: Personal Seals* (2 vols., London, 1978–81); R. H. Ellis, *Catalogue of Seals in the Public Record Office: Monastic Seals* (London, 1986); P. D. A. Harvey, 'Computer catalogue of seals in the Public Record Office, London', *Janus*, ii (1996), 29–36. See also J. A. McEwan, *Seals in Medieval London, 1050–1300: a Catalogue* (London, 2016).

⁴⁵ E. A. New, 'Digital imaging of British medieval seals: report on a six-month pilot project', *Archives*, xxvi (2001), 11–17.

⁴⁶ At the time of publication, The National Archives were also in the process of making images of their collection of seal moulds (objects used to produce seal casts) available online.

techniques, such as reflectance transformation imaging (RTI), also promise to enable repositories to overcome the historical limitations of photography by allowing them to offer readers digital visualizations of seals.⁴⁷ RTI is a computational photography technique based on sets of photographs of an object taken from a fixed camera position but with light from varying known directions. The photographs are then used to produce a dynamic visualization that enables a user to simulate the appearance of the object with light from any direction. While RTI is a good method of modelling seals, photogrammetry can be used to capture entire documents. Photogrammetry involves creating a virtual three-dimensional model of an entire object that can be manipulated within a computer. With such visualizations, readers can gain some sense of the nature of the original objects without having physically to visit the archives themselves and handle the originals, which is convenient for readers and contributes to the conservation of the originals. Moreover, visualizations also enable readers to see features of seals that can be difficult to detect with the naked eye, so they are also important analytical tools.

Digital visualizations are impressive, but electronic data-management systems are perhaps more important in creating access to seals. Towards the end of the twentieth century, scholars began to consider the impact these might have on sigillography. Pastoureau reflected on their potential to facilitate searches.⁴⁸ Other scholars considered the implications of their capacity to store enormous amounts of information.⁴⁹ Although computers gave sigillographers the ability more efficiently to manage the information contained in existing catalogues, they also promised to enable cataloguers to create entirely new types of catalogues. These catalogues could allow users to perform searches that were difficult in analogue catalogues.⁵⁰ For the National Archives Harvey devised a plan for a fully electronic sigillographic cataloguing system.⁵¹ Harvey conceptualized each seal record as composed of information about the ‘document’, the ‘seal’ and the ‘impression’. As each seal was clearly associated with a set of documents, the National Archives could incorporate sections of the catalogue into its main document

⁴⁷ J. A. McEwan, ‘Reflectance transformation imaging and the future of medieval sigillography’, *History Compass*, xvi (2018) <<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/hic3.12477>> [accessed 19. Dec. 2018].

⁴⁸ Pastoureau, *Sceaux*, p. 61.

⁴⁹ J. E. Cooper, ‘Some thoughts about the computerization of seals’, *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography*, vii (2002), 189–96.

⁵⁰ M. Dalas-Garrigues, ‘L’inventaire informatique de sceaux: un essai aux Archives Nationales a Paris’, *Janus*, i (1993), 69–81.

⁵¹ Harvey, ‘Computer catalogue of seals’, pp. 32–6.

catalogue, enabling its readers to discover information about seals.⁵² A further advantage of electronic catalogues is that they can be periodically updated and extended as cataloguing work proceeds. As a result, it becomes possible to imagine a future when researchers will be able to move seamlessly from seal catalogues to document catalogues and vice-versa.

In the context of early twentieth-century historical scholarship, Tout was a pioneer who explored how seals could contribute to addressing broader historical questions. Tout's approach involved setting seals alongside other types of evidence. In the first instance this meant considering the connection between seals and the particular documents to which they were appended. The documents showed where, when, for what purpose and by whom the seal had been used. By asking seals to contribute to a larger historical argument, Tout gave seals an important role in scholarship and changed how repositories thought about their collections.

Almost a century after the publication of *Chapters in Administrative History* we may have reached the point where it is possible to expand to other types of seals the types of question about the use of seals that Tout explored using royal sources. RTI offers us the capacity to simulate the movement of light over an object, enabling us to handle seals virtually in a fashion reminiscent of how we encounter them in the archives. Photogrammetry enables us to model entire documents, including the seal, its attachment, the parchment and its text. Electronic data-management systems allow scholars to make full use of all available catalogue information, so that they can effectively survey and search the vast numbers of records. If repositories can be encouraged to facilitate the production of RTIs, three-dimensional models and electronic seal catalogues, then historians will be able to follow Tout's lead and consider seals holistically, as objects with artistic, social, political, judicial and administrative significance.

⁵² McEwan, 'Past, present and future of sigillography', pp. 8–9; see also J. A. McEwan, 'The challenge of the visual: making medieval seals accessible in the digital age', *Jour. Documentation*, lxxi (2015), 999–1028, at pp. 1003–4.

13. Tout's administrators: the case of William Moulsoe

Elizabeth Biggs

In the field of medieval administrative history, the work of T. F. Tout remains foundational. Tout's *Chapters in the Administrative History of Medieval England*, in its six volumes, continues to be the starting point for any discussion of the development and workings of England's government in the middle ages.¹ The narrative Tout offered, from undifferentiated government by the king's household servants under the Angevins to a complex, bureaucratic structure of multiple departments by the end of the fourteenth century, underpins all current discussion of what central government looked like in this period.² His administrative world was the royal household, in particular the clerks who wrote documents for the king and the departments in which they were organized across the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.³ William Moulsoe was such a clerk, serving Edward III across several of the departments that had emerged by the fourteenth century. These offices were for Tout the distant and much less specialized relations of the orderly, paper-driven civil service of his own day, organized properly into their departments and carrying out their work professionally.⁴ Most crucially, Tout was able to take advantage of the opening up of medieval records caused by the formation of the Public Record Office in 1838 and particularly the energetic calendaring overseen by Sir Henry Churchill Maxwell Lyte after his appointment as keeper of the records in 1886.⁵ It was this which made possible the type of detailed, archival history that marked out the *Chapters*. Although he disclaimed 'mere biography', Tout's great success was due to his deep awareness of the individuals who

¹ T. F. Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Medieval England: the Wardrobe, the Chamber and the Small Seals* (6 vols., Manchester, 1920–33).

² Tout, *Chapters*, i. 21–2.

³ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 21.

⁴ T. F. Tout, *The English Civil Service in the Fourteenth Century* (Manchester, 1926), p. 11.

⁵ V. H. Galbraith, 'Lyte, Sir Henry Churchill Maxwell (1848–1940)', rev. by G. H. Martin, in *ODNB* <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/34653>> [accessed 10 Jan. 2019].

worked in the departments he described, which has given his narrative a flexibility and an adaptability to the newer methods of writing the history of political life that have emerged since his time.⁶ Even as K. B. McFarlane and his successors argued that political power was based in patronage and informal structures of political activity, Tout's knowledge of the archival sources and the personnel of government meant that he has remained a crucial resource and may now offer an alternative model for understanding medieval political life.

Tout's knowledge of the sources for medieval history and his commitment to training undergraduates as research historians comfortable with the available sources shaped his writings. Tout began the entire work with a comment about the immense amount of material that survived from the middle ages.⁷ The vast majority of the surviving medieval records that had been so carefully gathered out of their various unsuitable repositories in the early nineteenth century were largely the records created by medieval administration and the departments that Tout was to trace in development. Understanding their creation and the processes that created these records had not yet been attempted. Tout commented in his introduction that despite the sources being available, medieval administrative history had been neglected in England as compared to France.⁸ His explanation was that his English predecessors Stubbs and Maitland were interested in the foundations of parliamentary democracy and so focused on the origins of parliament rather than the royal household.⁹ In addition, Tout was rightly wary of reading parliament as a continuous institution in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and so turned to a set of institutions that had endured and adapted in the period in which he was interested.¹⁰ In addition to being able to point out that these institutions would repay further study, Tout had been building up an encyclopaedic awareness of the primary sources that medieval administration had generated. But he also was able to draw on the work of students whom he encouraged. As an academic at Lampeter and then at Manchester, he helped to develop a distinctive history curriculum that was committed to having undergraduates work directly with the surviving primary sources and their calendars, which were

⁶ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 28. The most influential view of medieval political history since has been that of K. B. McFarlane, *The Nobility of Later Medieval England: the Ford Lectures of 1953* (Oxford, 1973); see also comments of C. Richmond, 'After McFarlane', *History*, lxxiii (1983), 46–80, at pp. 46, 59–60.

⁷ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 1.

⁸ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 7–8.

⁹ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 2–4.

¹⁰ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 5.

then being opened up by the work of the keepers of the public records.¹¹

Even Tout could not have written the *Chapters* based on his own archival research alone and he was careful to record where he drew on others' examination of the archives and their conclusions about procedure and personnel. Thanks to his students he was able to run what was in essence an adhoc and long-running research project without any external funding. He was fortunate at Lampeter and then particularly at Manchester to be able to shape the curriculum around practical training in historical skills, including palaeography and diplomatic, as well as expecting a final research dissertation, which in 1906 he called 'some sort of modest thesis'.¹² According to his obituary in *English Historical Review*, he was particularly delighted with the *Festschrift* that his students offered him in 1925, which reflected his commitment to teaching and to working with students.¹³ Already in the volumes of the *Chapters* published in the early 1920s he frequently acknowledged the work of former students on aspects of the history of administration: for example, L. B. Dibben on chancery and Dorothy Broome on the exchequer and its procedures.¹⁴ Broome in particular set aside much of her own work to act as a collaborator to bring the work to press. His death in 1929 after a period of ill health made the co-operation and collaboration with his former students even more essential to the completion of his work. His wife, Mary Tout, wrote the introduction to the fifth volume of the *Chapters* in which she gratefully noted that Tout's colleague James Tait, Broome and other former students had helped her to finish it after his death. She made clear that Tout himself, aware of the limits of his own research and anxious to give credit where it was due, had wished volume 5, which dealt in part with the subsidiary royal households, to be 'a joint effort rendered possible by the co-operation of a "syndicate of old pupils"'.¹⁵ It was also a family affair: their daughter Margaret Sharp contributed the sections on the Black Prince, while Mary Tout's sister Hilda Johnstone, who had also been Tout's student at Lampeter, wrote the section of *Chapters* dealing with the queen's household, reflecting her own publications and interests.¹⁶

¹¹ J. Tait, 'Thomas Frederick Tout', *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xlv (1930), 78–85, at pp. 79–80.

¹² Quoted in Tait, 'Thomas Frederick Tout', p. 80.

¹³ Tait, 'Thomas Frederick Tout', p. 84.

¹⁴ For example, in a public lecture first delivered at the John Rylands Library in Manchester in Dec. 1915 he acknowledged the work of Miss L. B. Dibben in creating a classified list of the chancery clerks (Tout, *English Civil Service*, p. 30); he thanked Dr. Dorothy M. Broome for her help and co-operation and noted her own work on the exchequer (Tout, *Chapters*, iii. vii).

¹⁵ M. Tout, 'Preface', in Tout, *Chapters*, v, pp. v–vii, at p. vi.

¹⁶ M. Sharp, 'The central administrative system of Edward, the Black Prince', in Tout,

Tout's model of the fourteenth-century clerk has been fundamental to historians' understandings of the workings of medieval government, though he intended it to have even wider applicability to medieval political life. For him, the workings of government offices and the individuals who worked there were fundamental to understanding where power lay within the realm. In a 1915 public lecture which laid the intellectual groundwork for his later work, Tout placed the 'civil servant' as a category at the centre of political life, the means by which political action happened as directed and overseen by politicians and ministers.¹⁷ The pattern of life into which he placed his medieval clerks was that of the Victorian bureaucrat, albeit in a more generalist and inchoate form. Even as he compared the clerks to their contemporary equivalents, he carefully noted the overlaps and multiple functions of the various departments that he saw emerging out of the king's household and court before settling down in London and Westminster.¹⁸ Five years before the publication of *Chapters* this lecture showed the framework on which the larger and more involved work would elaborate. It was a framework of centralized authority, one in which documentation and its creation were central and governed everything else. In this he was influenced by the experience of the great Victorian offices of state that he knew.¹⁹ Administrative historians have continued to be interested in the development within departments: for example, C. W. Smith on the changing world of chancery clerks or Mark Ormrod on the ways in which clerks worked in the fourteenth century.²⁰

Tout's argument about where power lay within medieval political life is, however, no longer generally accepted. More recent historians have looked to interpersonal relationships and networks of kin and obligation to explain where power and influence lay within government.²¹ There is

Chapters, v. 289–400; and M. Sharp, 'The diplomatic of the Black Prince's central secretarial departments', in Tout, *Chapters*, v. 400–31; H. Johnstone, 'The queen's household', in Tout, *Chapters*, v. 231–89. Her own publications included H. Johnstone, 'Poor-relief in the royal households of thirteenth-century England', *Speculum*, iv (1929), 149–67; and 'The queen's exchequer under the three Edwards', in *Historical Essays in Honour of James Tait*, ed. J. G. Edwards (Manchester, 1933), pp. 143–53.

¹⁷ Tout, *English Civil Service*, pp. 1, 6, 11.

¹⁸ Tout, *English Civil Service*, pp. 8–9.

¹⁹ Tout, *English Civil Service*, p. 6; see also Tait's comment that Tout felt that history was an excellent training for any walk of life (Tait, 'Thomas Frederick Tout', p. 80).

²⁰ C. W. Smith, 'Some trends in the English royal chancery 1377–1483', *Medieval Prosopography*, vi (1985), 69–94; W. M. Ormrod, 'Accountability and collegiality: the English royal secretariat in the mid-fourteenth century', in *Écrit et pouvoir dans les chancelleries médiévales: espace français, espace anglais*, ed. K. Fianu and D. J. Guth (Louvain, 1997), pp. 55–85.

²¹ G. Harriss argued that political developments were driven by pressure on government from the emerging 'political society', the landowning classes based in the localities

room, however, to move back towards understanding administration and administrators as a key part of wider medieval political life which mediated and influenced contact between the king and his subjects. The humanity of Tout's methodology for administrative history was crucial to his success in balancing the personal and the institutional without ever losing sight of either, thereby combining some elements of prosopography with studies of institutional frameworks and development.

This methodology now looks particularly prescient, even as it was drawn from Tout's own models and teaching of primary sources. Over twenty years ago Ted Powell called for an examination of both the personal and institutional structures of government together.²² He wanted to encourage a new look at the 'constitutional' elements of political life, the structures by which contemporaries organized their understanding of government. Tout in many ways had already answered that call for the fourteenth century. The influence of the French diplomatic tradition exemplified by Eugène Déprez's 1908 *Etudes de la diplomatie anglaise* on the workings of the privy seals gave him the tools he needed to draw out the institutional workings of medieval government from the documents it left behind.²³ His ability to look at sources and then discern the processes, both formal and informal, that had created them meant that he was engaged actively with that tradition even as he refined it on the records at the Public Record Office. He helpfully provided a summary at the start of *Chapters* of the record classes that were useful for the type of work that he had in mind, offering a much-needed overview of the materials available and a sense of their creation: for example, the relationship between the pipe rolls and the wardrobe accounts.²⁴ As others have already noted, his knowledge of the records helped to open them up to the historians who followed and who were then able to continue his examination of the processes of medieval government.²⁵ Where Tout was particularly pioneering, however, was in

(G. Harriss, 'Political society and the growth of government in late medieval England', *Past & Present*, cxxxviii (1993), 28–57, at p. 33).

²² E. Powell, 'After "After MacFarlane": the poverty of patronage and the case for constitutional history', in *Trade, Devotion and Governance: Papers in Later Medieval History* (Stroud, 1994), pp. 1–16.

²³ Tout reviewed Déprez in *English Historical Review* in 1908 and was able to critique details but praised his methods and noted that he, too, was working on the history and use of the privy seals (Tout, review of E. Déprez, *Etudes de diplomatie anglaise, 1272–1485: le sceau privé; le sceau secret; le signet* (1908), *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xci (1908), 556–9, at pp. 557, 559.

²⁴ Tout, *Chapters*, i. 36–66, esp. pp. 45–6.

²⁵ See the judgement that not only did Tout 'inspire other historical research but ... also increased the productivity of other historians through his systematic calendaring and indexing' (V. H. Galbraith, 'Thomas Frederick Tout (1855–1929)', rev. by P. R. H. Slee, in *ODNB* <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref.odnb/36539>>).

his awareness of the administrators who operated within the government as individuals whom he had tracked through their various roles; and in the way he commented on their effectiveness, their wider lives and their rewards for working for the king. Building up the lists in *Chapters* of the individuals involved with all the various governments across two centuries was a monumental achievement. Then to be able to contextualize them, as he did throughout his text, is even more impressive.²⁶

The key to Tout's lasting success as a historian of royal administration was his choice of focus, the administrative apparatus of the king's household and the development of its constituent offices, as well as the processes by which orders moved between the offices, particularly the development of the system of seals used to authenticate documentation.²⁷ Out of the household came the specialized offices of state, including chancery and the exchequer, as well as the council. In addition, the side of the household that managed the king's goods and looked after his personal needs developed as well into the various departments of the wardrobe and chamber. The process by which these departments moved 'out of court', to use Tout's own phrasing, was one of tension between the needs of the itinerant king and his court as they moved between royal houses and the need for stability and long-term storage which led departments to take over housing in London and Westminster.²⁸ The wardrobe went to Lombard Street and then Baynard's Castle, while chancery settled in Westminster, with the exception of a brief period when it was moved to York or itinerated with the king under Edward II.²⁹ Some elements of royal administration, however, continued to travel with the king and the household and to communicate with the settled departments and thus new seals were required.³⁰ By making his departmental focus so broad, Tout took in most of the range of medieval government and showed its flexibility and adaptability. It was in the household that experimentations in finance and governance often started or ended, such as in the 1340s and 1350s when William Edington reformed royal finances.³¹ Edington was trying to centralize financial accounting in the exchequer and so placed his own men, including John Buckingham and William Rothwell, in wardrobe departments to aid his scheme to reduce

²⁶ The lists are in Tout, *Chapters*, vi. 1–72.

²⁷ Set out in Tout, *Chapters*, i. 21–4.

²⁸ E.g., for the peregrinations of the great wardrobe from the Tower to a house in Lombard Street, see Tout, *Chapters*, iv. 400–7.

²⁹ Tout, *Chapters*, iii. 80–3.

³⁰ *Chapters*, i. 22–3.

³¹ W. M. Ormrod, 'The protocolla rolls and English government finance, 1353–1364', *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, cii (1987), 622–32, at pp. 624–6.

the importance of their new departments. Equally, Edington's successor William Wykeham used the household and its clerks to great effect.³² The success and importance of Tout's work came from his ability to bring out the implications for politics and royal resource management of the changing dynamic between as well as within departments.

William Mulsho or Moulsoe provides an ideal example of one of Tout's administrators and highlights the importance of Tout's two-pronged approach to both institution and individual.³³ Moulsoe was not a high-flying clerk who would end up with a bishopric, nor was he someone who spent his fourteenth-century career solely within one department. His career was rather ad hoc and sporadic and he did not belong, as far as is known, to one of the northern clerical dynasties that sprawled across late fourteenth-century administration, such as the Waltham-Thoresby-Ravenser dynasty or the Ferribys.³⁴ Unlike many of his fellow clerks, he does not seem to have come from the north of England but from the manor of Moulsoe in Buckinghamshire.³⁵ Thus, he has rather fallen between the cracks in the historiography because he does not fit neatly into any of the categories that historians have so far examined in relation to fourteenth-century administration and he is not significant enough or well-documented enough for a full study on his own. Yet Tout appreciated his career and what it could tell us about the workings of royal administration in the mid fourteenth century. William Moulsoe was active in royal government in the last decades of Edward III's reign, from before 1358 until his death in 1376. In particular, he was one of the clerks brought to the wardrobe with outside expertise and connections.³⁶ He held a variety of roles in the exchequer, including serving as surveyor of the works under William Wykeham, as one of the clerks of the works as Wykeham's replacement and as chamberlain from 1365. In 1375 he was brought into the household as keeper of the wardrobe at a moment of high political tension and was to stay there until his death a year later. The records do not give a strong sense of his personality, but his career is suggestive. It is one of diverse royal service across several offices in association with William Wykeham, bishop of Winchester, where he was clearly seen as a safe pair of hands to take on tricky roles in politically

³² Tout, *Chapters*, iv. 455–6.

³³ Mulsho is the form used in all the contemporary references to him in the patent rolls, but Moulsoe is the current spelling of the place name. I have chosen to follow Tout in modernizing to the current place name.

³⁴ J. L. Grassi, 'Royal clerks from the archdiocese of York in the fourteenth century', *Northern History*, v (1970), 12–33, at p. 26.

³⁵ For Moulsoe in Buckinghamshire, see Tout, *Chapters*, iv. 155.

³⁶ Tout, *Chapters*, iv. 152.

charged moments. Following Moulsoe's career shows Tout's methods and his awareness of the interplay between the personal and the institutional which gave his *Chapters* their depth.

Because Tout's thesis depended on the departments that had emerged out of the household and their mechanisms for accounting for the king's finances, he was particularly sensitive to the workings of the wardrobe, which remained a household department even after it acquired a permanent home in London.³⁷ The use of individuals across departments signalled to him the changing balances of power and influence among the overlapping and still-developing remits of the different offices in relation to each other. While Moulsoe did not take part in the moments of significant upheaval in the earlier years of Edward III, he was part of two crisis points in royal finance and power in the last years of the reign. Hence Tout was able to see the significance of Moulsoe and to see that Wykeham helped to shape his career and the moments in which he was asked to take on particular roles within royal administration.³⁸ Otherwise, Moulsoe would simply have remained one in a long list of individuals within two separate departments with their own histories. In addition, Tout noted that Moulsoe was already serving in some capacity in 1358, when he was first appointed to be surveyor of the works under Wykeham, because he was already identified as a 'king's clerk'.³⁹ This service may have been elsewhere in the household, or perhaps even in the wardrobe, as Moulsoe was made dean of St. Martin le Grand in 1364, a sinecure that often went to wardrobe clerks.⁴⁰ But for the middle part of his career he was associated with the exchequer. In 1365 he replaced one of the two chamberlains of the exchequer at a moment of tension. A dispute between the incumbents John Chesterfield and Ralph Brantingham over alleged misconduct in the office meant that both men were replaced.⁴¹ Moulsoe stayed in the exchequer for a decade, where he continued to be associated with Wykeham. For example, he was present in 1370 when Wykeham received the fealty of the bishop of Limerick on the king's behalf.⁴² This time at the exchequer ended in 1375, when he moved to the wardrobe to become keeper, replacing Henry Wakefield, who had been

³⁷ Tout first published on the wardrobe in 1909 and it remained a focus in *Chapters*. See also the comments of H. C. Davis that 'no-one before Mr Tout had attempted to take stock of them [the wardrobe records] as material for institutional history' (quoted in Tait, 'Thomas Frederick Tout', pp. 83–4).

³⁸ Tout, *Chapters*, iv. 155.

³⁹ Tout, *Chapters*, iii. 250; *Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1358–1361*, p. 146.

⁴⁰ *CPR, 1364–1367*, p. 39; Tout, *Chapters*, iv. 155.

⁴¹ Tout, *Chapters*, iii. 250.

⁴² *CPR, 1367–1370*, p. 363.

elevated to a bishopric.⁴³ Unfortunately, Moulsoe's time at the wardrobe was quickly ended by his death the following year. In 1376 those around the king, including Alice Perrers, were under pressure from the Commons, in part over household finance and royal expenditure.⁴⁴ Moving Moulsoe to the wardrobe in the previous year may have been intended to keep a friendly face in a potentially important department at a moment when a new parliament was expected and when financial pressures were high.

Tout showed in passing that clerks as well as laymen had familial and personal ties beyond their offices. Thus, his work can usefully serve as a model for integrating administrative history of the formal, institutional type with the questions of patronage and personal relationships that have come to dominate historians' understanding of power structures and political society in medieval England. He often noted biographical details that began to suggest how an individual clerk might have had wider connections beyond his particular role. Although he rarely followed this up with a specific comment, these details are a constant reminder that the personal interacted with the institutional. For example, Tout had noticed the way that the Beverley family of clerks, lawyers and knights were active not just in the service of the king, but also in the administrative machinery of the duchy of Lancaster and in their native Yorkshire in the years following Moulsoe's death.⁴⁵ William Beverley followed Moulsoe at the wardrobe and was to use that position in the service of his family's wider dynastic ambitions. Grassi has shown how pervasive Yorkshire kinship ties were within the various branches of administration as a means of recruiting personnel and how local ties bound these clerks together.⁴⁶

The second element of Tout's work that addressed the relationship between landed society and his administrators was the question of laicization and its effects on governmental unity and effectiveness. Tout thought that laicization was opposed by the king as the weakening of his own position by the founding of independent dynasties.⁴⁷ Both these elements show clerks beyond the institutional focus of the *Chapters* and show how Tout's work laid the foundations for potential future work on the relationship of the administrative offices to political society in the period more generally. Tout noted that Moulsoe held the manor of Moulsoe in Buckinghamshire,

⁴³ Tout, *Chapters*, iv. 155; for Wakefield's career see his *ODNB* entry but note that he was keeper of the wardrobe, not keeper of the great wardrobe (R. G. Davies, 'Wakefield, Henry (c. 1335–1395)', in *ODNB* <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/37532>> [accessed 31 Dec. 2018]).

⁴⁴ G. Holmes, *The Good Parliament* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 63, 68–9.

⁴⁵ Tout, *Chapters*, iii. 313.

⁴⁶ Grassi, 'Royal clerks', pp. 20–1.

⁴⁷ Tout, *The English Civil Service*, pp. 13–4.

whence he originated, but he did not then explore his connections outside royal service and particularly to the upper Thames valley.⁴⁸ These connections made use of his exchequer experience to the benefit of former colleagues and his patron, William Wykeham. Moulsoe was a consistent presence in 1368 in the land dealings of Almeric de St. Amand.⁴⁹ In addition to regular service in the local government of his home counties of Berkshire and Oxfordshire, St. Amand had been justiciar of Ireland and a consistent presence in Edward III's military service.⁵⁰ In 1368 St. Amand was concerned to secure his outlying manors in Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire for his son, perhaps in anticipation of further military service, and turned to groups of clerks to act as feoffees of his lands to transfer them to the next generation.⁵¹ Indeed, he was to serve as governor of Southampton in the following year. These transactions suggest that Moulsoe, who had resigned from some of his prebends to focus on the work of rebuilding St. Martin le Grand, was also becoming more active in and around Buckinghamshire, where his experience of administration would be valuable to his neighbours.⁵²

Around the same time Moulsoe can be seen in association with Wykeham and with the king's mistress, Alice Perrers, in land dealings. Like St. Amand, Perrers used Moulsoe in 1372 along with other clerks to serve as feoffees of lands primarily in Buckinghamshire and Berkshire.⁵³ In contrast, Wykeham did not draw on Moulsoe's ties to the Thames valley, perhaps because he did not need to draw on local ties to safeguard his interests, but instead he was protecting his lands from challenge to his tenure at Westminster. Moulsoe appeared acting for Wykeham in Kent, along with other exchequer clerks, over land near Farnham and the manor of Elyng and Windsor in Hampshire.⁵⁴ In all cases the lands had not been fully handed over; and in 1376 Wykeham was under political pressure in advance of a new parliament, hence his concern to regularize his tenure in these lands at this time. Moulsoe's transactions offer a range of possible ways in which a clerk might well exploit his personal connections to an area for the benefit of his friends

⁴⁸ Tout, *Chapters*, iv. 155.

⁴⁹ *CPR, 1367–1370*, pp. 157, 214.

⁵⁰ R. Frame, 'St. Amand, Almaric, third Baron St. Amand (1314–1381), justiciar of Ireland', in *ODNB*, xlviii. 588–9; <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/24476>> [accessed 31 Dec. 2018].

⁵¹ *CPR, 1367–1370*, p. 214.

⁵² He resigned prebends at the royal free chapels of Hastings, St. George's Windsor and St. Stephen's Westminster in 1368 (*CPR, 1367–1370*, pp. 103, 116, 157); for St. Martin le Grand see Tout, *Chapters*, iv. 155.

⁵³ Perrers was acting with two clerks and a citizen of London. The manors involved were Wendover in Buckinghamshire, Hanney in East Hanney and Ardington in Berkshire, as well as Meonstoke in Hampshire (*CPR, 1370–1374*, p. 198).

⁵⁴ *CPR, 1374–1377*, pp. 237, 272.

as well as the value to his neighbours by using his expertise and connections within royal service.

Tout's position that clerics made better administrators than laymen influenced the mid twentieth-century work by R. L. Storey on the increasing use of laymen in administration in the fifteenth century in a period of governmental collapse.⁵⁵ The theory of the professional position of clerks within royal government as a quid pro quo in which they served loyally and were rewarded in turn with benefices in the king's gift was Tout's formulation in 1915 and then developed in *Chapters*.⁵⁶ Laymen in this scheme were dangerous because they could have divided loyalties and attempt to create dynasties of their own. Anti-clericalism, however, was also a potential political force and Tout commented at length on the parliament in February 1371, when the Commons petitioned that the officers of the crown should be laymen rather than unaccountable clerics.⁵⁷ The petition, as translated by Ormrod in the most recent edition of the parliament rolls, reads:

the governance of the realm has been controlled for a long time by people of holy Church, who are not liable to the king's justice in all cases, whereby great misfortunes and damages have occurred in times past, and more might occur in times to come, for various reasons which can be declared, in disinheritation of the crown and great prejudice of the said realm; may it please our said lord the king that henceforth lay people of the same realm, sufficient and of suitable rank to be chosen for this, and no other people, be made chancellor, treasurer, clerk of the privy seal, barons of the exchequer, chamberlains of the exchequer, controllers and all other great officers and ministers of the said realm; and that this matter shall now in such manner be established in the aforesaid form, that it shall in no way now be undone, nor should anything be done to the contrary in any time to come. Saving always to our lord the king the choice and removal of such officers, but still that they shall be lay people such as is aforesaid.⁵⁸

The king's answer was that he would consult with the council on the matter and no commitment of any type was given, not particularly surprisingly because it was an unusually wide attack on the king's freedom of appointment.

⁵⁵ R. L. Storey, 'Gentleman-bureaucrats', in *Profession, Vocation and Culture in Later Medieval England: Essays Dedicated to the Memory of A. R. Myers*, ed. C. H. Clough (Liverpool, 1982), pp. 90–130.

⁵⁶ Tout, *English Civil Service*, p. 13.

⁵⁷ Tout, *Chapters*, iii. 270–4.

⁵⁸ 'Edward III: parliament of 1371, text and translation', ed. W. M. Ormrod, in *The Parliament Rolls of Medieval England 1275–1504*, ed. C. Given-Wilson et al. (16 vols., Woodbridge, 2005), v. 238 (item 15 of that roll).

The Commons' anti-clerical sentiment has been linked to the replacement at this time of William Wykeham, bishop of Winchester, and two other senior administrators, Thomas Brantingham and Peter Lacy, by laymen.⁵⁹ After these three particularly senior men were replaced, no other clerics seem to have been affected by this sweeping request for lay administrators. Certainly William Moulsoe stayed as chamberlain of the exchequer and then moved without opposition to the wardrobe in 1375.⁶⁰ Clerics continued to dominate the writing offices of chancery, the exchequer and the privy seal office. The king did not want to allow the Commons to put any restrictions on his choice of his administrators. However, this episode should give us pause. Rather than contemporaries seeing the Church as providing a safe set of administrators, the Commons in 1371 were wary not just of the major clerics but also of the other clerical officers of the crown's writing offices. Tout's thesis that clerics were professional bureaucrats might not have made much sense to contemporaries concerned in this petition about the clerks' acquisition of landed rights for the Church and their families and their use of the Church courts over the royal courts. This episode suggests that in the fourteenth century clerks were not straightforwardly professionals who were solely answerable to the king and that they could come under suspicion from the wider political community for their immunities. There was a potential here for pressure towards laicization, even if it was not followed through after 1371.

The study of medieval administrators and their wider significance in the political history of medieval England will continue to draw on the findings and methodology begun on such an ambitious scale by Tout. The careers of William Moulsoe and others like him, unshowy yet vital to the operation of government, show the need for further work on the individuals who made up late medieval government across their various workplaces. They also need further consideration of their connections both inside and outside the offices of state. By looking at these individuals and their networks, it will be possible to return to administrative history of the type that Tout championed — archival, detailed, both personal and institutional — and to larger structural debates over the location of political power, the composition of the political community and the effectiveness of the crown and its servants. Looking across the departments of royal government, as Tout did, allows a much fuller picture of the work carried out by clerks for the king and an awareness of how these departments interacted, overlapped and developed.

⁵⁹ W. M. Ormrod, 'Edward III: parliament of 1371, introduction', in Given-Wilson, *The Parliament Rolls of Medieval England*, v. 230–1.

⁶⁰ Tout, *Chapters*, iv. 152.

Tout pointed the way for much of this work, but he framed it in the constitutional and bureaucratic structures of his own day, especially the orderly workings of Whitehall, where outside connections were supposed in theory, if not always in practice, to be subordinated to the professional work. Moulsoe and the other clerks around him were trusted by the men they served precisely because they had proven themselves trustworthy both inside and outside government service. Their connections were potentially at the king's disposal for the communication of his policies and the carrying out of his orders. Thus, their positions and work within the central offices of state were one part of their work for the king and one part of their larger careers within the political community of the kingdom. Tout's views were shaped by his understanding of the bureaucracy of his own day, but in his methods and in his awareness of the interaction between the individual and the wider institutional structures, he shaped and will continue to shape our understanding of the workings and significance of medieval government.

IV. Tout's wider influence

14. Institutionalizing history: T. F. Tout's involvement with the Royal Historical Society and the Historical Association*

Ian d'Alton

T. F. Tout's reach extended beyond what Vivian Hunter Galbraith described as his 'triple capacity of administrator, teacher and writer' in Manchester.¹ The institutional infrastructure of historical scholarship and teaching also occupied him and (together with his interest in the British Academy) Tout was involved with two organizations at different ends of the historical profession: the Royal Historical Society (RHS) and the Historical Association (HA). Tout's career as a historian spanned a seminal period in the reorienting and realignment of the historical discipline at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries.² That discipline morphed from being a subject subsidiary to law or English to one in its own right. It also moved out from the clutches of amateurs – sometimes gifted, often not – to those of paid professionals with scholarly status. If Tout was the latter, his enthusiasms also bore the faint hallmarks of the former, seen in his institutional activities in the RHS and, particularly, the HA.

This chapter recognizes the essential characteristic of the early twentieth-century development of history as increasing professionalism, but it argues that it was complemented institutionally through an 'opening out' of history to a broader world. That might seem somewhat obvious in the case of the HA: as we shall see, the Association started with a focus on school

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¹ V. H. Galbraith, 'Tout, Thomas Frederick', in *The Dictionary of National Biography, 1922–1930*, ed. J. R. H. Weaver (Oxford, 1937), pp. 845–8, at p. 846.

² For a discussion in a broader context, see D. S. Goldstein, 'The organisational development of the British historical profession 1884–1921', *Hist. Research*, lv (1982), 180–93; and R. Jann, 'From amateur to professional: the case of the Oxbridge historians', *Jour. Brit. Stud.*, xxii (1983), 122–47.

teachers of history, but widened its membership at the end of the 1910s to include a more general ‘interested-in-history’ cadre. In that, it appeared to run counter to what was happening in the Royal Historical Society, where the focus was increasingly on high-end academics and scholars. Yet in its early twentieth-century incarnation, the RHS was exercised with ‘opening out’ too – in this case ensuring the inclusion in it of as broad an elite as possible. An example was Tout’s appointment – along with Charles Firth at Oxford, J. R. Tanner at Cambridge and A. J. Grant at Leeds in 1904–5 – as, in George Prothero’s formulation, ‘recruiting sergeants ... to beat up young and active soldiers for our ranks’, to garner for the Society’s fellowship ‘*all* historians’ who had ‘made any mark in historical science’.³

The two organizations, though, had very different antecedents and trajectories. The RHS was founded in 1868, brainchild of a serial founder of learned societies, Dr. Charles Rogers, a historical charlatan and ex-bankrupt. Rogers had a genius for co-opting the great and good (and sometimes gullible) into his schemes; in the case of the RHS (and he had appropriated the ‘Royal’ prefix without due authority, only regularized with a royal warrant in 1872) that included Earl Russell, the archbishop of York, George Grote, J. A. Froude and Thomas Carlyle.⁴ Until 1881, when he was ousted in a coup, as the so-called ‘historiographer’ and secretary of the infant society Rogers milked it for all that it was worth (and sometimes for more than it was worth).⁵ Subsequently, it was headed by gentleman amateurs from the military, clerical and scholarly elites and, while producing some interesting work, was – until the turn of the century or so – firmly in the tradition of the Victorian genteel society. In this, it was similar to many in this period which found themselves in a zone that straddled the amateur, the antiquarian, the dilettante and Tout’s newer class of the professional academic and scholar. The RHS was not unique in its inauspicious beginnings. One of the forerunners of the Royal Anthropological Society, the Anthropological Society of London, ‘enjoyed a somewhat notorious existence through the eighteen sixties’.⁶ Again, what became the Royal

³ University College London, RHS archives, RHS council minutes, 17 Nov. and 15 Dec. 1904; 16 March 1905. The quotation is in R. A. Humphreys, *The Royal Historical Society 1868–1968* (London, 1969), p. 31. It is not clear how useful this initiative was: neither the published RHS reports of session nor the unpublished minutes of council make any further reference to the activities of these ‘recruiting sergeants’ after 1905 (RHS council minutes, 17 Nov. and 15 Dec. 1904; 16 March 1905).

⁴ Humphreys, *Royal Historical Society*, pp. 1, 3–4.

⁵ T. F. Tout, ‘Presidential Address’, *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 4th ser., ix (1926), 1–28 at pp. 9–12; Humphreys, *Royal Historical Society*, pp. 3–8, 14–9.

⁶ J. W. Burrow, ‘Victorian historians and the Royal Historical Society’, *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 5th ser., xxxix (1989), 125–40, at p. 125.

Economic Society was similarly conflicted from its foundation as the British Economic Association in 1890. It remained an 'open' society, not one just for professionals in the field – for instance, Sir Austin Robinson records that '[o]n 7 April 1905, Henry Higgs, then Secretary, conducted a [Council] meeting alone and recorded its decisions. That meeting not only elected new Fellows; it also elected a new Treasurer and moved the Society's account from one bank to another'.⁷

Intellectual historian and historiographer John Wyan Burrow saw the RHS primarily within the tradition of the genteel society, little more than a gentlemen's club. He was sceptical of the RHS's place in the professionalization of history; but Robin Humphreys in his 1968 centenary history of the RHS claimed that from about 1899, when Adolphus Ward became president, the Society *was* at the forefront of efforts to professionalize the historical discipline – and not just with the RHS as a vehicle.⁸ In 1899 Ward, with others, proposed to the RHS council the establishment of a school of advanced historical studies, eventually to be under the aegis of the University of London; this was to catch up with developments on the Continent and in the United States. An influential 'Committee for Advanced Historical Teaching' was formed as a result of a circular letter by the RHS to distinguished historians and others, signed, along with Ward as president, by thirty-five members of council, amongst whom was Tout. Although the project did not advance under the RHS banner, it did eventually come to fruition after the First World War with the foundation of the Institute of Historical Research in 1921.⁹ By 1924, the Board of Education could assert that that more progress in the teaching of history had been achieved in the period since 1900 than in the previous 100 years.¹⁰

Like the RHS, the HA had precursors in other 'subject' associations. Bodies such as the Mathematical Association (1870), the Geographical Association

⁷ See A. W. Coats, 'The origins and early development of the Royal Economic Society', *Econ. Jour.*, lxxviii (1968), 349–71, at pp. 358–60; A. Robinson, 'Recollection: fifty-five years on the Royal Economic Society Council', in *A Century of Economics: 100 Years of the Royal Economic Society and the Economic Journal*, ed. J. D. Hey and D. Winch (Oxford, 1990), pp. 161–92, at p. 163.

⁸ T. F. Tout, 'Presidential address: national and international co-operation in historical scholarship', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 4th ser., x (1927), 1–19, at p. 3. Burrow quotes from *The Collected Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout* (3 vols., Manchester, 1932–5), i. 112. The address was incorrectly attributed to 1929 by Burrow.

⁹ Humphreys, *Royal Historical Society*, pp. 28–30; *The History Laboratory: the Institute of Historical Research 1921–1996*, compiled by D. J. Birch and J. M. Horn (London, 1996), pp. 1–12.

¹⁰ C. H. K. Marten, 'The Board of Education report on the teaching of history', *History*, ix (1924), 30–40, at p. 30.

(1893) and the Classical Association (1903) supplied advice and support to teachers in the areas of textbooks, syllabus and teaching methods.¹¹ But the HA was a very different animal to the RHS in *its* early years. Founded in 1906, the Association had the advantage of avoiding the clutches of the genteel; and it kept well clear of charlatans. It actually emerged from the very professional development that Tout and the ‘Manchester school’ exemplified. These new university professionals had begun to build their scholarly empires and there was a new awakening of history as a subject in its own right. Yet schools found it difficult to attract teachers who were adequately trained. This led to a dearth of serious undergraduate honours students, which in turn led to an inadequate supply of trained history teachers.¹² That vicious circle needed to be broken.

It was not always clear what the purposes of the HA were to be. At a preliminary meeting in January 1906, teacher Miss M. A. Howard (who, with Miss R. R. Reid, was a progenitor of the HA’s concept) suggested that it should be to ‘co-ordinate the efforts of all who are working in England towards the improvement of history teaching in our schools’.¹³ A. F. Pollard, later founder of the Institute of Historical Research, felt that an association with wider aims was warranted, ‘that history should be properly recognized by universities, and that history should be properly taught in schools’.¹⁴ The HA itself suggested that ‘[t]eachers of History have long felt the need for some organisation to promote the study of that subject in schools, and to facilitate co-operation among those engaged in teaching it’.¹⁵ At the foundation meeting of the HA in May 1906 it was agreed that its objective should be a rather vague ‘interchange of ideas and information with regards to the methods of historical teaching’.¹⁶ The aims were finally codified as:¹⁷

- (a) the collection of information as to existing systems of historical teaching at home and abroad, by getting together printed books, pamphlets and other materials and by correspondence;
- (b) the distribution of information amongst the members of the Association as to methods of teaching and aids to teaching (viz. maps, illustrations, text books, etc);

¹¹ H. Butterfield, *The Historical Association 1906–1956* (London, 1955), p. 6.

¹² Butterfield, *The Historical Association*, pp. 4–5.

¹³ Butterfield, *The Historical Association*, pp. 6–7.

¹⁴ Tout tried to replicate elements of the IHR at Manchester, but apparently failed (M. Bentley, *Modernising England’s Past: English Historiography in the Age of Modernism, 1870–1970* (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 204–5; Butterfield, *The Historical Association*, p. 7).

¹⁵ C. Wrigley, ‘Nottingham Branch History’ <<https://www.history.org.uk/getinvolved/resource/674/nottingham-branch-history>> [accessed 21 June 2018].

¹⁶ Butterfield, *The Historical Association*, pp. 7–8.

¹⁷ Quoted in Butterfield, *The Historical Association*, pp. 8–9.

- (c) the encouragement of local centres for the discussion of questions relative to the study and teaching of history;
- (d) the representation of the needs and interests of the study of history and of the opinion of its teachers to governing bodies, government departments and other authorities having control over education;
- (e) co-operation for common objects with the English Association, the Geographical Association, the Modern Language Association and the Classical Association.

If the idea for the HA first emerged from the efforts of Howard and Reid, it is significant that the Association was formally founded by two academics from the upper echelons of prestigious university schools of history, Charles Firth of Oxford University, a prominent RHS Fellow, and Albert Frederick Pollard from London University.¹⁸ Right through to 1929, with the exception of idiosyncratic Irishwoman Alice Stopford Green (also an honorary vice-president of the RHS from February to May 1929), the presidency of the HA stayed within that elite upper-academic stratum.¹⁹ That might have seemed anomalous, but it was harmonious and is a pointer to a greater integration between the two strands of the history profession than might have been expected, deriving from a common objective: the recognition and encouragement of history as a professional discipline.

The RHS warmly welcomed the foundation of the HA. Initially it afforded the Association support in the sharing of premises and administrative assistance – and the RHS's paid secretary, Miss M. B. Curran, was also the HA's administrator until 1921.²⁰ By 1910, with over 900 members, the HA suggested that it 'had so grown in its work that it could no longer accept the hospitality of the Royal Historical Society for office accommodation'.²¹ But the HA remained a tenant of the RHS in Russell Square, London, until 1936. Herbert Butterfield noted the close relations between the two organizations, especially after 1919. In 1921 a joint conference was held and it was agreed that HA members could attend RHS lectures and use the library. While there was apparently some talk of amalgamation around this time, 'the problem of government' seemed intractable. One very significant, and possibly unbridgeable, difference between the two organizations was how their memberships were recruited. The RHS's was by invitation and validation by existing members; election (as the council minutes show) was by no means automatic. Fellows could be (and sometimes were) removed. The self-perpetuating elite that this represented was in stark contrast to

¹⁸ Butterfield, *The Historical Association*, pp. 6–7.

¹⁹ Butterfield, *The Historical Association*, App. II, pp. 55–6, at p. 55.

²⁰ Humphreys, *Royal Historical Society*, pp. 30–1; Butterfield, *The Historical Association*, p. 8.

²¹ Butterfield, *The Historical Association*, p. 14.

the HA, which anyone could join as long as they paid the subscription. Unlike the RHS, the HA never had to wrestle with the conflicting pressures of needing to increase its membership for largely financial reasons while simultaneously seeking to preserve its exclusivity. There are no references in the RHS council minutes to a potential union. All that resulted was an Association rule-change in 1930, including the RHS in the group of subject-based groups with which the HA would co-operate.²²

Tout was involved with the RHS for some thirty-eight years, starting with his induction into the Society by Oscar Browning in 1891. His paper ‘The earldoms under Edward I’ was published in the Society’s *Transactions* for 1894.²³ He was a member of council between 1893 and 1901, an honorary vice-president from 1915, president between 1926 and 1929 and, on his retirement from that position, a vice-president until his death in October 1929.²⁴ If this seems busy, Tout exhibited an impressive record of inactivity in the early years. From 1893 to 1901, when he was on council, he attended only two meetings out of a possible fifty-two; and in 1926 stated that, ‘doubtless for the reason of non-attendance, I was relegated to the position of an ordinary member’.²⁵ Tout never served on any of the finance, library or publications committees, where the real work was done. After all this, it was perhaps a relief to be elected an honorary vice-president of the Society in 1915 – ‘an office’, he averred, ‘the more welcome to a member than dwelling in what are sometimes quaintly called the “provinces”’, involving ‘neither the obligation nor the privilege of attending meetings’.²⁶ And yet an examination of the RHS archives shows somewhat more involvement

²² Butterfield, *The Historical Association*, p. 29.

²³ T. F. Tout, ‘The earldoms under Edward I’, *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, n.s., viii (1894), 129–55; H. Hall to Tout, n.d., but attributed to 30 Sept. 1892 by the repository (John Rylands Library, Manchester, Special Collections GB 133, Tout papers, TFT/1/466/1).

²⁴ UCL, RHS archives, RHS council minutes, 20 Oct. 1891; 18 May 1893; 18 Jan. and 15 Feb. 1894; 19 Jan. and 17 Feb. 1898; RHS, ‘Report of the council, session 1893–4’, *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, new ser., ix (1895), 1–6, at p. 3; ‘Report of the council, session 1901–2’, *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, new ser., xvii (1903), 325–9, at p. 328; RHS council minutes, 16 Dec. 1914; 17 Feb. 1915; RHS, ‘Report of the council, session 1914–5’, *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 3rd ser., x (1916), 187–93, at p. 180; T. F. Tout, ‘Presidential Address’, *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 4th ser., ix (1926), 1–28, at p. 1. The secretary was directed to write to Mrs. Tout on Tout’s death (RHS council minutes, 14 Nov. 1929). Tout was elected a vice-president at the anniversary meeting on 14 Feb. 1929 (RHS council minutes, 14 Feb. 1929).

²⁵ UCL, RHS archives, RHS council minutes, 19 Apr. 1894; 26 March 1896; G. W. Prothero wrote to Tout on 10 Nov. 1902: ‘I wish you were nearer to London, that you might drop in now and then to enlighten us at the Hist. Soc. Meetings’ (JRL, Special Collections GB 133, Tout papers, TFT/1/925/19).

²⁶ T. F. Tout, ‘Presidential Address’, *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 4th ser., ix (1926), pp. 1–28, at p. 1.

than appeared on the surface. He actively supported Ward for President in 1899, he seconded a candidate for fellowship in 1904 and, intriguingly, put himself forward as a professional secretary in 1894 after a scandal involving fraud and the suicide of its then secretary.²⁷

The apparent semi-detachment from the Society was reflected in his obituaries and memorials, all of which gave his HA and British Academy activity much more prominence than his involvement with the RHS. Butterfield's 1955 history of the HA was silent on Tout's RHS involvement.²⁸ Similarly, Andrew George Little's 1929 obituary in the HA's journal *History* only offered two brief mentions of Tout as president of the RHS.²⁹ Vivian Galbraith's entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography* barely mentioned the RHS; it devoted only a part of one sentence to the fact of his presidency, with no details regarding his activities and achievements in the four years he was at the RHS's helm.³⁰ James Tait, in a 1930 obituary of Tout in the *English Historical Review*, ignored the RHS involvement; but Frederick Maurice Powicke, in a memoir in the three-volume tribute published by Manchester University Press in 1932–5, did mention his presidency.³¹

The clue may lie not in Tout necessarily, but in the perception of the RHS in the era after the First World War. Humphreys, in his 1968 history (an RHS presidential address), was critical of the Society in those years; he suggested that Tout, while not responsible for its post-war blues, had talked up its 'slowly winning back our lost ground' after 'four years of stagnation' during the war.³² Those were quotations from Tout's presidential address in 1926, which arguably was the first account of the genesis and development of the Society itself. Tout did not underplay the Society's early travails and recent difficulties. He was conscious of raking over old embers – but he did so in order to emphasize the cathartic effect of the 1880–1 crisis: '[I]t is enough to realize how the severity of the crisis pulled the Society together, and how the purging of 1881 sent it forth on its mission, invigorated and

²⁷ A. W. Ward to Tout, 13 Apr. 1899 (JRL, Special Collections GB 133, Tout papers, TFT/1/1242/86); G. W. Prothero to Tout, 23 May 1904 (JRL, Special Collections GB 133, Tout papers, TFT/1/975/20); H. Hall to Tout, 17 Dec. 1894 (JRL, Special Collections GB 133, Tout papers, TFT/1/466).

²⁸ Butterfield, *The Historical Association*, p. 13.

²⁹ A. G. Little, 'Professor Tout', *History*, xiv (1929–30), 313–24, at pp. 320, 321.

³⁰ V. H. Galbraith, 'Tout, Thomas Frederick', in *The Dictionary of National Biography, 1922–1930*, ed. J. R. H. Weaver (Oxford, 1937), pp. 845–8, at p. 846. Tout's *DNB* entry runs to nearly three full pages.

³¹ J. Tait, 'Thomas Frederick Tout', *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xlv (1930), 78–85; F. M. Powicke, 'Memoir', in *The Collected Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout*, i. 1–24, at pp. 17–18.

³² RHS, 'Report of council, session 1968–69', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 5th ser., xx (1970), 197–206, at pp. 197; Humphreys, *Royal Historical Society*, p. 37.

strengthened'.³³ Tout went on to list the positives in the 1920s, including increased support through an expanding fellowship overseas and subscribing libraries.³⁴ Humphreys, however, pounced on the negatives, including an ill-advised publication of British diplomatic instructions; an indiscriminate offer of fellowship to attendees at a 1921 conference; the loss of leadership in historical activity consequent upon the establishment of the Institute of Historical Research; the degeneration of the Society's library; and the decline of the Society's long-serving full-time director, Hubert Hall.³⁵ If these could not be laid at Tout's door, many occurred on his watch as council member and president. It is significant, perhaps, that all his successor Richard Lodge could say about Tout's presidency of the RHS – and that at a special memorial meeting of the Society in 1930 'before a large and representative gathering' – was that it was 'useful and fruitful'.³⁶ In March 1925, just after Tout's election as president, Harold Temperley had looked to Tout to provide 'ginger in the groceries' and for an uplift in 'the next two or three years'.³⁷ It was perhaps unfair, though, to expect radical and energetic responses to the challenges facing the RHS from a man who was now seventy and no longer a working professional. Such would have to wait for the more vibrant presidency of F. M. Powicke ('Tout's most faithful pupil') from 1933.³⁸

If Tout failed to match up to Temperley's expectations, in contrast to his former inactivity as a council member he took his presidential duties seriously. Of forty-one council meetings held between March 1925 and February 1929, he presided over thirty-three.³⁹ He seems to have managed the meetings competently and with due dispatch of business. He used the platform afforded by the RHS presidential addresses to express some

³³ T. F. Tout, 'Presidential Address', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 4th ser., ix (1926), pp. 1–28, at p. 12.

³⁴ Humphreys, *Royal Historical Society*, pp. 37–8.

³⁵ Birch and Horn, *The History Laboratory*, esp. pp. 1–47; Humphreys, *Royal Historical Society*, pp. 38–40.

³⁶ R. Lodge, 'Thomas Frederick Tout. A retrospective of twin academic careers', *Cornhill Magazine*, n.s., lxxviii (1930), pp. 114–26, at p. 114. Lodge's address was extraordinary: the 'twin academic careers' referred to were his and Tout's. Despite a disclaimer at the beginning, a self-indulgent envy of Tout pervades the address. See also RHS, 'Report of council, session 1928–29', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 4th ser., xiii (1930), 241–9, at p. 241.

³⁷ UCL, RHS archives, RHS council minutes, 13 Sept. and 11 Dec. 1924; 12 Feb. 1925; letters from H. Temperley to Tout on 24 and 26 March 1925 (JRL, Special Collections GB 133, Tout papers, TFT/1/1165).

³⁸ The quotation is from Bentley, *Modernising England's Past*, p. 106; Humphreys, *Royal Historical Society*, pp. 40–6.

³⁹ Derived from an analysis of the RHS council minutes of 1925–9.

reflections on aspects of contemporary historical interest.⁴⁰ As an instance, his 1928 address, 'The human side of mediaeval records' – the development of an evening lecture which had been delivered in early 1916 in a series on 'Records' given under the auspices of the RHS council – illuminated Tout's 'public and popular' view of history:

[R]ecords are not always dull. Used with imagination, insight, a touch of humour, and a resolution to recognise the light and shade of the picture, they afford material for reconstructing, in colours both bright and true, the story of the remote past. To do this properly requires gifts that few of us can claim. We must not expect all our historians to be as readable as Macaulay, or as vivid as John Richard Green. But even the dullest of us can make our history more interesting and instructive by the judicious use of records.⁴¹

That lecture would have sat easily with the HA's membership.

Tout's presidency could easily be interpreted as little more than a lap of honour for an eminent historian after his 'life's work' had been completed – he had retired from Manchester in 1925, the year before he became RHS president.⁴² Yet the Society under Tout was perhaps more vibrant than Humphreys portrayed it. In an echo of its former club-like gentility, some incongruities with its status as a learned and scholarly society still clung to it. The RHS had a representative on an advisory committee in connection with the preservation of ancient cottages.⁴³ Tout himself accepted an invitation from the *Spectator* magazine to sit on a committee established to safeguard future transfers of controlling shares in the magazine.⁴⁴ Council's report of session for 1925–6 noted that 'the St. George's Rambling Society have been entertained at tea'.⁴⁵ Yet it got on with its principal professional business, too: council minutes illustrate a wide range of activities, concerns and initiatives. Apart from the usual housekeeping items there were several

⁴⁰ While Tout's series of addresses evidenced some form of structure, his successors have been much more thematically focused. As Professor Colin Jones put it in 2010, presidents 'have used the generous canvas of four successive presidential addresses as an opportunity to explore the state of a key issue or else offer a synthesis in regard to some knotty problem or major theme in, usually, English history' (C. Jones, 'Presidential address: French crossings: I. Tales of Two Cities', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 6th ser., xx (2010), pp. 1–26, at p. 2).

⁴¹ RHS, 'Report of council, session 1915–6', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 3rd ser., xi (1917), 215–21, at p. 217; T. F. Tout, 'Presidential address: the human side of mediaeval records', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 4th ser., xi (1928), pp. 1–16, at p. 16.

⁴² Galbraith, 'Tout', p. 846.

⁴³ UCL, RHS archives, RHS council minutes, 10 June 1926, 10 Feb. and 6 Apr. 1927.

⁴⁴ UCL, RHS archives, RHS council minutes, 18 Apr. 1928.

⁴⁵ RHS, 'Report of council, session 1925–6', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 4th ser., x (1927), 287–95, at p. 288.

proposals for broadening the fellowship: five American scholars were suggested in 1928; the appointment of a corresponding fellow in Portugal; and a replacement for the Irish Free State corresponding fellow, who had returned to Britain following Irish independence.⁴⁶ The criteria for gaining a fellowship were further codified and tightened.⁴⁷ The Alexander Prize conditions were reviewed; Tout was one of three examiners for the prize in 1925.⁴⁸ Important financial and testamentary matters were dealt with, such as the appointment of trustees to the Prothero estate and the question of societies' liability for income tax.⁴⁹ Significant reports on the Society's publications were drawn up including, in 1925, revised guidelines for contributors; and there was consideration of ways to increase sales of the problematical publication *British Diplomatic Instructions*.⁵⁰ And the place of women in the RHS's pantheon was further strengthened: of the twenty-two papers delivered during Tout's presidency, half were by women.⁵¹

Tout's 'capacity to innovate and inspire towards new territory' was demonstrated in his work for the Historical Association.⁵² That work emerged from the nature of his character – what G. P. Gooch called 'the liveliest of men' and Herbert Butterfield his 'vigorous and exhilarating leadership' in Manchester.⁵³ With James Tait and A. G. Little he had been on the cusp of starting a similar group in Manchester when they became aware of what A. F. Pollard and Charles Firth were planning in London. Tout was enthusiastic; communicating with Pollard, he concluded that, following the foundation of other 'subject' groups, 'historians should organise along with the rest'.⁵⁴

Tout subsequently became a founding member of the HA and one of its first vice-presidents. He was the Association's second president, from 1910 to 1912, and was instrumental in forming one of the first HA branches, in

⁴⁶ UCL, RHS archives, RHS council minutes, 13 May, 14 Oct. and 9 Dec. 1926.

⁴⁷ UCL, RHS archives, RHS council minutes, 14 Jan. 1926. A report was drawn up by H. E. Malden, Hon. Sec., and adopted by council.

⁴⁸ Letter from H. E. Malden to Tout, 23 Apr. 1926 (JRL, Special Collections GB 133, Tout papers, TFT/1/760); UCL, RHS archives, RHS council minutes, 1 Apr. 1925. His co-examiners were G. P. Gooch and H. Hall, the RHS's director.

⁴⁹ UCL, RHS archives, RHS council minutes, 13 May, 10 June, 1926; C. Johnson to Tout, 20 March 1928 (JRL, Special Collections GB 133, Tout papers, TFT/1/599/13).

⁵⁰ UCL, RHS archives, RHS council minutes, 24 Sept. 1925; RHS council minutes, 13 Oct. 1927.

⁵¹ Derived from RHS, 'Report of council, sessions 1925–30' (*Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 4th ser., ix–xiii).

⁵² Bentley, *Modernising England's Past*, p. 140.

⁵³ G. P. Gooch, 'The presidents', in Butterfield, *The Historical Association*, App. 1, pp. 53–4, at p. 53.

⁵⁴ D. Read, 'A parade of past presidents', *The Historian*, xci (2006), 10–23, at p. 12.

Manchester on 19 January 1907 with sixty-three members.⁵⁵ Charles Firth delivered its inaugural lecture, with another by Tout, entitled 'Outlines versus Periods', on 9 February 1907. That lecture was included in the HA's fourth published leaflet; Tout was an enthusiastic proponent of the publication of pamphlets. In contrast to the RHS he served as an active committee man, as the first chairman of its library committee between 1908 and 1911. Of the forty-eight pamphlets published before 1920, nearly half were bibliographies. Tout's aim, though, was to produce 'short essays on great themes'; and Frank Merry Stenton's *The Development of the Castle in England and Wales* was an early publication as Historical Association leaflet no. 22 (1933). Tout's influence on what he hoped the HA would produce – 'a fairly bulky pamphlet dealing with a definite historical subject' – was evident in the preponderance of mediaeval topics in the early productions. The *Annual Bulletin of Historical Literature*, a résumé of recent history publications, also made its appearance in 1912 under Tout's tutelage and A. J. Little's editorship.⁵⁶ The periodical *History* (still extant) appeared first in 1912, in Tout's presidency; but it was a private venture, not taken over by the HA until 1916.⁵⁷

Tout continued to take a close interest in the Manchester branch, for instance as part of the programme in 1921 to 1922 at a joint meeting with the local branch of the Geographical Association, when he spoke on 'The relations of history and geography'. He chaired the Association's annual meeting held in Manchester from 11 to 13 January 1912. This was the first time the meeting had taken place outside London and, according to Association records, was considered a great success, 'thanks in large part to the enterprise and energy of the Manchester Branch and the lavish hospitality its members afforded or procured'.⁵⁸

In contrast to the almost exclusively metropolitan focus of the RHS, branch activity was a primary purpose of the HA. That structure led to people not involved with history teaching or study wanting to join. This is where the HA and the RHS began to diverge; in this regard, the HA responded to the growing interest in popular and public history in the early and middle years of the twentieth century. The composition of the HA's branches reflected this. Those close to universities, teacher training colleges and in large cities were largely colonized by teachers and aspirant teachers;

⁵⁵ Butterfield, *The Historical Association*, App. II, pp. 55–6, at p. 56.

⁵⁶ Butterfield, *The Historical Association*, pp. 15–17.

⁵⁷ K. Robbins, 'History: the Historical Association and the national past', *History*, lxvi (1981), 413–25; also *History*, i (1916), editorial, 1–4, at p. 1.

⁵⁸ V. Moreland, 'Manchester Branch History' <<https://www.history.org.uk/events/categories/511/resource/4421/manchester-branch-history>> [accessed 21 June 2018].

but others were founded for members of the public simply interested in history. ‘History’ was a broad church and growing broader as the twentieth century progressed; and so, in terms of the institutions, it did not really matter if, as suggested by Carless Davis in 1905, Tout’s interests lay much more in political history rather than constitutional, social or intellectual history.⁵⁹

Structural utility was Tout’s guiding principle. In 1910 he declared that the Association’s current objective was to ‘produce for the working teacher a portable working library in a few volumes’.⁶⁰ Less than a year later, he suggested ‘that now we are becoming strong and well-established we shall not forget that we can also make ourselves an Association of students, a body desirous of furthering the study and the investigation of history’.⁶¹ Opening up the HA to the popular and public was formalized in January 1917 when membership was widened to include all those ‘interested in the study and teaching of history’.⁶² Tout was a medievalist – the modern concept of ‘contemporary history’ would have been foreign to him – but the sense of ‘history’s engagement with the contemporary’ is clearly visible in his fingerprints all over the HA. By the time of Tout’s death in 1929 the HA was a substantially different organization from the one he had helped to found twenty-three years before. The objective of today’s Historical Association is to ‘further the study and teaching and enjoyment of history in all guises and forms: professional, public and popular’. In that, it still represents the values that Tout saw for it over a century ago.⁶³

Institutionalizing scholarly and intellectual activity was a favourite activity in the later Victorian and Edwardian eras. Tout’s part in this process throws up some interesting questions about both his personal reasons for involvement – nature as significant as nurture, according to Michael Bentley – as well as more general ones that relate to the purpose of institutionalization.⁶⁴ To take the RHS first: Tout got away with doing very little for the Society in the early years. Distance, really, was no excuse – Manchester has always been well-served with rail links to London. Where

⁵⁹ Letter from C. Davis to Tout, 31 Dec. 1905 (JRL, Special Collections GB 133, Tout papers, TFT/1/264/3).

⁶⁰ J. Smith and M. Crook, ‘Publications’, *The Historian*, xci (2006), 70–5, at p. 74.

⁶¹ R. Sullivan, ‘Who are we?’ <<https://www.history.org.uk/aboutus/info/1342/who-are-we>> [accessed 7 Feb. 2017]; Anon., ‘Manchester (with Liverpool and Chester): Branch History’ <<https://www.history.org.uk/events/categories/511/resource/3986/manchester-with-liverpool-and-chester-branch-his>> [accessed 7 Feb. 2017].

⁶² Sullivan, ‘Who are we?’

⁶³ R. Sullivan, ‘What do we do?’ <<https://www.history.org.uk/aboutus/info/1343/what-do-we-do>> [accessed 24 June 2018].

⁶⁴ Bentley, *Modernising England’s Past*, p. 223.

he exhibited engagement, it was slow. An illustration is his editing of the state trials (1289–93) of Edward I for the Society's Camden Series. This took a long time to complete, finally appearing in 1906. In the introduction, Tout apologized to the Society 'for having so long delayed to discharge the obligation that I had undertaken'. (There was an effusive tribute to Hilda Johnstone, his collaborator, who in fact did the bulk of the work.⁶⁵) On the other hand, if Tout's work rate for the Society in the earlier period was a little thin, he did make up for it during his presidency. That may have been due more to geography than to history: on his retirement, Tout had come back to live in London and access to the RHS rooms was much easier.

During his presidency Tout was a champion of the RHS, if a somewhat defensive one. His narrative for the RHS saw it originating in the tendency towards specialization at the end of the nineteenth century. He had not always approved. In wartime 1916 Tout chaired a committee of the 'subject groups' that vigorously argued for education as 'the training of human beings in mind and character as citizens of a free country' and argued against premature specialization.⁶⁶ That view complemented his almost-contemporaneous suggestion that historians should employ the methods of the observational sciences.⁶⁷ By 1927 Tout, in his second RHS presidential address, had changed tack: '[W]e have no reason to complain of them [processes, including specialization]. This Society is itself a result of them. It came into existence because, more than a generation ago, historians began to believe that history was a definite branch of knowledge to be studied by itself for its own sake'.⁶⁸ Burrow suggested that Tout's reference to the origins of the RHS in the context of specialization was 'surprisingly inaccurate and idealised'.⁶⁹ This chapter argues that it was not necessarily so. Tout was very well aware of the Society's early chequered history. He was careful in his choice of words, not trying to claim something for the Society that was not true; his reference to 'more than a generation ago' was probably quite deliberate. If a 'generation' is generally accepted as about twenty-five years, then Tout was referring to the modern RHS after the scandal involving the

⁶⁵ *State Trials of the Reign of Edward I, 1289–93*, ed. T. F. Tout and H. Johnstone (London, 1906), p. vii. See also UCL, RHS archives, RHS council minutes, 19 March 1903, wherein the RHS director is asked to ascertain Tout's intentions in respect of editing the state trials papers.

⁶⁶ Butterfield, *The Historical Association*, pp. 24–5.

⁶⁷ Bentley, *Modernising England's Past*, p. 196, quoting K. Burk, *Troublemaker: The Life and History of A. J. P. Taylor* (New Haven, Conn., 2000), p. 104.

⁶⁸ T. F. Tout, 'Presidential address: national and international co-operation in historical scholarship', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 4th ser., x (1927), pp. 1–19, at p. 3.

⁶⁹ Burrow, 'Victorian historians', p. 139.

suicide of its secretary in 1894.⁷⁰ Also, the ‘processes’ that Tout referenced were not only those of scholarly specialization. He recognized the necessity for administrative structures to support scholarship. But he warned against bureaucratization: ‘[N]othing would be more disastrous to history ... than that there should be a class of administrators who do not know, directing scholars who cannot administer’.⁷¹ Another process highlighted by Tout was that just as the cosmopolitan world of scholarship had been fragmented into national schools, so too had knowledge itself been compartmentalized.⁷²

Hugh Trevor-Roper in 1957 caustically derided the Manchester school of Tout, Tait, Powicke and Galbraith as ‘Manchester medievalism’ and a degeneration into ‘the cult of *minutiae* ... mere boring antiquarianism’ characterized only by ‘switching the narrow specialist beam from the reign of Richard II to the reign of George II, from the Exchequer to the East India Company Board’.⁷³ That bowdlerized Tout’s wide vision of what history meant and, vitally, who its practitioners and audiences might be. His panoramic concern was exemplified in involvement in both Society and Association. It may have been fortified by Tout’s own professional and personal journeys, leading him to engage with the institutional scaffolding of the RHS and the HA in quite different ways. Tout was never particularly close to the prestigious, metropolitan inside; while rubbing shoulders with the likes of Ward, Firth and Pollard carried advantage, an inverted snobbery may have meant that his engagement with the RHS was distant, in every sense of the word. The lively localism of the HA in Manchester, on the other hand, gave him a canvas and a stage on which he could perform with greater ease, facilitated by physical proximity.

Both the RHS and the HA provided complementary platforms for Tout’s views on opening up the historical discipline. The RHS, in particular, offered opportunities to emphasize the cause of internationalism in historical scholarship – not today’s transnational history, but rather the furthering of international co-operation and solidarity amongst historians. Tout’s presidential lectures in 1927 and 1929 exemplified this. His 1927 address on ‘National and international co-operation in historical scholarship’ was principally taken up with an exposition on the quinquennial International

⁷⁰ Letter from H. Hall to Tout, 2 Feb. 1926 (JRL, Special Collections GB 133, Tout papers, TFT/1/466).

⁷¹ T. F. Tout, ‘Presidential address: national and international co-operation in historical scholarship’, *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 4th ser., x (1927), pp. 1–19, at p. 2.

⁷² T. F. Tout, ‘Presidential address: national and international co-operation in historical scholarship’, *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 4th ser., x (1927), pp. 1–19, at pp. 2–3.

⁷³ Letter from H. Trevor-Roper to W. Notestein, 2 May 1957 (Yale University Library, Notestein MSS. 544/1/8/747 (quoted in Bentley, *Modernising England’s Past*, pp. 230–1)).

Congress of the Historical Sciences, which was founded in 1898, just as the RHS was getting into its stride.⁷⁴ The First World War fractured the intellectual worldwide commonwealth and threw a long shadow. While Tout duly noted the difficulties in reconstructing that *res publica* after the war – it was not until 1928 that the defeated nations were readmitted to the congress – he patted the RHS on the back for being in the forefront of efforts to recommence international gatherings.⁷⁵ Tout was particularly pleased that on his watch as RHS president German subscribing libraries were reinstated on the Society's rolls.

The significance of Tout's internationalism was recognized, since this address was the only one of his RHS presidential lectures to be reproduced in Manchester university press's three-volume tribute to Tout. The International Committee of Historical Sciences, as organized in 1926 at Geneva, had its headquarters in Washington D.C., with its secretary based in Paris and its president in Oslo. Tout paid lip-service to British participation – 'We Englishmen have played our little part in the erection of the international machine'⁷⁶ – and he, with Harold Temperley, was to be the representative of the Society on the national committee for the furtherance of the International Historical Congress at Oslo, held from 14 to 18 August 1928 (in the event, neither attended – the RHS was represented by Charles Johnson and J. F. Chance).⁷⁷ What comes across from Tout is an obvious appetite for widening the contacts and horizons of the British academic history milieu, together with a tinge of regret that Britain was not at the forefront of this activity.⁷⁸ And during his presidency the international dimension of the RHS's activities was encouraged, such as the attendance in 1926 of Sir Richard Lodge and the officers of the Society at an Anglo-American history conference at the IHR; and in 1927 Tout's suggestion that the Society should contribute to the national committee of the International Council of the International Historical Conference.⁷⁹

Tout's final RHS presidential address in February 1929 was also about internationalism, but with a particular focus deriving from, in every sense, a personal journey – nature rather than nurture. In 'History and historians

⁷⁴ T. F. Tout, 'National and international co-operation in historical scholarship', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 4th ser., x (1927), 1–19.

⁷⁵ Tout, 'National and international co-operation in historical scholarship' pp. 7–11.

⁷⁶ Tout, 'National and international co-operation in historical scholarship', p. 13.

⁷⁷ UCL, RHS archives, RHS council minutes, 11 Feb. 1926.

⁷⁸ UCL, RHS archives, RHS, 'Report of council, session 1926–7', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 4th ser., xi (1928), 197–206, at pp. 200–1.

⁷⁹ UCL, RHS archives, RHS, 'Report of council, session 1925–6', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 4th ser., x (1927), 287–95, at p. 288; UCL, RHS archives, RHS council minutes, 11 March 1926; RHS council minutes, 13 Jan. 1927.

in America' he detailed an eight-month tour, principally in the United States with a brief foray into Canada, during which he lectured at about thirty universities. (Tout was at pains to emphasize that he was also there as an emissary of the Society, noting that, of 800 fellows, 100 were from North America, while over one third of the Society's exchanging and subscribing libraries were from the Continent.)⁸⁰ His obvious admiration for American methods of third-level education was tempered by an unease at the ubiquity of college education: 'Mass production of educated men and women is not impossible, though not so easy as Mr. Ford finds the mass production of automobiles'.⁸¹ It is obvious, though, that for Tout internationalism had its limits. He went on to describe the difficulties under which American medievalist scholars laboured, principally remoteness from source materials; and how rich Americans had typically countered this by the wholesale purchase of manuscripts and the like from a post-war near-bankrupt Europe.⁸² He criticized a regimen in England that allowed the wholesale export of historical material and he suggested that the Historical Manuscripts Commission should have the legal right to catalogue private documents and, if necessary, prevent their export.⁸³ Tout tried to get the RHS to take up the cause,⁸⁴ but no progress was made.

Tout's perception of the purposes of the HA and the RHS was structural and organizational, not intellectual. These organizations were vessels; and it was the shape and structure of those receptacles that interested and engaged him. They were there to facilitate and sponsor 'opening-up': in the case of the RHS to establish and maintain an international and transnational fellowship; for the HA, the recruitment of interested-in-history individuals into the historical freemasonry. Unless the product of research were communicated to the people who paid for it, the genre would not thrive in the longer run. Where his vision for the two organizations met was in exposing teachers, earnest vicars and eager bank clerks in the HA to the professionalism of the academics and scholars represented by the RHS. This was a mechanism for the transmission of historical values into a wider world. Whether in the RHS – professionalizing the paid academic – or in the HA – popularizing public history using these professionals – the destination was the same.

⁸⁰ T. F. Tout, 'Presidential address: history and historians in America', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 4th ser., xii (1929), 1–17, at pp. 1–2.

⁸¹ Tout, 'Presidential address: history and historians in America', p. 5.

⁸² Tout, 'Presidential address: history and historians in America', pp. 8–12.

⁸³ Tout, 'Presidential address: history and historians in America', p. 13.

⁸⁴ Letter from H. E. Malden to Tout, 1 Apr. 1926 (JRL, Special Collections GB 133, Tout papers, TFT/1/760); UCL, RHS archives, RHS council minutes, 13 May 1926; 9 Feb. 1928.

15. T. F. Tout and the *Dictionary of National Biography**

Henry Summerson

Tout's involvement with the *Dictionary of National Biography* (*DNB*) must until 2004 have been one of the best-known things about him. Anyone who consulted the first edition of the *Dictionary*, either as it was initially published in sixty-three volumes between 1885 and 1900, or in the better-known revised and consolidated issue of 1908, could be sure of encountering those familiar slabs of typeface, sometimes extending over several pages, in which practically every other sentence was followed by a source reference, as though Tout had just invented the Harvard referencing system and was taking out a patent on it (it was in fact devised at almost exactly this time), before getting to the no-less familiar initials 'T.F.T.' at the end.¹ Although Tout was not, numerically, the most prolific of the predominantly medieval contributors to the *DNB* – both William Hunt and C. L. Kingsford wrote more articles – his contribution nonetheless remains impressive. By the time its publication was completed, he had supplied the *Dictionary* with 240 entries, of which thirty, twenty-four of them on medieval subjects, survived, albeit in revised form, into the second edition published in 2004. Sidney Lee, the *DNB*'s deputy-editor when it began and chief editor when it finished, reckoned that Tout's contributions amounted to the equivalent of an entire volume, which would have meant a book of nearly 450 pages.² Chronologically his articles extended from Cunobelinus in the early first

* I am very grateful to Dr. M. Curthoys, the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*'s senior research editor, for some valuable references and for advice on a number of points.

¹ For ease of reference, individual articles are cited using the name forms employed in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and B. Harrison (60 vols., Oxford 2004); and also released online, where it has continued to be corrected and augmented <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>> [accessed 22 Dec. 2018]. Superseded articles can be consulted by electronic users through the 'Archive Edition' facility attached to every entry which has an equivalent in the first edition of the *Dictionary*.

² Figures from S. Lee, 'A statistical account', the preface to vol. 1 of the *DNB* in its 1908 issue (originally published in June 1900 as the preface to volume 63 of the first edition), pp. lxxi–v.

century AD to John Henry Blunt, a scholarly clergyman who died in 1884.³ Geographically he was principally concerned with England and Wales, but he also provided articles on members of the Scottish baronial Comyn family and on several Anglo-Irish Fitzgeralds. His overriding interest in the secular nobility did not prevent his contributing articles on eight archbishops of Canterbury, five of York and five of Dublin, as well as on at least one bishop of all but three of the dioceses of England and Wales; and he also supplied entries on some of Wales's notable eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century nonconformist ministers.

Such was Tout's scholarly range that for the 2004 edition it took 130 people to revise or replace the entries which were published over his name between 1885 and 1900, all of them written in his spare time – when the *DNB* was launched Tout was already professor at Lampeter, moving from there to Manchester in 1890. A superb organizer, he must also have had a will of iron. Why did he do it? One consideration was doubtless a financial one, since contributors were paid for their articles. Born in relatively humble circumstances, supported only by a scholarship during his undergraduate years, he learnt early to be careful with money; and R. L. Poole, whose upbringing was subjected to none of the constraints which affected Tout's, even thought him 'rather mercenary in his views'.⁴ The imputation was unjust, but Tout was certainly willing to earn money where he could and the receipts from his entries in the *DNB* must have been welcome. H. E. Murray, a senior member of the production staff at Smith, Elder, the company which published the *Dictionary*, 'with the punctual production of which he was concerned from the second year of the venture', told Humphrey Milford in 1921 how payments were determined by the publisher George Smith in person. Once a month Smith would go through the proofs and mark each article with either an 'A' or a 'B', those letters determining the rate of pay, with the distinction apparently depending more upon the standing of the contributor than upon the length of the article or the importance of its subject.⁵ At first an 'A' indicated a rate of 30s per page and a 'B' one

³ A full list is provided by G. Fenwick, *The Contributors' Index to the Dictionary of National Biography, 1885–1901* (Detroit, Mich., 1989), pp. 383–7.

⁴ For events in Tout's life I have relied principally on V. H. Galbraith, 'Thomas Frederick Tout (1855–1929)', rev. by P. R. H. Slee, in *ODNB* <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref.odnb/36539>> [accessed 18 June 2018]. Poole's comment is recorded in Senate House Library, University of London, MS. 860/2/1, papers of Albert Frederick Pollard (hereafter SHL, Pollard Papers), letter of 14 May 1894 (one in the series of letters sent regularly to his parents in which Pollard supplied what was almost a diary of the *DNB*'s progress).

⁵ Oxford University Press Archives, PB/ED/12909. I owe my knowledge of this letter to M. Curthoys. For H. E. Murray, see L. Huxley, *The House of Smith, Elder* (London, 1923), p. 247.

of 25s, but from volume 13 onwards, starting in January 1888, the steadily mounting costs of production meant that thereafter 'A' brought 25s per page and 'B' 20s. Fractions of pages were also paid for – a letter of 1922 records that the industrialist James Tait Black had never received the 8s 4d due to him for his article on the nineteenth-century thread-manufacturer Thomas Coats, published as long before as 1887, when it occupied just under half a page in volume 11.⁶

As a rising star in the scholarly firmament, it seems certain that Tout's work was marked with 'As' throughout. Perfect precision is impossible, but before 1888 he should have received about £6 for St. Thomas Cantilupe, £4 10s for Robert Burnell and £10 10s for Catherine of Braganza; while afterwards his earnings would still have included about £12 10s for Edward II; £8 15s for Owain Glyn Dŵr; £15 for Henry IV; £16 5s for Henry VI; £10 for Llywelyn ap Gruffudd; and £12 10s for both Margaret of Anjou and Richard of Cornwall. Many of his contributions were much shorter, less than a page in several cases, and will have brought him only a few shillings, but once or twice he made up for this with what it is scarcely unjust to call a bulk delivery. Volume 19 (July 1889) contained no fewer than twenty-four articles by Tout, all under surnames with the prefix 'Fitz', which should have earned him around £43 10s, while volume 39 (July 1894), which included his entries on ten members of the Mortimer family, six of them in a sequence extending over seventeen consecutive pages, probably brought him about £39 5s more.

Such sums were far from negligible in the late Victorian scale of values, but in themselves they seem inadequate to explain Tout's extended involvement with the *DNB*. The latter was not, in fact, the first project of its kind with which he was connected, for he also wrote for the one-volume *Dictionary of English History* which appeared in 1884, just as work on *DNB* was getting under way. For instance, he provided entries on Henry II, Richard I, John and Henry III (much shorter than their equivalents in the *DNB*), on Anselm, Giraldus Cambrensis and Robert Grosseteste, on the Romans in Britain, the Picts, Feudalism and Jacobitism; and a whole series of articles on England's relations with foreign powers, not just Prussia and France, as one might expect, but also Spain, Portugal, Russia, Turkey, Denmark and Bohemia, among others. And he had some sort of enabling role in production as well, since its editors concluded their acknowledgements by giving him their 'special thanks' as one 'whose assistance throughout has been of the greatest value, and who has constantly and most kindly placed the benefits of his extensive knowledge of modern history at the service of

⁶ Information gratefully received from M. Curthoys.

the Editors'.⁷ He had taken the *Dictionary of English History* seriously, it may be surmised, because such an enterprise constituted a valuable contribution to scholarship and its dissemination and he made the same commitment to the *DNB* primarily because he saw that in the same beneficent light.

Commitment it certainly was. Tout's first contribution to the *Dictionary*, on the Lollard John Badby, appeared in its second volume, published in April 1885. The article was a short one (about 280 words), as indeed were many of his contributions, but he soon progressed to entries on major figures, starting with Bishop William Barlow, a significant, if rather equivocal, figure in the implementation of the Reformation in Wales; and then taking on no less a personage than Queen Catherine of Braganza, an article of around 6,000 words which also provides a striking illustration of his range, scholarly and also linguistic – he was clearly fluent in French, German and Italian, not to mention Welsh, and his article on Queen Catherine suggests that he knew Portuguese too. As he began, so he went on. The short entries on mostly Welsh saints and kings tend to fade out after a while, but there are detailed articles on nobles and prelates and major ones on kings – Edward II (8,500 words), Henry IV (just under 10,000) and Henry VI (nearly 11,500) – along with queens, notably Isabella of France and Margaret of Anjou; English princes like Lionel of Antwerp and Humphrey of Gloucester; Welsh ones like Llywelyn ap Gruffudd; and various great men like Roger Mortimer, the first earl of March, Bishop Robert Burnell and Owain Glyn Dŵr. In the spring of 1892 Tout told Lee that he could not take on any of the proposed subjects then being circulated under the letter 'N' (a circumstance which doubtless explains why James Tait supplied no fewer than ten articles on members of the Neville family).⁸ But when that crisis passed he resumed his contributions to the *DNB* and continued with them to the end, with his last article, on Archbishop William Zouch of York, appearing in what was also the *Dictionary's* final volume in 1900.

Tout was a great support to Lee and their friendship clearly deepened as work on the *DNB* progressed. They stayed in each other's houses and went on holiday together, at least until Tout married in 1895. On one occasion in 1894 Tout even lent Lee £30.⁹ When Kingsford resigned as editorial assistant in summer 1890, it was to Tout that Lee turned in his pursuit of a successor and Tout suggested James Tait, then an assistant lecturer at Manchester, who accepted the post but resigned it almost at once, having decided that he did not want to spend several years writing short articles on unimportant

⁷ *The Dictionary of English History*, ed. S. J. Low and F. S. Pulling (London, 1884), p. vi.

⁸ John Rylands Library, Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout, TFT/1/672/47, letter from S. Lee to Tout, 23 May 1892.

⁹ JRL, Tout Papers, TFT/1/672/78–9, S. Lee to Tout, letters of 13 and 16 Apr. 1894.

people.¹⁰ Kingsford had gone to the department of education, where he had been offered what Lee described as 'a more permanent & easy post'.¹¹ He continued to write articles for the *DNB*, but from around the end of 1896 the demands of the department clearly became such that he had to relinquish a number of *DNB* articles, under the letters 'U' to 'Z', which he had either offered or been asked to write and which now had to be provided by others.¹² Four of these, including the one on William Zouch, were supplied by Tout himself, two by his former student W. E. Rhodes and three by Tout's wife Mary, who was also his former student. Lee knew he could rely on Tout and also knew that the latter also had good assistants to hand.

As a writer of articles for the *Dictionary*, Tout improved as he went on. Throughout his career he wrote fast, with little concern for niceties of expression, and revised and rewrote afterwards, as seemed necessary. Stubbs's dictum on Tout's first in history in 1877, that he was 'Unus solus totus', is well-known, its context rather less so. In a letter written to Tout's widow in around 1930, William Hunt, who had been one of the three examiners concerned, recounted how their colleague had wanted other candidates to be placed alongside Tout on the grounds that 'their answers were better expressed and showed a certain degree of literary attainment'. Stubbs would have none of it, declaring that the examiners 'were not called upon to decide on literary matters but on the evidences of historical knowledge', and 'with a note of triumph' placed Tout alone in the first class. Hunt went on to give his opinion that Tout's *DNB* articles, and other writings, showed that he 'had got the better of his earlier difficulty in expressing his meaning in well arranged and appropriate words'.¹³ Not everyone would have agreed with him. When Tout's *Edward I* appeared in 1893, the twenty-three-year-old Albert Pollard, writing home with all the condescension of a clever young man, told his parents that 'I am agreeably impressed with it. Tout has quite risen to the situation and his style is vastly better than that in which he writes his Dictionary articles'. Even more cattily, he quoted a *Times* review which had described the book as 'more noticeable for solidity than grace' and offered the opinion that the remark had been suggested 'by Tout's personal appearance rather than a perusal of the book'.¹⁴

¹⁰ JRL, Tout Papers, TFT/1/672/24, 25, 38.40, S. Lee to Tout, letters of 8 and 12 Aug. 1890, 1 June 1891, 8 July 1891; TFT/1/1155/4-7, J. Tait to Tout, letters of 6-10 July 1891.

¹¹ JRL, Tout Papers, TFT/1/672/24, letter from S. Lee to Tout, 8 Aug. 1890.

¹² Shown by lists of articles sent to Kingsford in the expectation that he would provide them, but all of which were undertaken by others (SHL, Papers of Charles Lethbridge Kingsford, MS. 900/32-4).

¹³ JRL, Tout Papers, TFT/1/556/24, letter from W. Hunt to M. Tout [n.d.].

¹⁴ SHL, Pollard Papers, MS. 860/1/4, letter of 4 July 1893.

Solid rather than graceful (though always clear) might in fact be a fair description of Tout's literary style, but where the *DNB* was concerned the solidity was relieved from time to time by well-turned phrases and touches of humour, as when we come upon the comment, among the sources for the entry on Hereward the Wake, that in Freeman's *Norman Conquest* 'the more probable details of the legend are picturesquely worked up with the facts of the undoubted history', or learn, after reading the gruesome details of the execution of Dafydd ap Gruffudd in 1283, that '[a]n unseemly contention between the representatives of York and Winchester for the right shoulder resulted in the triumph of the southern city'. Tout knew, too, how to leaven the lump with some of those out-of-the-way details which have always added to the pleasure of browsing in the *Dictionary*. How else were people to discover that Margaret of Anjou was the subject of an opera by Meyerbeer; or that the Irish upbringing of the Welsh prince Gruffudd ap Cynan was 'thought to have led him to introduce the bagpipes into Wales, somewhat to the disparagement of the harp'; or that Catherine of Braganza was not only influential in the popularization of tea, but was also 'celebrated in the annals of fashion as introducing from Portugal the large green fans with which ladies shaded their faces before the introduction of parasols'?

Tout almost certainly wrote better for being subjected to the discipline of writing for the *Dictionary*, though self-discipline was hardly less important, for commissions to write articles set no word limits, only an exhortation 'to give from original authorities the most condensed statement consistent with fullness of information'.¹⁵ It was only when an article was actually delivered that the editor and his staff decided how appropriate it was to its subject in terms of both length and content.¹⁶ Hence the letter sent to Tout by Leslie Stephen in June 1889 asked him to look over his article on Henry IV, which Stephen had just edited and in which he had made many alterations, mostly cuts. Explaining what he had done, Stephen justified himself on three grounds. The article was simply too long, disproportionately so by comparison with those on other King Henrys and people of like eminence. It was also over-detailed: '[Y]ou have gone into details too minute for a dictionary, though quite proper for a history'. And finally it contained too much material which properly belonged in other articles, for instance those on Henry's father and his eldest son.¹⁷ Henry IV needed streamlining, in fact. Tout accepted most of what Stephen had done to his article, enabling the

¹⁵ Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS. Eng. Lett. d. 357, 188–9 (commission to H. Rashdall to supply an article on Robert Pullen).

¹⁶ Huxley, *House of Smith, Elder*, pp. 184–5.

¹⁷ JRL, Tout Papers, TFT/1/1140/2, letter from L. Stephen to Tout, 27 June 1889.

editor to supply a reference in support of his application for the Manchester chair which praised the candidate's 'thoroughness, accuracy and power of telling a story clearly and tersely' and concluded by declaring that 'the more work I can get from him the better I shall be pleased'.¹⁸

Succinctness, however, was not all that Tout learnt from Leslie Stephen. His contributions to the *Dictionary of English History* show that he already possessed a wide range of expertise in both British and continental history before he wrote anything for the *DNB*. Nevertheless, in February 1885 he received a letter from the editor asking him to amplify his article on Bishop William Barlow, inviting him to look at the relevant entry in Thompson Cooper's *Athenae Cantabrigienses*, where, said Stephen, 'you will see that you have overlooked some facts which it is desirable to mention'. And he should also consult the writings of John Strype and Thomas Wright's edition *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, published by the Camden Society in 1843.¹⁹ Tout did as asked; and all the books referred to were duly cited in the list of sources which concluded his article, Cooper's being described as containing 'the longest and best modern account of Barlow'. It seems strange that he had not used them in the first place and one can only surmise that he did not then know as much about the sixteenth-century episcopate, and the sources relevant to it, as he thought he did. The lesson was well-learned, however, for exposure to the editor's scrutiny seems to have pushed Tout in the direction of greater thoroughness in his research, and also encouraging him to show the foundations of his writings. By the time he got well into articles on subjects beginning with 'C', to men like John de Chishull and Archbishop John Cumin, the familiar style, the text studded with references like the currants in a Christmas pudding and a comprehensive list of sources at the end by way of back-up, was in full operation. Presented in this way, Tout's contributions did as much as anyone's to display the *Dictionary's* credentials as a serious scholarly undertaking.

The sources themselves call for some comment, not least because their range was exceptionally wide. When composing a testimonial in support of Tout's application for a chair at Glasgow in 1894, Lee noted that the applicant's articles for the *DNB* were characterized not only by 'a minute & accurate knowledge of British history', but also 'by an exceptional familiarity with the latest results of historical research undertaken in foreign countries' and the articles themselves fully bear this out.²⁰ Whenever a life

¹⁸ JRL, Tout Papers, TFT/1/771/2 (t), testimonial from L. Stephen, 12 Jan. 1890.

¹⁹ JRL, Tout Papers, TFT/1/672/4, letter from L. Stephen to Tout, 11 Feb. 1885.

²⁰ JRL, Tout Papers, TFT/1/418/1, testimonial from S. Lee, 5 May 1894.

had a continental dimension, Tout seemed to know everything relevant to it. He was greatly helped by the recourse he could make to the *Monumenta Historica Germaniae*, to Martin Bouquet's *Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France*, in its successive manifestations, and to Ludovico Antonio Muratori's *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, but these were only a beginning. For his entry on Richard of Cornwall, for instance, he cited German biographies of his subject going back to 1718, a whole string of monographs published between 1668 and 1886, collections of sources for the Lower Rhine and for Lübeck and what he described as 'a rather thin Königsberg inaugural dissertation' of 1865; while his article on Humphrey of Gloucester produced a near-riot of erudition, taking in the French chroniclers Bassin, Monstrelet, Saint-Remy and Chastellain, Giovanni Degli Agostini's mid eighteenth-century *Scrittori Viniziani*, Franz von Loher's *Jakobäa von Bayern und ihr Zeit* (Nördlingen, 1862–9) and culminating in 'Particularités curieuses sur Jacqueline de Bavière', published in *Numéro sept des publications de la Société des Bibliophiles de Mons*, 1838. One wonders how Tout had ever heard of that, let alone read it.

All these supplemented the English sources, primary and secondary, which formed the bedrock of his articles. Here again the learning on display is immensely impressive. Fundamental to his contributions to the *DNB* were chronicles, which meant principally, though not exclusively, the Rolls Series. Some chronicles, then as later, were only available in the publications of the English History Society or of earlier antiquaries. But overall the Rolls Series was his great standby – he seems to have made use of seventy out of its ninety-nine publications. Some were drawn on only occasionally, even just once or twice, but he was clearly deeply familiar with many of them; and of some – Stubbs's edition of *Chronicles of the Reigns of Edward I and Edward II*, for instance – one feels that he must have known them almost by heart.

Alongside them went the record sources. Here Tout was handicapped by the fact that the Public Record Office's publication of the calendars of close rolls, patent rolls and other chancery records, which have cumulatively transformed our understanding of the purposes and workings of government and society from the thirteenth century onwards, did not begin until the early 1890s and was a long way from completion in 1900. He made use of these volumes where he could (this is further discussed below), but for many of his articles he had to make do with substitutes of varying quality. First of all, this entailed frequent recourse to such sources as Thomas Rymer's *Foedera* (constantly at his elbow), Thomas Madox's *History of the Exchequer*, David Wilkins's *Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae*, and the *Parliament Rolls, Parliamentary Writs* and other volumes of the Record Commission. To these

could be added the compilations of great seventeenth-century antiquaries like Sir William Dugdale, whose *Monasticon* and *Baronage of England* he clearly knew intimately, supplementing the latter with the works of later heralds and antiquaries. For bishops and senior clergy he relied mainly on Duffus Hardy's revision of John Le Neve's *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae*.

Few English county history societies were publishing records of a kind likely to help Tout at this date, but he knew several of the volumes of the Surtees Society and the Oxford History Society and was also very familiar with the full range of antiquarian county histories, both English and Welsh, for instance Edward Hasted on Kent, Francis Blomefield on Norfolk, R. W. Eyton on Shropshire (a particular favourite) and Theophilus Jones on Brecknockshire, supplementing them with histories of individual cities, towns and cathedrals – he knew all Browne Willis's early eighteenth-century *Surveys* of the Welsh cathedrals, for instance. For Scottish history he used the cartularies published by the Bannatyne and Maitland Clubs. He exploited other biographical collections, too, not just early bio-bibliographers such as Bale and Tanner, but later gatherings like Edward Foss's *Lives of the Judges* (1864) and W. F. Hook's *Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury* (1861). Several family histories appear in Tout's lists of sources, some with health warnings (John Watson's *Memoirs of the Ancient Earls of Warren and Surrey* (1782), cited at the end of his entry on Hamelin de Warenne, was 'a useful storehouse but to be employed with the utmost caution'), others without depreciatory comment. His generation was not well served for academic journals (the *English Historical Review* published its first issue only in 1886), but he made the most of what there was – Welsh journals like *Archaeologia Cambrensis* and the Montgomeryshire Collections published by the Powysland Club, English publications such as the *Norfolk Archaeological Journal* and *Sussex Archaeological Collections*. But more often he appears to have searched through *Archaeologia*, *Collectanea Archaeologica* and *The Archaeological Journal* and the products of what may be loosely described as metropolitan scholarship like *Notes and Queries* and even *Macmillan's Magazine* – all five appear among his sources for Edward II.

As these tremendous displays of source-related learning demonstrate, Tout took bibliography seriously. The introduction to the Owens College volume of historical essays of 1902, which he edited along with James Tait, named it among 'the practical aids to history which are as indispensable in certain directions as are the laboratories of the chemist and physicist'.²¹ The plethora of citations and the frequent criticisms of the sources he quoted,

²¹ *Historical Essays by Members of the Owens College Manchester*, ed. T. F. Tout and J. Tait (London, 1902), p. xiii.

either for their reliability or for the quality of their editing, suggest strongly that he regarded the bibliographical onslaught as both an essential scholarly service and a demonstration of academic professionalism which others could usefully follow. It is noticeable, however, that it also reflected the scholarly foundations of Tout's own work at this time, in that the sources he listed were almost invariably printed ones, primary as well as secondary. In his *DNB* memoir of Tout, published in 1937, V. H. Galbraith described his subject's contribution to the *Dictionary* as 'broadening and deepening with the years as it found a firmer basis in the manuscript sources'.²² It may have broadened and deepened, but it is difficult to see evidence for greater use of manuscript evidence. Tout referred from time to time to manuscripts in what is now the British Library, but he did that from the outset, starting with his article on William Barlow; and although he made use of a number of the Reports of the deputy keepers of the public records, his work for the *DNB* contains very few unequivocal references to the records themselves, probably because the publication of PRO lists and indexes began too late to give him the guidance he needed to the documents held at Chancery Lane. The very first list, of ancient petitions, appeared in 1892 and by 1898 the tally had only reached nine, with the *List of Sheriffs*, which Tout cited in his penultimate *DNB* article, on Alan la Zouch.

This is not to say that Tout regarded the public records as unimportant. He had the highest regard for Stubbs's *Constitutional History* (a point developed below), but it is very striking that as far as *narrative* history was concerned he consistently preferred to direct his readers not to Stubbs, but to the three volumes, covering the period between 1154 and 1509, which Reinhold Pauli had contributed to a ten-volume *Geschichte von England* which appeared between 1834 and 1898. Pauli's volumes, published between 1853 and 1859, were the product of an extended stay in London as a member of the staff of the Prussian ambassador Baron Christian von Bunsen. His duties cannot have been very demanding, for he was able to do an immense amount of research in the repositories containing the resources of the future PRO. The result was an analytical narrative founded as much upon unprinted as printed sources, making full use of the records of the chancery – he appears to have read all the close and patent rolls – and of at least some of those of the exchequer, especially the issue rolls, as well. Pauli's *Geschichte* was, in fact, solidly based on a whole range of narrative and record sources in a way which very few contemporary histories of medieval England could rival.

²² Galbraith, 'T. F. Tout', rev. by Slee, *ODNB* <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref.odnb/36539>> [accessed 22nd Dec. 2018].

Tout, based first in Lampeter and then in Manchester, can have had little opportunity at this stage in his career to attempt similar work, but he took full advantage of Pauli's researches and then, as soon as the PRO calendars began to appear, he made the most of those as well. He was certainly quick to appreciate their significance, in an *English Historical Review* review of their first volumes in 1893 acclaiming them as 'the most important new departure during this generation in the policy of the custodians of the national records of England'.²³ A further review, published in the following year, enabled him to demonstrate their value for projects like the *DNB* when he illustrated 'the way in which these calendars help the historian in the attainment of minute accuracy' by specific reference to errors in his own article on the Welsh rebel Llywelyn Bren.²⁴ He also pleaded for more, expressing the hope in an 1894 *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* article that the inquisitions *post mortem* would be calendared with what he called 'the same scholarship and skill' (the first volume appeared in 1904).²⁵

The slips to which he admitted in his review were minor ones, but Tout valued the 'minute accuracy' to which he referred and did his utmost to achieve it, with a considerable degree of success. When in 1904 the publishers of the *DNB* issued a volume of *Errata*, it contained corrections to only seventeen of his 237 articles and to none on significant points – several amendments involved what were plainly misprints. Consequently, one may well wonder why, in the light of his vast learning, his linguistic facility, his alertness to historiographical developments, his robust style – he may not have written like Maitland, but then nobody but Maitland did – any of his articles needed revising, let alone replacing. Yet although thirty have survived in part, 207 have disappeared altogether. Two basic reasons may be offered, one factual, the other conceptual. The first is straightforward. A century's additional scholarship, with the completion of the PRO's programme of calendaring, the publications of county record societies, of the Canterbury and York Society and of the English Episcopal Acta series, the emergence of countless academic journals, the publication as scholarly monographs of innumerable doctoral dissertations (a phenomenon unknown when Tout started work; indeed, he probably did more than anyone else to promote it), not to mention that of large numbers of scholarly text books and works

²³ T. F. Tout, review of *Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1327–1330* and *Calendar of Close Rolls, 1307–1313*, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, viii (1893), 135–40.

²⁴ T. F. Tout, review of *Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1281–1292* and *Calendar of Close Rolls, 1313–1318*, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, ix (1894), 359–61.

²⁵ T. F. Tout, 'The earldoms under Edward I', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, n.s., viii (1894), 129–55, at p. 142, n. 1.

of historical studies – all this has cumulatively transformed our knowledge of medieval people and the societies in which they moved. Historians today simply know a great deal that he did not.²⁶

But no less important is the fact that they also see both what he knew and what they know in a light which he would have found unfamiliar. In his British Academy memoir of Tout, Powicke wrote that ‘Tout always regarded Stubbs as his master’ and the truth of this is reflected in many of the pupil’s *DNB* articles.²⁷ It can be seen not only in his numerous citations of the master’s writings, of the *Constitutional History* and of the lavish introductions which Stubbs provided for his Rolls Series editions, but also in the phraseology with which Tout described his subjects’ actions. It is hardly possible today to read of how Robert de Bellême ‘attempted to raise the feudal party against Henry I’, or how William de Forz, count of Aumâle, was early in Henry III’s reign ‘the most conspicuous representative of the feudal reaction towards the ancient ideal of local independence for each individual baron’, without sensing that behind Tout’s narratives lay Stubbsian notions of feudalism as an institution inevitably violent, factious and self-interested, which it was the duty of an inherently beneficent monarchy to control and repress. A reference to Robert FitzWalter as ‘the first champion of English liberty’, by contrast, drew on the same authority to display a baron tamed by concepts of national interest and public responsibility. Tout’s use of the word ‘party’, for instance in his article on Henry of Almain, who in 1258 ‘began to incline towards the popular party’, and his references to a ‘middle party’ which was active in the reign of Edward II, likewise had parallels in the writings of Stubbs and followed the latter in describing the politics of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in terms more appropriate to the nineteenth. So, too, did his employment of the adjective ‘constitutional’, as when Edward II’s minister Walter Langton was described as ‘unfriendly to the constitutional opposition’, or when Henry IV in 1399 ‘established constitutional monarchy and restored ecclesiastical orthodoxy’, while ‘[h]is frank acceptance of his position as a constitutional king diminished his troubles at home’. Whether Tout understood such words in precisely the same sense as do today’s historians is irrelevant in the present context. What matters is that for twenty-first-century readers, such words and phrases combine imprecision with anachronism in ways which risk introducing confusion and obfuscation into his articles.

²⁶ Cf. Sir K. Thomas, *Changing Conceptions of National Biography: the Oxford DNB in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge, 2005): ‘These new lives embody the enormous volume of research and reinterpretation which has accumulated over the past hundred years’ (p. 52).

²⁷ F. M. Powicke, ‘Thomas Frederick Tout, 1855–1929’, *Proc. Brit. Academy*, xv (1929), 491–518, at p. 492.

Stubbs was a dominant figure among medieval historians in the years when the *DNB* was in course of production. It would be as perverse to blame Tout for having revered him as it would be to criticize him for not having the complete calendars of close and patent rolls at his disposal. Nevertheless, when changes in knowledge and outlook have combined to call into question the value of much of Tout's work for the *DNB*, it becomes reasonable to ask why historians should still pay any attention to it. The high quality of its scholarship apart, two considerations suggest themselves. One is biographical, the fact that his articles cumulatively tell us much about the remarkable man responsible for them. His involvement with the *DNB* illustrates his dependability, as already observed, and also something of his sense of obligation. At the end of 1893 Lee wrote to Tout asking for information about Thomas Phillips, who had made a fortune in India and spent much of it on educational projects in Wales, not least as a major benefactor to St. David's College, Lampeter.²⁸ Lee seems to have intended to write the *DNB* article himself, but Tout must have offered to take it over, presumably moved by both institutional piety and personal gratitude to the benefactor whose generosity had helped to make his first academic post possible. He concluded his article by applauding its subject's devotion to the cause of education in Wales and recording that there was a bust of Phillips in the college library.

Tout's *DNB* articles may also tell us something about his religious outlook. All the signs are that he was a loyal member of the Church of England. His articles point towards what may be loosely called a broad-church outlook, without denominational *parti-pris*.²⁹ Just as there is a clear note of outrage in his early entry on the evangelical Thomas Bilney, burnt as a heretic in 1531, with the man being described as 'gentle and harmless' and his execution denounced as 'peculiarly disgraceful to the government', so there is a distinct sympathy in his articles on some of the great Welsh Methodist preachers of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, men like John Elias, whose article he illustrated with a series of splendid contemporary quotations: "As a preacher", cried his enthusiastic medical attendant, "there has not been his equal since the apostle to the Gentiles" – to which the professor added the more restrained comment that '[h]e was certainly the greatest orator among the remarkable series of the preachers of early Welsh methodism'. One may guess that Tout, described by Galbraith in his *DNB* memoir as 'a fine lecturer' who 'carried his subject in his head,

²⁸ JRL, Tout Papers, TFT/1/672/74, letter from S. Lee to Tout, 29 Dec. 1893.

²⁹ See M. Tout, 'T. F. Tout as a citizen', in *The Collected Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout* (3 vols., Manchester, 1932–4), i. 27–38, at pp. 33, 37–8.

speaking always without notes, or even immediate preparation', had a taste for rhetoric and appreciated a good sermon.

Tout also appreciated a good building. In several of his articles on archbishops and bishops he noted the improvements which his subjects made to their cathedrals in terms which show that he had studied them for himself – his entries on Peter Quinil at Exeter and Henry Gower at St. David's provide good examples – but as one might expect, his terms of reference were unusually broad and extended to continental as well as English architecture. At the end of his entry on Michael de la Pole, first earl of Suffolk, he recorded that the earl had built three houses in Hull, 'each with a brick tower like the palace of an Italian noble'. The phrase reminds us that Tout was a keen traveller, who in March 1895 told Lee that he was about to leave for a month's holiday in Florence.³⁰ The article on Pole would have appeared in April 1896, so it is just possible that his sight-seeing in Tuscany informed the *DNB* comment. In any case it shows that the mind which Tout brought to his contributions was stocked with much more than names and dates.

The other principal reason why Tout's contributions to the first edition of the *DNB* are still worth consulting is essentially historiographical. In the context of a volume devoted to his involvement in 'the refashioning of history in the twentieth century', it would be misguided pedantry to object that since the *Dictionary* was completed in 1900, the last year of the nineteenth century, neither it, nor those concerned with it, were in a position to become involved in any such 'refashioning'. It could in any case be said on Tout's behalf that he did not lose interest in, or cease to be involved with, the *DNB* after its completion in 1900. He contributed articles on the historians Mary Bateson and William Stubbs to its 1912 supplement, devoted to people who died between 1901 and 1911; took part in discussions of the future of the *Dictionary* after it came into the hands of Oxford University Press in 1917;³¹ and in his later writings sometimes commented on individual articles with a view to their improvement in the light of subsequent research.³² But there are stronger arguments to be made for the *DNB*'s lasting importance and for the contributions to it of scholars like Tout, arguments which extend well beyond its long life as a major source of reference for anybody interested in the British past.

³⁰ Bod. Libr., MS. Eng. misc. d. 181, fos. 28–9v.

³¹ H. C. G. Matthew, *Leslie Stephen and the New Dictionary of National Biography* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 9.

³² E.g. T. F. Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Medieval England: the Wardrobe, the Chamber and the Small Seals* (6 vols., Manchester, 1920–33), i. 64; ii. 18 and notes, 181 and n. 1.

The Dictionary of National Biography helped to 'refashion' history not only by virtue of its contents but also because it made a significant contribution to the process whereby the study and writing of history became more professional, even more scientific, than they had been earlier in the nineteenth century. For all those involved in its production, it was an innovatory collaborative enterprise which trained those who wrote for it in the attainment of shared standards of both accessibility and scholarly rigour. This was understood even before it was complete. A review of its first twenty-two volumes published in the *English Historical Review* in 1890, unsigned but probably the work of the editor, Mandell Creighton (who himself wrote fifty-nine articles for the *DNB*), observed that it had 'provided a training school and has rapidly developed the powers of its contributors. A considerable number of writers have been directed towards systematic research, and the example of some has raised the example of all'.³³ And in 1897, when speaking at the dinner given by the publisher George Smith to mark the appearance of volume 50 of the *DNB*, Creighton (now bishop of London) made the same point again, when – as A. F. Pollard recorded in a letter home – he 'said something about the Dictionary training a school of historians who would subsequently go back to teach it to the universities'.³⁴

For Pollard, the experience of working on the *DNB* helped to inspire his foundation of the Institute of Historical Research in 1921;³⁵ and Tout was certainly no less appreciative of the long-term importance of the *Dictionary*. On 23 May 1906 F. W. Maitland wrote to him asking for a contribution to a volume he was preparing to commemorate the recently deceased Leslie Stephen, with specific reference to the *DNB*.³⁶ Tout replied positively, speedily and enthusiastically, recording how:

Like many Oxford men of my generation, I approached historical investigation without the least training or guidance in historical method, and felt very much at a loss how to set to work. The careful and stringent regulations which he [Stephen] drew up, and the brusque but kindly way in which he enforced obedience to them, constituted for many of us our first training in anything like original investigation.

He went on to emphasize the value of the editor's insistence on the cardinal virtues of 'brevity, scholarship, punctuality and business-like precision'.³⁷

³³ Anon. review of *DNB*, i–xxii (1885–90), *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, v (1890), 783–8, at p. 787.

³⁴ SHL, Pollard Papers, MS. 860/2/4, letter of 13 July 1897.

³⁵ N. Harte and J. North, *The World of University College London, 1828–1978* (London, 1978), p. 152. I owe this reference to M. Curthoys.

³⁶ *The Letters of Frederic William Maitland*, ii, ed. P. N. R. Zutshi (London, 1995), no. 340 (pp. 260–1). No. 343 (p. 262) shows that Tout replied on 3 June.

³⁷ F. W. Maitland, *The Life and Letters of Leslie Stephen* (London, 1906), p. 370.

Thomas Frederick Tout (1855–1929): refashioning history for the twentieth century

Arguably the most distinguished of its principal medieval contributors, Tout gave a great deal to the *DNB*, in terms of both time and scholarship. But he also learnt a great deal from it; and what he learnt he passed on, above all through his promotion of original research and of training in historical techniques, in ways from which generations of later historians have benefited.³⁸ ‘Unus solus totus’ indeed.

³⁸ A point made by A. G. Little, ‘Professor Tout’, *History*, xiv (1929–30), 313–24, at p. 316.

16. Tout's work as a reviewer*

John D. Milner† and Dorothy J. Clayton

In 1890, when T. F. Tout, aged only thirty-five, moved from his chair at Lampeter to take up the post in Manchester, he had already made a name for himself by the quality of his writing and the confidence with which he wrote. It has been suggested that his time at Lampeter gave him the opportunity to develop those teaching skills which were so important at Manchester.¹ James Tait noted that Lampeter also, perhaps surprisingly, 'called forth all the self-confidence and masterfulness which had found little vent at Oxford'.² Tout's confidence was revealed, especially in his many contributions to the *English Historical Review* in which, from the outset, he was prepared to challenge the mighty.

In the *Review's* first edition in 1886 Tout tackled a chapter on Britain in Theodor Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte*.³ Adopting a technique which he was to refine over his career, Tout demonstrated his own mastery of the material, a generosity in reflecting on the strengths of the work under review, accompanied by a truly devastating critique of its weaknesses, reinforced by reference to a range of points of detail. At the beginning he sets the tone for

* Thanks are due to the council of the Record Society Lancs. & Ches. for permission to reproduce extracts from 'Personal influence and impact: aspects of the career of Thomas Frederick Tout (1855–1929)'. That article will appear in a memorial volume for the late Dr. Peter McNiven, to be published by the Society in 2020. Sadly, John Milner died before completing this article. Additions have been made and the footnotes completed and expanded upon as necessary. T. F. Tout's Papers are held in the John Rylands Library, Manchester, and I should like to thank Dr. John Hodgson and the Reading Room staff for their help in facilitating access to this extensive and fascinating collection.

¹ M. Bentley, 'The age of Prothero: British historiography in the long *fin de siècle*, 1870–1920', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 6th ser., xx (2010), 171–93, at p. 185.

² J. Tait, 'Thomas Frederick Tout', *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xlv (1930), 78–85, at p. 78.

³ *Römische Geschichte*. Von Theodor Mommsen. Fünfter Band: Die Provinzen von Caesar bis Diocletian (Berlin: Weidmann, 1885), review in *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, i (1886), pp. 350–61 (chapters 1–4, 6–13 by W. T. Arnold), and pp. 361–4 (chapter 5 by T. F. Tout). The first 3 volumes of *Römische Geschichte* had been published in Leipzig in 1854, 1855 and 1856; and the fourth volume, which Mommsen intended to appear after the fifth volume, was delayed and eventually abandoned.

what can only be described as a blistering review: ‘Students of early British antiquities have great reason to regret that the chapter on Britain in the new volume of Dr. Mommsen’s “Roman History” is so decidedly below the level of that great historian’s usual work’. But then Tout turns to the positives, demonstrating how Mommsen’s account of ‘the strictly military history, and especially the stations and movements of the legions, are sketched with a care that adds something in criticism and exposition even to the elaborate treatise of Hübner’. Examples are given: Mommsen displayed his ‘brilliant historical imagination’ with a ‘brilliant conjecture’ about the ‘sudden end’ of the ninth legion. Tout then returns to further detailed criticisms: ‘The internal history of the province is inadequately dealt with’; and ‘it is much to be regretted that Dr. Mommsen did not take the trouble to acquaint himself with the main results of recent ethnological and philological speculations on early Britain’. Tout writes as an equal, showing only slight deference towards the much older Mommsen. He concludes his review with these carefully crafted sentences: ‘But it is an ungracious task to continue to harp on the small mistakes of so great a writer. After all deductions he has given us a most useful summary. But our knowledge that Mommsen might have given us so much more makes dissatisfaction very natural’.

Until the latter part of his career, Tout wrote few books apart from textbooks. Although his *Edward I* (1893) was well regarded, being described as ‘a good short account’ in Gross’s magisterial bibliography,⁴ it was through his numerous entries in the *Dictionary of National Biography* (*DNB*) and his work as an energetic reviewer that Tout established himself as a historian of breadth and depth, with an acute attention to detail. In reviewing Henri Pirenne’s *Histoire de la constitution de la ville de Dinant au moyen age* (1889), for example, he pointed out that Pirenne ‘inaccurately compares the contest of the patrician burgesses with the commons of the town to the modern conflicts of capital and labour’; while noting also that ‘there are more printer’s errors than are desirable, including a bad transposition of a whole line on p. 13, where line 1 should follow line 12’.⁵

Tout’s 1895 review of the *Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1330–1334* is significant in terms of his reputation as a reviewer.⁶ He points to there being ‘much confusion owing to Welsh places being described as belonging to counties like Monmouthshire which did not then exist’; while others, like Abergwili,

⁴ C. Gross, *The Sources and Literature of English History from the Earliest Times to about 1485* (London, 1900), no. 2845 (p. 485). *Edward I* was reprinted 7 times between 1896 and 1920.

⁵ T. F. Tout, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, v (1890), 773–82, at p. 782.

⁶ T. F. Tout, review of *Calendar of the Patent Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office. Edward III, 1330–1334* (1893), *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, x (1895), 150–1.

were assigned to counties 'which then existed but of which the places in question did not in the fourteenth century form a part'. However, for Tout, 'the worst cases of carelessness in identifying place names with their modern equivalents' occurred with those in the 'English king's dominions in France'. In relation to the indexing of the volume, some of the errors 'are truly portentous'. While not wishing 'to magnify their importance or to depreciate the vast mass of solid work efficiently done', the mistakes 'are the more irritating since they could have been easily removed, had the common precaution been taken of submitting the proofs of the index to some person competently acquainted with the local geography of Wales and Gascony' and with 'the ancient terms of the place names of these regions'.⁷ Here was the Manchester professor judging a volume in a major series of calendars of state papers, with a scarcely veiled reference to his own superior qualification for the task of ensuring their accuracy. He reviewed successive volumes in the series and was able to report 'distinct progress in the right direction' in 1897 with the *Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1334–1338*: 'Mr. Isaacson seems to have made none of those serious blunders that we have been obliged to point out in some of the previous volumes'.⁸ Tout did not, however, shy away from listing examples of defects in the index and criticizing a lack of signposting in the volume which made it difficult for the reader to locate some of the key documents calendared.

Tout was increasingly noticed. His essay on Owain Glyn Dŵr in the 1890 edition of the *DNB* was, over a century later, considered 'the first truly scholarly account of [Owain] and his revolt'.⁹ Tout was elected a fellow of the Royal Historical Society in October 1891.¹⁰ Although he was regarded within the Manchester history department as like 'a kettle bubbling over a brisk fire',¹¹ the quantity of what he produced, but more especially its quality and diversity, brought him increasing acknowledgement. Despite an apparent 'loathing' for the *Manchester Guardian*,¹² he did not hesitate to respond to the urgent request from its editor, C. P. Scott, for an obituary of Edward Freeman, who had died unexpectedly of smallpox in Alicante on 16 March 1892.¹³ His thoughtful and comprehensive reflection on Freeman

⁷ Tout, review in *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, x (1895), 150–1.

⁸ T. F. Tout, review of *Calendar of the Patent Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office. Edward III, 1334–1338* (1895), *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xii (1897), 159–60, at p. 159.

⁹ R. R. Davies, *The Revolt of Owain Glyn Dŵr* (Oxford, 1995), p. 331.

¹⁰ Royal Historical Society Archives, Certificate of Election, 31 Oct. 1891.

¹¹ F. M. Powicke, 'Thomas Frederick Tout', *Proc. Brit. Academy*, xv (1929), 491–518, at p. 499.

¹² V. H. Galbraith, 'Afterthoughts', in *The Historian's Workshop: Original Essays by Sixteen Historians*, ed. J. L. Curtis (New York, 1970), pp. 5–21, at p. 16.

¹³ John Rylands Library, Manchester, Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout, TFT/1/1080/1, 2, letters from Scott to Tout, 17 March 1892.

appeared in the newspaper on 18 March.¹⁴ Scott was impressed: ‘Nothing else nearly so full & good has appeared elsewhere’.¹⁵ Other obituaries and a large number of book reviews for the *Manchester Guardian* were to follow; and a close friendship developed between Tout and Scott.¹⁶ After her husband’s death Mary Tout wrote: ‘Though he [Tout] differed in political standpoint, he held the paper, and his friend, its great editor, Mr. C. P. Scott, in warm affection’.¹⁷

Working ‘with boundless energy’ and ‘a kind of deliberate fury’,¹⁸ Tout’s output was immense. In 1891, for example, his first full year at Manchester, he wrote fourteen biographies for the *DNB*, a textbook for Macmillan (subsequently reprinted five times) and two reviews – one for the *English Historical Review* and one for the *Manchester Guardian*.¹⁹ As he gained confidence, so he relaxed and his writing began to be infused on occasions with that wry humour and underlying humanity which were to stay with him to the last. In 1898, reviewing the archivist and historian Hubert Hall’s edition of *The Red Book of the Exchequer*, he wrote: ‘We need not lay any great stress upon occasional slips like the “Eleven Virgins” of Cologne, robbing St. Ursula of so large a part of her following’.²⁰

This edition of the *Red Book*, published in three volumes in 1896, was, in fact, rooted in controversy, being first conceived in the 1880s with W. D. Selby as editor. Following its eventual publication under the editorship of Hubert Hall, it continued for a further two decades to be the subject of intense debate among historians. Tout found himself involved in a troublesome and increasingly vitriolic argument over the edition created by an impassioned attack on Hall by J. Horace Round, the historian and genealogist best known for his contributions to *The Complete Peerage*, the *Victoria County History* and the *DNB*; and for his monographs *Geoffrey de Mandeville* (1892) and *Feudal England* (1895).

The Red Book of the Exchequer is a manuscript dating from c.1230 based upon the researches of Alexander Swereford, an exchequer baron and treasurer of St. Paul’s. The first part of Tout’s review gave a general

¹⁴ *Manchester Guardian*, 18 March 1892, p. 5; repr. in *The Collected Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout* (3 vols., Manchester, 1932–4), i. 124–35.

¹⁵ JRL, TFT/1/1080/3, letter from Scott to Tout, 18 March 1892.

¹⁶ JRL, TFT/1/1080/6, letter from Scott to Tout [2 Oct. 1905], invitation to dinner.

¹⁷ M. Tout, ‘T. F. Tout as a citizen’, in Tout, *Collected Papers*, i. 27–38, at pp. 35–6.

¹⁸ Powicke, ‘Tout’, pp. 507, 513.

¹⁹ Mary Tout, ‘A list of the published writings of Thomas Frederick Tout’, in *Essays in Medieval History Presented to Thomas Frederick Tout*, ed. A. G. Little and F. M. Powicke (Manchester, 1925), pp. 379–87, at p. 383.

²⁰ T. F. Tout, review of *The Red Book of the Exchequer*, ed. H. Hall (3 vols., 1896), *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xiii (1898), 145–50, at p. 149.

overview of the manuscript and its content, followed by an account of Hall's methodology as editor. Tout's overall assessment was positive: 'It is impossible to speak too highly of the enormous pains taken by Mr. Hall in bringing before the public this great quantity of new material in a careful and scholarly form'.²¹ He went on to describe the difficulties Hall must have faced in 'compiling the elaborate index that falls but slightly short of three hundred pages' and 'the three long prefaces [which] make up in themselves nearly four hundred closely printed pages of original matter'. Tout carefully introduced the controversy between Hall and Round: 'In addition to the elaborate nature of the task, a strange series of fatalities has beset the Red Book during its progress towards publication'. These 'fatalities' were the death of Selby, the original editor, 'while ill health, *we are told*,²² has deprived it of the editorial services of Mr. J. H. Round, whose remarkable studies on Domesday and the origin of knight service have put the whole question of feudal origins on a new basis'.²³ There followed, in Tout's typical, forensic style, a detailed critique of the prefaces and index. With regard to one of the prefaces, Tout criticized Hall for devoting 'so many pages to the carrying on of an unimportant controversy, about which enough had already been said'.²⁴ Here Tout was referring to Round's 'attack' on Swereford – and on Hall as his defender – in the *English Historical Review* in 1891.²⁵ The argument between the two historians was subsequently played out in the pages of the *Quarterly Review* and the *Athenaeum*. With this background, Tout struggled to steer an impartial course in the 1898 review:

The natural enthusiasm of Mr. Hall for Swereford led him to resist with unnecessary heat Mr. Round's contention that the assignment to particular wars of certain scutages, collected in the early years of Henry II's reign, could not be borne out by the Pipe Rolls. Of course Mr. Round put his point with needless acerbity. It is his method to get angry even with a man who has been dead more than six hundred years [Swereford]; and all will agree in reproaching the language in which he has expressed his opinion of the work of a brother scholar with whom he has been personally associated in editing this very book [*Red Book*], and who, even at the threshold of this unlucky dispute, spoke of Mr. Round in very becoming terms of appreciation.²⁶

²¹ Tout, review of *Red Book*, p. 147.

²² Clayton's emphasis.

²³ Tout, review of *Red Book*, p. 147.

²⁴ Tout, review of *Red Book*, p. 149.

²⁵ J. H. Round, 'The introduction of knight service into England', *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, vi (1891), 625–45, at pp. 625–9.

²⁶ Tout, review of *Red Book*, p. 149.

Round seemed determined to involve Tout, sending him updates and copies of letters which he had sent to Hall. In May 1914 Round demonstrated the extent of his contempt for Hall, writing to Tout that ‘he [Hall] suffers from incurable inaccuracy, which prevents his seeing what is on the page before him, and also from an appalling confusion of thought, which makes him ... incapable of understanding even his own meaning’.²⁷ In another letter to Tout, Round appeared to suggest that on one rather obscure point (Sheriffs’ Inquest Returns, 1170), Hall had ‘now had to abandon his view, and admits that my view is right ... So, you see I am fully justified in taking the strong line that I have done about his wretched production’.²⁸ Interestingly, at the end of this letter Round described how he had not recovered from an operation the previous year: ‘I am living quite an invalid life with a trained nurse to look after me. The trouble is a nervous breakdown, and as soon as I attempt to do any real work, I suffer for it’.

Tout was not the only eminent historian caught up in this protracted dispute. According to Edmund King, the author of Round’s entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ‘Round’s friends urged Hall’s good name in mitigation ... and Lane Poole in exasperation closed the pages of the *English Historical Review* to the controversy’.²⁹ Hall’s *ODNB* entry, written by C. Johnson and revised by G. H. Martin, praises Hall for withstanding ‘Round’s vituperative and obsessive attacks ... with notable dignity’; and it further describes the episode as ‘plainly discreditable to Round’ and displaying ‘Hall’s extraordinary good nature and patience’.³⁰ It is perhaps worth noting that Tout himself managed to remain on cordial terms with both men throughout.

Tout’s personal reputation continued to grow in the first decade of the 1900s: his considerable output was reviewed favourably by the giants of the period; and he himself produced some of his most penetrating reviews of contemporary European scholarship. His substantial 500-page text, *The History of England from the Accession of Henry III to the Death of Edward III, 1216–1377*, published in 1905,³¹ was among the books taken by F. W. Maitland on his visit to Gran Canaria during the winter of 1905–6.

²⁷ JRL, TFT/1/1040/13, letter from Round to Tout, 16 May 1914.

²⁸ JRL, TFT/1/1040/18, letter from Round to Tout, 7 Nov. 1916.

²⁹ E. King, ‘Round, John Horace (1854–1928)’, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/35847>> [accessed 14 Oct. 2018].

³⁰ C. Johnson, ‘Hall, Hubert (1857–1944)’, rev. by G. H. Martin, in *ODNB* <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/33654>> [accessed 14 Oct. 2018].

³¹ T. F. Tout, *The History of England from the Accession of Henry III to the Death of Edward III, 1216–1377* (*The Political History of England in Twelve Volumes*, ed. W. Hunt and R. L. Poole, iii, London, 1905).

On 23 May 1906, when Maitland was back in Cambridge, he wrote to Tout: 'I want to congratulate you on your "1216–1377". I read it in my exile among the bananas with great joy. It does seem to me quite first-rate and the appendix on authorities is the best thing of its kind that I have read for many a day'.³² Despite, or perhaps because of, their incisive and comprehensive quality, Tout's reviews were solicited. In November 1907 the German publisher Dr. Walther Rothschild sent Tout 'a copy of the "justly" appeared [*sic*] work of Professor Heinrich Finke in Freiburg, *Acta Aragonensia*', in the hope that he would give 'a full review of this proeminent work' in the *English Historical Review*.³³ This Tout duly did in 1909. His comments suggest the importance he attached to bringing alive the periods and people studied. 'In these pages', he wrote, 'the shadowy kings, priests and nobles of the middle ages cease to be mere abstractions, and show that they are as much alive and as different from each other as were the heroes of the Italian Renaissance'.³⁴ As so often with Tout's reviews, while the work in question is appraised with care and thoroughness, he does not lose the opportunity to demonstrate his own minute knowledge. Although Finke's summaries 'seem very careful and precise', Tout observes that 'on p. 879 a phrase of Raymond Lull, in which he recommends the study of his book on proverbs, is misinterpreted'.³⁵ However, the thing which strikes the twenty-first-century reader about this review is not primarily the minutia of the analysis, but the enormity of the task which Tout set himself and of which he made light. He was required to wade through more than one thousand pages of text in an assortment of languages and dialects – primarily Latin, German, Italian, French, Spanish and Catalan. Yet, Tout wrote generously of the editor's approach:

Dr. Finke has done nearly all that is in his power to make things comfortable for his readers. To each letter he has prefixed a summary [in German], printed in bold clarendon type that catches the eye, and this attention is the more welcome since so large a proportion of the documents are in Catalan. They do

³² *The Letters of Frederic William Maitland*, ii, ed. P. N. R. Zutshi, (Selden Soc., supp. ser., xi, 1995), no. 340, pp. 260–1, at p. 260.

³³ See JRL, TFT/1/1038/1, letter from Rothschild to Tout, 11 Nov. 1907. The letter is typed in a dark blue font on the publisher's headed notepaper, and signed in black ink by 'Dr Walther Rothschild'. In the same hand, the word 'justly' has been inserted into the text, indicating that this was an advanced copy of the book that was to be published in early 1908.

³⁴ *Acta Aragonensia: Quellen aus der diplomatischen Korrespondenz Jaymes II. (1291–1327)*. Herausgegeben von Dr. Heinrich Finke. II Bände (Berlin: Rothschild, 1908). Review by T. F. Tout in *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xxiv (1909), 141–5, at p. 143.

³⁵ *Acta Aragonensia*, p. 145.

not however often present any great difficulties to those who have a bowing acquaintance with Provençal.³⁶

Tout carried this increasingly natural authority into other writing, including obituaries. He wrote an extraordinarily candid and, at times, controversial obituary of Mary Bateson, the forty-one-year-old Cambridge-educated medievalist who died in 1906:

She enjoyed such a magnificent physique and such splendid health that it is hard to realise that she has been taken from us. But, short as her career was, she had accomplished more for her science than many famous professors of history, about whom big volumes have been written, and more than many of us can hope to do in the course of a long life.³⁷

However, this is no mere sycophantic review of the achievements of a young female scholar. Tout used the opportunity of Bateson's obituary to make a barbed attack on the way women were treated at Cambridge. Bateson was the daughter of the late master of St. John's College and she had attended the Perse School for Girls, where, according to the school's records, 'her command of German was substantial enough that she was engaged as the German teacher ... at the same time she was a student there'.³⁸ She went on to Newnham College, where she took a first in the history tripos of 1897. Subsequently, she became a lecturer and ultimately a fellow of Newnham. But, as Tout so graphically put it: 'She thus spent the whole of her life under the shadow of the University with which she was in so many ways associated, but in which her sex debarred her from the humblest privileges of membership'.³⁹ Just before her death, Bateson agreed to become one of the editors of the *Cambridge Medieval History*. Some of her friends, including Tout, it seems, had 'mixed feelings' about the appointment. Tout wrote that 'there was no doubt about her supreme fitness for the task, but [her friends] valued the appointment chiefly as the best recognition that Cambridge, as

³⁶ *Acta Aragonensia*, pp. 144–5.

³⁷ Tout's obituary of Mary Bateson appeared in *Manchester Guardian*, 3 Dec. 1906, p. 6. In 1912 he wrote a *DNB* entry for Bateson, which lacks the immediacy of the obituary. See archived *DNB* entry in *ODNB* <<https://doi.org/10.1093/odnb/9780192683120.013.30640>> [accessed 24 Feb. 2019]. See also M. Dockray-Miller, 'Mary Bateson (1865–1906): scholar and suffragist', in *Women Medievalists and the Academy*, ed. J. Chance (Madison, Wis., 2005), ch. 6, pp. 67–78.

³⁸ Dockray-Miller, 'Mary Bateson', p. 67, n. 3.

³⁹ Dockray-Miller wrote: 'From 1871 to 1921 women at Newnham and Girton were issued "certificates" stating they had passed the tripos rather than official degrees ... Newnham and Girton were not officially recognized as full member colleges of Cambridge University until 1948' (Dockray-Miller, 'Mary Bateson', p. 69).

at present circumstanced, could give to the private scholar who had brought so much reputation to the University of which she was not a member'. Equally controversially, Tout took the opportunity of explaining how Mary Bateson 'lamented the cast-iron routine that bound down teachers to tend the examination Moloch'. It is clear that Tout and Bateson were close academic allies. Tout referred to Bateson visiting Manchester 'several times' in the last two years of her life: she lectured to the university historical society and a year later, in 1905, the university invited her to deliver two Warburton lectures on medieval borough law. Again Tout is keen to emphasize that they championed a common cause: 'She [Bateson] was much interested in the constitution of the Manchester University courses in History after the dissolution of the federal University, and very sympathetic with our efforts to break through the tyranny of examinations and make our higher history teaching prepare the way for the technical education of the historian'. This was a passionate theme to which Tout returned time and again.⁴⁰ One feels that it was with great personal conviction that Tout wrote: 'In her [Mary Bateson] the University of Manchester and its teachers of history have lost a true friend'.

There are occasional instances of Tout reacting strongly to critical reviews of his own work. He seems to have been provoked by the review in *History* in April 1920 of his new edition of a textbook, *Advanced History of Great Britain to 1918*.⁴¹ The review, written by Miss Noakes, a member of the editorial board and second mistress at Godolphin School, Salisbury, was unflattering. She wrote: 'A good test as to whether a history text-book is acceptable is to note whether it is carried home when school days are over or returned to the book-room to be sold second-hand ... It is regrettable when such admirable books as Professor Tout's ... have to be reckoned among the failures in this respect'.⁴² Although her main complaint was about some aspects of the presentation, for example 'vexatious "aids" in heavy type and numbered paragraphs', she also criticized the 'unwieldly size of the volume'. Miss Eliza Jeffries Davis, the honorary secretary of the Historical

⁴⁰ J. A. Petch, *Fifty Years of Examining: the Joint Matriculation Board, 1903–1953* (London, 1953), p. 30, n. 26. Petch wrote rather bitterly that 'Tout had little belief in examinations', having described them as "'a very subsidiary function" of a university' (T. F. Tout, 'The future of the Victoria University', in *Collected Papers*, i. 45–52, at p. 49). John Milner was amused to find something interesting on Tout in this book. Petch worked at the Joint Matriculation Board (JMB) for 40 years (1927–67). The JMB was a precursor of the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA), where John ended his career as principal director. Unlike John, Petch was not an admirer of Tout (*Fifty Years*, pp. 17, 45).

⁴¹ J. Noakes, review of *Advanced History of Great Britain to 1918*. (Longman's Historical Series for Schools). New edition by T. F. Tout, *History*, v (1920), 55–7, at p. 56.

⁴² Noakes, review of *Advanced History of Great Britain*, p. 56.

Association, was charged with the difficult task of making things right with Tout. Her clumsily-worded letter displayed her obvious embarrassment: '[Miss Noakes's] real fault (and ours) was that there was nothing to be said about the matter of any work of yours as everyone would know that that must be beyond question superior to ordinary textbooks – & she only, therefore, noted the disadvantage it laboured under in consequence of the publisher's repellent ideas of what a schoolbook should look like'.⁴³ Tout was asked what redress he deemed appropriate. The outcome was an acknowledgement in the next edition of *History* to the effect that the reviewer had failed to note that the three parts to Tout's volume could be purchased separately, 'in the more convenient form she [the reviewer, Miss Noakes] advocated'.⁴⁴ It would seem that Tout was not to be challenged lightly.

Tout could, however, welcome criticism, especially if he admired the source. For example, writing to Maitland on 1 November 1906 after the latter's review of Tout and Hilda Johnstone's *State Trials of the Reign of Edward I*, in which Maitland had praised the work but detailed seventeen corrections, Tout thanked him 'for all the kind things you were good enough to say about our State Trials in the English Historical Review ... It is just like you to take so much trouble in helping to get us straight'.⁴⁵ That Tout could balance criticism with support was well demonstrated in a request from Bertie Wilkinson of December 1928 for Tout to read some of his work. Tait had offered, but 'kind as he is – if you don't mind my saying this – I'd prefer to be chastised by you than by anybody else, if you have the time to spare'.⁴⁶ Tout was also capable of self-deprecating humour. Speaking of Trevet's 'cut and dried annals', Tout – himself the prolific writer of textbooks – commented that, 'like the better sort of modern text-books, [the annals] serve their purpose in an uninspired sort of way'.⁴⁷

Tout died on 23 October 1929 after a short illness. Virtually to the end he worked with his accustomed energy and efficiency. In February he delivered the presidential address to the Royal Historical Society and in March he gave a lecture at the Royal Institution. His published output in 1929 remained prodigious: he wrote three substantial journal articles; a

⁴³ JRL, TFT/1/257/1, letter from Davis to Tout, 24 Apr. 1920.

⁴⁴ 'Correction in the April number', *History*, v (1920), 128.

⁴⁵ F. W. Maitland, review of *State Trials of the Reign of Edward I, 1289–1293*. Edited for the Royal Historical Society by T. F. Tout and H. Johnstone (1906), *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xxi (1906), 783–6; and Zutschi, *Letters*, no. 340 n. 3 (p. 260); no 354 n. 2 (p. 269).

⁴⁶ JRL, TFT/1/1286/13, letter from Wilkinson to Tout, [Dec.] 1928.

⁴⁷ T. F. Tout, 'The study of medieval chronicles', in *Collected Papers*, iii. 1–25, at p. 15. His reference was to N. Trevet, *Annales sex regnum Angliae 1136–1307*, ed. T. Hog (London, 1845).

memoir of J. H. Wylie; and twenty reviews – the final two pieces appearing in the *Manchester Guardian* on 26 September, less than a month before his death.⁴⁸ Here we have classic Tout reviews – clear, detailed and incisive, with the occasional wry aside. Samuel Angus's *Religious Quests of the Graeco-Roman World* is 'a learned and carefully documented study of the "historical background of early Christianity"'. Some criticisms are made, including examples of arguments which are difficult to follow. Tout suggests that he may have encountered these problems because he is 'a mere historian' and the book is 'so heavily theological'. The review ends in a characteristically Tout fashion: 'These things, however, are trifles ... we must not be too critical over a remarkable piece of work'.

⁴⁸ Reviews of S. Angus, *Religious Quests of the Graeco-Roman World* (New York, 1929); and C. Petit-Dutaillis and G. Lefebvre, *Studies and Notes Supplementary to Stubbs' Constitutional History*, iii (Manchester, 1929), in *Manchester Guardian*, 26 Sept. 1929, p. 7.

17. T. F. Tout and literature

D. Vance Smith

T. F. Tout has been overshadowed by his contemporary F. W. Maitland to no small degree because of continuing reverence for Maitland's 'literary genius',¹ against which Tout's self-confessed 'patient and plodding working out of apparently unimportant detail' has had no hope.² Almost from the moment of his death, any appraisal of Maitland's work has rested on his famous style: it has been compared to music, described as 'compelling', 'seductive' and 'magic'.³ Maitland even played a part in the shaping of modernist literary culture: he wrote the first major biography of his friend Leslie Stephen, father of Virginia Woolf, for which Thomas Hardy gave him an unpublished poem. Yet Maitland had almost nothing to say about literature in the middle ages. It is T. F. Tout who wrote most extensively and richly about literature.

It is a paradox that the historian best known for the monumental study of government institutions extracted from records was possibly, out of the major historians of his era (except, perhaps, for Eileen Power), the most interested in the literature of the period. Tout's volume for *The Political History of England*, for example, seems conspicuously and idiosyncratically literary when read against other volumes in the series.⁴ The volume that followed Tout's, on the years from 1377 to 1485, was written by Charles Oman, who finished his degree in modern history at Oxford five years after Tout did.⁵ It covered the years during which English literature arguably

¹ W. S. Holdsworth, 'Maitland reissued', *Yale Law Jour.*, xlvi (1937), 801–10, at p. 801.

² T. F. Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Mediaeval England: the Wardrobe, the Chamber and the Small Seals* (6 vols., Manchester, 1920–33) i. 27.

³ P. Vinogradoff, 'Maitland', *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xxii (1907), 280–9, at p. 287; *The Letters of Frederic William Maitland*, ed. P. N. R. Zutshi (2 vols., London, 1995), ii. 20. *Frederic William Maitland: Two Lectures and a Bibliography*, ed. A. L. Smith (Oxford, 1908), p. 9.

⁴ T. F. Tout, *The History of England, from the Accession of Henry III to the Death of Edward III (1216–1377)* (*The Political History of England in Twelve Volumes*, ed. W. Hunt and R. Poole, iii, London, 1905).

⁵ C. Oman, *The History of England from the Accession of Richard II to the Death of Richard III (1377–1485)* (Hunt and Poole, *The Political History of England*, iv, London, 1906).

became a national literature, the years during which Geoffrey Chaucer, William Langland, John Gower, the Pearl Poet, John Lydgate and Thomas Hoccleve wrote. But it said virtually nothing about them, nor, indeed, about literature at all. Of these foundational poets, Oman mentioned only Langland and Chaucer, simply to name them as satirists in the vein of John Wycliffe. He mentioned Chaucer once more, but just as the father of Thomas Chaucer.⁶

In Tout's volume, on the other hand, literature was one of the most visible results of Edward III's reign. It is in Wycliffe and Chaucer, Tout said, that one finds the unifying theme of the years between Henry III and Edward III, the emergence of an 'intensely national state ... with its own language, literature, style in art, law [and] universities'.⁷ The book's final chapter begins with a short essay on the essential importance of literature as a witness to history, starting with Jean Froissart's *Chronicle* and finishing with a brief but sophisticated account of William Langland's knotted involvement in cultural, political, intellectual and linguistic developments. Tout did not just admit a place for the symbolic importance of literature, nor did he treat it as a deviant and suspect form of documentary witness. Tout treated the hyperbole and invention of literature as important evidence in its own right – evidence, to be sure, not of political or constitutional history as Stubbs would have taught it to him, but evidence of broader cultural and social developments. Froissart's *Chronicle*, for instance, surpassed all previous chronicles 'not in precision and sobriety, but in wealth of detail [and] in literary charm'.⁸ It is clear that Tout did not mean 'charm' condescendingly: what he admired about Froissart was his ability to capture something of the *Zeitgeist* of Edwardian chivalry, even if Froissart's *Chronicle* was entailed in the kind of empirical liberality that ought to be anathematic to good history. Froissart records 'with an eye-witness's precision of colour, though with utter indifference to exactness, the tournaments and fêtes, the banquets and the *largesses* of the noble lords and ladies of the most brilliant court in Christendom'.⁹ Passages like this belie the myth that Tout was indifferent to style in his own writing; they also suggest the degree to which he recognized that style is an inalienable element of history itself. Far from disparaging Froissart's 'liberality' with fact, Tout described him as someone 'competent, above all other men of his time, to set down in courtly and happy phrase

Oman retains a deep respect for Stubbs's work: 'Stubbs's *Constitutional History* is the most important' book 'not concerned directly with political history' (p. 512).

⁶ Oman, *History of England*, pp. 69, 210.

⁷ Tout, *History of England*, p. 427.

⁸ Tout, *History of England*, p. 419.

⁹ Tout, *History of England*, p. 419.

the wonders that delighted his eyes'.¹⁰

Tout wrote approvingly, as we shall see later, of the literary value of historical chronicles in their own right. But Froissart occupied a special place in Tout's narrative of Edward's reign not only because of his élan but also because he happened to leave England just as Geoffrey Chaucer emerged, as Tout said, to occupy his place. Indeed, Chaucer became 'the first great poet of the English literary revival'.¹¹ That revival was important for Tout not just because it was a literary one, but because it was alluring evidence of the profound political and cultural changes that had taken place in England during the years of Froissart and Chaucer. Froissart wrote about the Edwardian court in French, using the tropes of French literary romance and chronicle, as if it were essentially a French court. Indeed, French remained an inextricable element of English political and cultural life. John Gower, for instance, wrote in French during Richard II's reign. But, as Tout pointed out, Gower wrote in French *for* England ("O gentile Engleterre, a toi j'escrifs", he said in the *Cinkante Balades*).¹² What was truly distinctive about Edward's reign, Tout said, was that a 'new courtly literature in the English language' began to appear, initiated by the poems *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and *Pearl*.

Tout's recognition of a sophisticated English literature outside of the Chaucerian tradition was punctilious, but it slightly undercut his argument that Chaucerian English literature depended vitally upon the milieu of London. Both these poems were northern (from the north-west midlands); and in Tout's day no-one claimed any link between them and the royal court. Scholars also believed that the poems were written in the 1350s, making it easier for Tout to cite them as the beginning of an English courtly tradition.¹³ That Tout did not mention the two other poems by the same author (*Patience* and *Cleanness*) is revealing: they had not yet been edited and published. Although some literary histories mention them, Tout seems to have preferred evidence that he himself could see, apparently depending upon Israel Gollancz's editions of the two poems, just as he seems to have depended upon the newest scholarly editions of Gower, Langland and Chaucer. Tout's characterization of the two poems as 'anonymous' and earlier than Chaucer revealed his dependence upon Gollancz, who argued

¹⁰ Tout, *History of England*, p. 419.

¹¹ Tout, *History of England*, p. 421.

¹² Tout, *History of England*, p. 420, referring to *The Complete Works of John Gower, i: the French Works*, ed. G. C. Macaulay (Oxford, 1899), p. 378. *Balade* LI, line 25.

¹³ Today the poems are dated to the last years of Richard II's reign and some scholars have argued for a deep connection between the poems and the Ricardian court (J. Bowers, *The Politics of Pearl: Court Poetry in the Age of Richard II* (Cambridge, 2001)).

in his edition of *Pearl* and again in his chapter of *The Cambridge History of English Literature* (which appeared after Tout wrote his *Political History*) that the earlier identification of the poet as ‘Huchown’ was wrong and that the poems could not have been written later than 1360.¹⁴ It was hardly Tout’s responsibility to discover what one of the most influential literary scholars of the day did not, but more accurate information about the context of the poems would have supported his nuanced and complex account of Chaucer’s poetry. Many of the dedicated literary histories of his period framed Chaucer’s career as a contest between a dominant Norman and re-emergent Saxon ‘spirit’ or ‘blood’.¹⁵ Tout’s more level-headed, empirically based narrative gives us a richer account of the larger importance of Edwardian and Ricardian English literature: ‘In becoming national, English vernacular art did not become insular’.¹⁶

Chaucer was a significant index for Tout of the Edwardian political and cultural shift partly because of his cosmopolitanism: ‘[H]e had his eyes open to every movement of European culture’.¹⁷ What Tout described as Chaucer’s ‘higher and later style’ was profoundly influenced by Chaucer’s study of Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio. Yet Tout’s account of Chaucer took a surprising turn here, toward the particular and more pedantic realms of philology, a subject that he would have, in theory, been responsible for at St. David’s College in his first three years there, as professor of English language, history and literature. Chaucer’s internationalism would be the apex of most accounts of medieval English literary history – and it usually is – but Tout situated it on a slope rising toward the final emergence of a distinctively English *literary* language.

Tout’s Chaucer was also a Chaucer summoned from his knowledge of administrative history. Tout described Chaucer’s English as southern because he wanted to place Chaucer in London as securely as possible because it contained ‘the habitual residences of the court, the chief seats of parliaments and councils, and the most frequented marts of commerce’.¹⁸ It was precisely, in this account, Chaucer’s embeddedness in the administrative and fiscal machinery of London that led to his deployment of ‘a standard

¹⁴ *Pearl, an English Poem of the Fourteenth Century*, ed. I. Gollancz (London, 1891), pp. xlii–xlv; I. Gollancz, “Pearl,” “Cleanness,” “Patience” and “Sir Gawayne”, in *From the Beginnings to the Cycles of Romance of The Cambridge History of English and American Literature*, ed. A. W. Ward and A. R. Waller (18 vols., Cambridge), i. 320–34.

¹⁵ See, e.g., H. Taine, *History of English Literature* (Edinburgh, 1872), cited in A. Butterfield, *Familiar Enemy: Chaucer, Language, and Nation in the Hundred Years War* (Oxford, 2009), p. 42, n. 17.

¹⁶ Tout, *History of England*, p. 421.

¹⁷ Tout, *History of England*, p. 421.

¹⁸ Tout, *History of England*, p. 421.

English language' that displaced 'the local dialects which had hitherto been the natural vehicles of writing in their respective districts'.¹⁹ Yet Tout's point was not that what later generations called chancery English became a written standard because England's administration was centralized by Edward III. His point, somewhat surprisingly, was that administrative writing formed the substratum of Chaucer's remarkable career. This might seem a subtle distinction, but it inverted what we would expect Tout to claim as the relative importance of literature and administrative history. Chaucer's poetry, in his account, was a triumph of Edwardian culture not just because it illustrated the governmental innovations of the mid fourteenth century but because it represented larger cultural innovations as well.

The significance of Tout's identification of the complex relation between Chaucerian literature and the chancery standard was not fully realized by literary historians for more than half a century, until a series of articles published by John H. Fisher beginning in 1977.²⁰ Tout's several paragraphs in the *Political History* typified his anomalous approach to literature. He did not subordinate it to the parameters of his particular discipline, using it merely to illustrate developments in governmental technique, but neither did he recognize that literature exists in a moral or intellectual plane above the quotidian work of administration and political history. In a lecture given to the Medieval Academy of America the year before he died, Tout argued, with some detail, that Chaucer's and Hoccleve's careers as poets were possible only because of their position as civil servants. They were the chief examples of the vital importance of royal administration to literature; and Tout argued that because of the division of disciplines neither historians nor literary scholars had been able to appreciate the degree to which their poetry must be understood in the context of government administration, or the degree to which their poetry illuminated the work of the historian. Both poets were a vindication of Tout's vast project in *Chapters in the Administrative History of Mediaeval England* as more than an archive of 'unimportant detail'. Indeed, Tout said at the end of the lecture, they were no more than a 'striking vindication of the Mediaeval Academy of America, in bringing together all sorts of mediaevalists into a single society'.²¹ At the end of his career, in other words, Tout argued that the future lay not in the kind of history he had practised, but in another discipline altogether: in literature, which pointed the way to a unified field of medieval studies.

Tout read literature in a mode that did not quite exist yet, situated

¹⁹ Tout, *History of England*, p. 421.

²⁰ Collected as J. H. Fisher, *The Emergence of Standard English* (Louisville, 1996).

²¹ T. F. Tout, 'Literature and learning: the English civil service in the fourteenth century', *Speculum*, iv (1929), 365–89, at p. 389.

between two disciplines whose fundamental preconceptions and biases kept them separate for some time to come. Tout's literary history, as a result, juttred out at some odd angles. Froissart assumed an importance he does not usually have in literary histories of medieval English literature. He 'was the chief literary figure at the English court in the ten years after the treaty of Calais', but his place was taken 'in the concluding decade of the reign' by Chaucer.²² The Froissart that was important for Tout was the Froissart who wrote the *Chronicles*, valuable to him for their vivid and intimate descriptions of the efforts of Edward to rival and eclipse the big chivalric spectacle of the French court. Tout did not mention the Froissart who was actually important to Edward's court and to English readers for several decades after: the great French poet, the writer who, along with Guillaume Machaut and Guillaume de Deguileville, seems to have been read avidly in the Edwardian court and who provided the raw material of Chaucer's earliest English work, *The Book of the Duchess* (c.1368).

Tout's treatment of the literature of the thirteenth century and the first half of the fourteenth century was as broadly dismissive of it as most histories of the time were, although some of his contempt was purchased with long exposure to it: 'The age of Edward I ... is recorded in chronicles so dreary that it is hard to make the dry bones live'.²³ Tout's judgment of the literary writing of the era was clearly based, in fact, on exposure to it at first hand rather than to secondary literature on it.²⁴ His taste as a critic seems to have been as much a guiding principle as was his diachronic interest as a historian. The one possible exception to the dreariness of the chronicles, for instance, was Matthew Paris; and Tout's judgment of his work is fundamentally a literary rather than evidentiary one: '[E]ven with him prolixity impairs the art without injuring the colour of his work'.²⁵ Tout's account of the literature of this period was perhaps so fundamentally a literary one that it was paradoxically prejudiced against the very pragmatism that enabled the emergence of high Edwardian and Ricardian literature. The innate talent of writers in Latin was spoiled by scholasticism's emphasis on the *artes* as only a juvenile stage to be transcended, 'only a preliminary to the specialized faculties which left little

²² Tout, *History of England*, p. 421.

²³ Tout, *History of England*, pp. 93–4.

²⁴ In the appendix to the *History of England* he cites the state-of-the-art editions of Gower, Langland, Chaucer and Minot and usually cites passages from them directly, rather than from secondary literature. He translates passages for the more difficult English of *Piers Plowman* himself and clearly read the poem – or at least those parts of it – closely.

²⁵ Tout, *History of England*, p. 93.

room for artistic presentation'.²⁶ Writers in French were compromised by a similar turn away from imaginative art: 'The practical motive, which destroyed the art of so many Latin writers, impaired the literary value of much written in the vernacular'.²⁷ For Tout, the standard from which literature in England had fallen was the literature of what he calls the 'great age of romance', by which he seems to have meant the development of Arthurian material in French and Anglo-Norman by twelfth-century writers like Wace and Marie de France and the thirteenth-century writers of the Vulgate Cycle.

Tout's situation of this moment of literary history in England was uncharacteristically vague: he referred to it simply as the 'contact of Celt and Norman on British soil'.²⁸ His overriding point, however, was that in the age of Edward III England no longer occupied an important place in French literature, which from that point 'belongs to the history of the Western world rather than to that of England'.²⁹

This may be one point where what later emerged as the narrative agenda of Tout's *Chapters* overrode the evidence of the literary archive. The work of Robert Grosseteste, bishop of Lincoln, is a revealing stress line. Tout used Grosseteste's treatise on estate management, written in Anglo-Norman between 1240 and 1242, and his purported translation into English of Walter of Henley's treatise on husbandry (c.1250) as evidence of the contradiction in the scope of vernacular literature in England by the 'practical motive'.³⁰ The practicality that debased literature, however, was, for Tout, eventually to enable a genuinely English literature. It combined a vigorous English nationalism with the administrative secularism of the specializations and technologizations that began in Henry III's reign.

To smooth this narrative, however, Tout had to set aside some important evidence that Grosseteste himself put before him. Tout mentioned, very much in passing, that Grosseteste 'also certainly wrote French poetry', but said nothing more about it.³¹ Grosseteste, in fact, not only wrote French poetry but a poem that was to have an immense influence on literature in both France and England and in both languages: his *Chateau d'Amur* (*Castle of Love*) (c.1220s) shaped medieval drama and poetry for several hundred years – including *Piers Plowman*, a poem central to Tout's discussion of late-Edwardian literature – and exists in more manuscript copies than almost

²⁶ Tout, *History of England*, p. 94.

²⁷ Tout, *History of England*, p. 94.

²⁸ Tout, *History of England*, p. 94.

²⁹ Tout, *History of England*, p. 94.

³⁰ Tout, *History of England*, p. 94.

³¹ Tout, *History of England*, p. 94.

any other work of insular French.³² The *Chateau d'Amur*, at the very least, complicated Tout's argument that a distinctively English literature – whether written in English or French – began to develop independently of France (or, indeed, that French literature was independent of English). For Tout, this development was most crucially and extensively embodied in legal literature, which 'secured for English custom the opportunity of independent development', an independence that was expressed in Anglo-Norman, which had already displaced French and began to outstrip Latin.³³ This development left Tout in an odd position, enthusiastically calling attention to the kinds of innovation that legal, constitutional and administrative historians find significant, yet having to disparage the linguistic medium of these innovations on literary, aesthetic grounds. Although Anglo-Norman was now clearly a 'living tongue', it was also 'barbarous'.³⁴

Tout never explained what made Anglo-Norman barbarous, although there are intimations that his judgment had something to do with years of slogging through technical legal documents.³⁵ Yet this judgment was either strangely impressionistic or uncharacteristically unwary for a historian usually so careful to prefer documentary evidence to the pronouncements of other historians. This may be because he used literature in the service of a larger narrative, what he called in the final paragraph of the book a 'narrative whose course is but half run'.³⁶ This larger narrative concerns the emergence of constitutional rule, which will be completed 'in the annals of a later age', as the book's third-last sentence said.³⁷ The death of Edward halted the narrative here, where the fundamental 'incompatibility' of sovereign authority and constitutional rule was still to be resolved and which was the 'explanation of the period'.³⁸ But Tout's narrative was not some kind of abstract Hegelian account of the emergence of the state. The beginning of the same, final, paragraph listed six other narratives yet to be concluded, three of which were (in Tout's terms) literary: the final expression of Wycliffe's 'revolt'; the final form of Langland's *Piers Plowman*;

³² For a recent summary, see N. Watson, 'William Langland reads Robert Grosseteste', in *The French of Medieval England: Essays in Honor of Jocelyn Wogan-Browne*, ed. T. Fenster and C. P. Collette (Cambridge, 2017), pp. 140–56.

³³ Tout, *History of England*, p. 95.

³⁴ Tout, *History of England*, p. 95.

³⁵ For example, the 'jargon of the *Year Books*' attests to the strong contrast between 'the insular French speech' and 'the language of polite society beyond the Channel' (Tout, *History of England*, p. 95).

³⁶ Tout, *History of England*, p. 441.

³⁷ Tout, *History of England*, p. 441.

³⁸ Tout, *History of England*, p. 441.

and Chaucer's mature work, which was 'yet to rise for a higher flight'.³⁹ The story that Tout was telling was, at every level, literary: his own history had a narrative shape and it was a history that depended upon the shape of writers' careers and of literary narratives themselves. It was important, in other words, that his narrative did not include the final years of Chaucer's, Langland's and Wycliffe's careers. From the perspective of the end of Tout's book, the still-incomplete work of these writers was equivalent to the still-incomplete development of constitutional and administrative history.

Tout certainly did not invent some kind of post-modern aesthetics of irresolution *avant la lettre*. But his appreciation of the significance of unfinished and imperfect work is striking. He tended not to make judgments about the talent of individual writers, even when the editions he was using made them almost inescapable. In writing about the poems Laurence Minot wrote celebrating Edward's battles between 1333 and 1352, Tout omitted the disparaging judgments about Minot's talent that the editor, Joshua Hall, had made: 'constrained and mechanical ... unrelieved by any touch of imagination'.⁴⁰ Tout ignored Hall's conclusion that Minot's 'direct historical value is small' and indeed cited Minot's 'rude battle songs' as an example of both the 'savage patriotism' of the early years of Edward's reign and the 'spirit' that would 'extend the use of English'.⁴¹ The hint of a less empirical, more idealist kind of history in the word 'spirit' came straight from Hall, who used far more hyperbolic language to describe Minot: the 'abstract of the spirit of the time', he was the 'first to speak in the name of the English nation'.⁴² Tout's far more reserved judgment was also subordinated to his narrative of the emergence of literary English through the process of administrative development, not the expression of a national spirit. Tout's subtext, if we can read him in a literary way, was that Minot's very disruption and violence were part of the means by which English literature struggled to emerge in the late fourteenth century. It emerged out of national, political, cultural and linguistic contest. If not itself always oppositional, it is a literature of and about opposition and self-identification.

³⁹ Tout, *History of England*, p. 441. The three other narratives are the end of John of Gaunt's rule, the end of the Hundred Years War and the peasants' uprising of 1381.

⁴⁰ J. Hall, *The Poems of Minot* (Oxford, 1914), p. xiii. Tout almost certainly knew Hall: he was the headmaster of the boys' Hulme Grammar School in Manchester; Mary Johnstone, Tout's wife, was representative governor of the Hulme Trust schools in 1903. Hall was appointed special lecturer in Middle English at Manchester University in 1908. Both were members of the short-lived Lancashire Bibliographical Society. The minutes and correspondence are in the John Rylands Library, GB 133 Eng MS. 1134.

⁴¹ Tout, *History of England*, p. 420.

⁴² Hall, *Poems of Minot*, p. xiv.

The importance of this mechanism of struggle to the emergence of literature in Tout's *Political History of England* is even clearer against Tout's own rather different version of English literary history in lectures given at the University of Rennes twenty years later, published under the title *France and England: Their Relations in the Middle Ages and Now*.⁴³ Far more conciliatory toward France – not surprisingly, given Tout's French audience – the literary history here acknowledged the partisanship of writers like Minot and his French contemporaries, but downplayed its significance both in the creation of an institutionalized nation and in the emergence of English literature. The otherness of the French was no more significant in Tout's later account than that of 'the neighbour from a rival borough or the next county'.⁴⁴ The mighty literary engine of Minot's 'savage patriotism' became mere 'literary badinage' between English and French writers. But Tout did not just file off the jagged edges of a literature struggling for self-identification: he also described a far more congenial and refined audience for the reception of English literature. Rather than present a Chaucer who made a rupture with his French past, as he did earlier, Tout argued that Chaucer used French literary tradition precisely to legitimate English literature for the 'widening cultivated circles in England'.⁴⁵ And in this account Chaucer's influence on the development of the language had little to do with the development of political and administrative institutions. Chaucer standardized the English speech by incorporating into it the Romance vocabulary and idioms that 'have ever since distinguished our tongue from the other Teutonic languages'.⁴⁶ Tout stepped away from his earlier, knottier and more productive history of a literature embedded in and emerging out of institutional struggle and wrote a surprisingly Arnoldian, belle-lettristic account of Chaucer, and poetry, as the expression of universal virtues.

This unexpected linguistic idealism may help us to understand better, however, the importance to Tout of the rise of a standard literary language. The emergence of literary English underpinned, as we have seen, the importance of administrative history; but a standard literary language also helped to enable the process of centralization. Tout's larger story of how the king's household was transformed into a national government in *Chapters* perhaps put undue pressure on the idea that literary English, too, was a national and monolithic tongue, as did his focus on London and Westminster as central administrative sites. This pressure led him to make

⁴³ T. F. Tout, *France and England: Their Relations in the Middle Ages and Now* (Manchester, 1922).

⁴⁴ Tout, *France and England*, p. 143.

⁴⁵ Tout, *France and England*, p. 145.

⁴⁶ Tout, *France and England*, p. 145.

some claims that were not borne out by evidence – for instance, that the ‘Yorkshireman, Wycliffe [and] the west-countryman, Langland, adopted before the end of the reign the tongue of the capital for their literary language in preference to the speech of their native shires’.⁴⁷ W. W. Skeat, in the edition of *Piers Plowman* that Tout used, identified Langland’s dialect as western Midland, ‘with occasional introduction of Southern forms’.⁴⁸ It is true, however, that *Piers Plowman* itself described its writer as living at least some of the time in London. Indeed, Langland’s connection to London was extensive and inescapable. As Caroline Barron put it, ‘Langland is surely much more a London poet’ than Chaucer.⁴⁹ London English was integral to the history of *Piers Plowman* in the later Ricardian moment also because many of its manuscripts were copied there and those did record the characteristic features of London English.

Yet Tout was essentially right about the importance of London to the emergence of an Edwardian literary culture. The story that Tout wanted to tell about London literature extended back into Edward’s reign – not on the evidence that he used, but his intuition turned out to have been correct. As Ralph Hanna put it, *Piers Plowman* ‘is a London work and the culmination of Edwardian literature in the city’.⁵⁰ Hanna’s book is a rich and illuminating study of Tout’s argument for the importance of Edwardian literature, but it is worth pointing out that his book appeared a hundred years after Tout’s. In the interim literary scholars had made only passing references to the possibility of a distinctively Edwardian literature.

Perhaps because he stood mostly outside the discipline of literary history, Tout talked about medieval English literature in a slightly different – and a surprisingly prescient – way. There was still the strong pull of late nineteenth-century prejudices against northern dialects and alliterative verse – both of them considered antiquated and rustic – in Tout and a strong bias for a view of Chaucer as the pinnacle of medieval English literature and the founder of all subsequent English literature. But he did not actually depend heavily upon other scholars for his opinions, although it would have been easy and tempting to do so. Some of the judgments he made about fourteenth-century literature, in particular, anticipated opinions that have only become current in the last twenty or thirty years. Indeed, to a large and perhaps

⁴⁷ Tout, *History of England*, p. 421.

⁴⁸ Skeat identified it as western in a passage on the higher rate of western forms in C-Text manuscripts, which may reflect Langland’s later return to the west of England (*Piers Plowman*, ed. W. W. Skeat (2 vols., Oxford, 1869), ii. lvii).

⁴⁹ C. Barron, ‘William Langland: a London poet’, in *Chaucer’s England: Literature in Historical Context*, ed. B. Hanawalt (Minneapolis, Minn., 1992), pp. 91–109, at p. 92

⁵⁰ R. Hanna, *London Literature, 1300–1380* (Cambridge, 2005), p. 243.

unrecognized degree, he may have been ultimately responsible for some of these developments.

His appreciation for the extra-evidentiary qualities of chronicles, for example, was unusual enough that he devoted a lengthy lecture to their defence, given at both Cambridge and Manchester.⁵¹ It is important mostly for what he said about the role that literature has to play in the writing of history. He was quite aware that chronicles are notoriously unreliable as witnesses to a certain kind of history, but also quite ahead of his time (by sixty years or more) in recognizing that they performed an instrumental, even literary, function nevertheless: '[T]heir object in general was not a piece of composition but to fulfil a practical need, to supply information, or to prove some case'.⁵² Their literary quality seemed, initially, to be beside the point:

Most chroniclers wrote badly, some from natural stupidity and carelessness, some from indifference to anything approaching canons of style. But some wrote well and achieved literary success without much conscious effort to secure it, while many had that style which comes from directness, sincerity, clarity of vision and strength of imagination.⁵³

But there was an interesting tension here in Tout's work. On the one hand, chronicles were interesting not because they provided empirical information, but because they revealed the pragmatic self-interest of their writers; on the other hand, Tout seemed implicitly to value chronicles whose interests were couched in more adept and skilled language, what Tout calls 'that style': direct, sincere, clear and 'strong in imagination'.⁵⁴ Tout's judgment here was essentially literary, but it was not just a matter of ranking chronicles. Even the 'most wooden collation of chronicles can hardly yield as inhuman a result as the piling up of detached items of detail from a variety of isolated documents'.⁵⁵ It was chronicle writers who, in some sense, gave a 'better' picture of their moment. Tout often revealed an irreducible delight in the appearance of more 'literary' modes in and alongside administrative records: 'With what thankfulness one notes and remembers the jest, salted perhaps with a touch of profanity, or impropriety, with which the average record writer scribbles on a blank page some effort to relieve his tedious task. How unrelated and trivial seem our extracts from his rolls!'⁵⁶

⁵¹ Published as 'The study of mediaeval chronicles', *Bull. John Rylands Libr.*, iv (1922), 414–38; repr. in Tout, *France and England*, pp. 5–29.

⁵² Tout, 'Study of mediaeval chronicles', p. 10.

⁵³ Tout, 'Study of mediaeval chronicles', p. 10.

⁵⁴ Tout, 'Study of mediaeval chronicles', p. 10.

⁵⁵ Tout, 'Study of mediaeval chronicles', p. 23.

⁵⁶ Tout, 'Study of mediaeval chronicles', p. 23.

Another important point that Tout makes in the article on medieval chronicles extended and deepened the definition of what English medieval literature was. It might seem a self-evident and obvious point, but it was an insight that it took the field of literary history ninety years to appreciate. Tout pointed out that literature in English was a minor part of the body of literary texts written in the fourteenth century:

We must not forget, when we rashly speak of the barrenness of our mediaeval literary history, that the real literary measure of the time is to be found in the Latin vernacular of the scholars and statesmen and in the French vernacular of the gentry and higher commercial classes. To these, English came as a bad third, at least up to the end of the fourteenth century. Schools of English are too apt to ignore this truth and make our mediaeval ancestors more illiterate than they were, because they wrote so seldom in the English language.⁵⁷

For decades, Anglo-Norman literature has been essentially a separate field, with no real institutional home: located, when it has been located anywhere, on the margins of French or English departments. It has only been with the work of scholars like Jocelyn Wogan-Browne and Laura Ashe and the publication of a volume on Anglo-Norman literature in the *Oxford History of English Literature*⁵⁸ in the last twenty years that it has begun to be studied consistently alongside literature in English. Tout's implicit definition of literature includes texts that were not read as 'literature' even by literary historians until the last thirty years: manuals of *dictamen*, Richard Fitzneal's *Dialogus de Scaccario*, Roger Waltham's *Compendium Moralis Philosophiae* (c.1300, which Tout said had never been printed – and it still has not been) and the Chandos Herald's *Vie du Prince Noir*.

As Tout acknowledged in the lecture, his title echoed the earlier work of Stubbs and Charles Homer Haskins (who contributed his article to the 1925 *Festschrift* for Tout) on the intersection of literature and royal administration in the court of Henry II. Richard de Bury (1287–1345) could have been the perfect illustration of Tout's thesis because he was involved in administration at every level under Edward III and used his administrative authority to create a literary household. But Tout disparaged Richard's learning at some length and discounted him as a figure of real learning, precisely because Richard was so thoroughly an administrator and therefore not likely to have studied very extensively. Yet, as Tout admitted, Richard did evince a deep love of and respect for literature – he is reputed to be the author

⁵⁷ Tout, 'Study of mediaeval chronicles', p. 20.

⁵⁸ L. Ashe, *The Oxford English History Volume 1, 1000–1350: Conquest and Transformation* (Oxford, 2017).

of *Philobiblon* – and ensured that his library was publically accessible.⁵⁹ It is somewhat surprising that Tout so emphatically impugned Richard's authorship of the *Philobiblon* because the consensus was, and still remains, that Richard wrote it (Tout's suspicion depended heavily on his credulous reading of a chronicle hostile to Richard). But what is most surprising is that Tout's perhaps unsupported suspicion undercut his own point that the royal household was becoming a viable nursery for writers of real talent and learning. Indeed, Tout's motive at this point seems to have been to reserve the final, complete synthesis for the later years of Edward III and for the emergence of Chaucer. If this was the case, then Tout's narrative seems to have been driven, on this point, by a particular conception of the emergence of literary culture: the only real index of the fusion of administration and learning, in other words, could be a poet of real genius. That was really a literary, and not a historical, judgment.

The real focus of Tout's last published lecture was Chaucer, who Tout argued could have received his impressive literary education entirely in the milieu of a great household, the 'usual training ground for officials'.⁶⁰ The implications of this point have never really been thoroughly worked out and would require a minor but revealing reorientation: Chaucer's literary sources have always pointed to a cosmopolitan library that scholars have assumed was the product of an unusually individual and cosmopolitan mind. Yet most of these sources could also be found in the environment of the great household and subordinated under the amorphous and still slightly inchoate genre of the literature of advice for princes. That would explain, for example, one of the cruxes of Chaucer studies: why he would assign to his own character in the *Canterbury Tales* the ponderous translation of Renaut de Louens's 1336 *Livre de Melibee et de Dame Prudence* on how to receive counsel. Was it an extended, self-deprecating joke about how unliterary a character the pilgrim Chaucer is? Or was it a deadly earnest treatment of a topic generally relevant in the turmoil of late fourteenth-century political culture? Almost all Chaucerians have looked right past Renaut's text to its source in the work of the thirteenth-century Italian jurist Albertanus of Brescia. That ultimate source has tended to be the focus of Chaucer criticism, which has implicitly assumed that Chaucer's interest lay in the headier realms of continental political and legal theory rather than in precisely the kind of text, translated into French, that would have been at the centre of a curriculum of a household 'training ground for officials'. Tout's lecture argued that the matrix of late fourteenth century English

⁵⁹ Tout, 'Literature and learning', p. 375.

⁶⁰ Tout, 'Literature and learning', p. 383.

literature was in the household and offices of government administration, an argument that both triggered important subsequent work (from Richard Firth Green's *Poets and Princepleasers* (1980) to Steven Justice and Katherine Kerby Fulton's work on the clerical London milieu of the production of the works of Chaucer, Gower and Langland) and whose accuracy, in the recent work of Linne Mooney, Estelle Stubbs and Simon Horobin, has been abundantly confirmed – but it is still an argument whose implications have not fully been worked out.

This brings us to Tout's most concrete contribution to the development of English medieval literary history, the championing of Thomas Hoccleve. Not quite championing, actually, because Tout repeats some of the universally disparaging things scholars of his generation said about Hoccleve. Hoccleve's own editor, the admittedly freewheeling F. J. Furnivall, wrote: 'We wish he had been a better poet and a manlier fellow; but all of those who've made fools of themselves, more or less, in their youth, will feel for the poor old versifier'.⁶¹ Tout's championing of Hoccleve took a different form: for Tout Hoccleve was valuable because he offered the greatest possibility in the English middle ages of being able to discover what 'manner of man' an English civil servant was 'by the books he wrote'.⁶² Tout found Hoccleve's love of quotidian details and intimate revelations important and revelatory in a way that no other contemporary readers did. In his first volume of *Chapters* Tout said he stopped his history at 1399 because the history of administrative offices after that is one of decay; but he did not, strictly speaking actually stop there. He was tempted, he said, to go a bit beyond 1399 precisely by Hoccleve, whose work, in its 'more personal and interesting parts', left behind a 'vivid and detailed picture of the working of the privy seal machinery'. From him 'come glimpses of the intimate life of a humble civil servant of the crown such as can hardly be imagined for an earlier age'.⁶³

Tout's descriptions of Hoccleve took on a strange personal tone that one does not often see elsewhere in *Chapters in the Administrative History of Mediaeval England*. On the one hand, Tout was strict and censorious about what he gathered from Hoccleve's life solely on the basis of Hoccleve's poetry (like other scholars of the era, Tout tended to read all first-person narrative as accurate autobiography): Hoccleve was 'an example of the clerk whose official life was a failure ... [his] presentation of the privy seal office comes from an embittered and impoverished man. Weak of will, drunken,

⁶¹ F. J. Furnivall, *Hoccleve's Works I: The Minor Poems* (London, 1891), p. xxxviii.

⁶² Tout, 'Literature and learning', p. 367.

⁶³ Tout, *Chapters*, ii. 29.

profligate and extravagant as long as health and money endured, suffering from bad health and chronic depression'.⁶⁴ Yet in places Tout's summaries of the details of Hoccleve's work sound almost like Tout describing what his own work was like. At the very least Tout betrayed deep and resonant sympathy for Hoccleve as writer:

Only those who have not tried how hard is writing all day, year after year, can describe the copier's work as but a game ... A writer must always work at the same time with mind, eye and hand. If any one fail, he has to do everything over again ... Few but the professional writers know the three great troubles that arise from the writer's craft, pains in the stomach, the back, and the eyes. After twenty-three years of writing, Hoccleve's whole body was smarting with aches and pains. And his eyesight was utterly spoilt.⁶⁵

Although Tout did not mention it, this extended passage came from Hoccleve's long prologue (2,156 lines) to his *Regiment of Princes* (1410–11), a poem modelled on the form of the *Fürstenspiegel* and dedicated to Henry V. It thus belongs precisely to the genre that one would expect a member of the extended administrative household to value and Hoccleve's choice may have been motivated by Chaucer's use of the genre in *Melibee* and *The Monk's Tale*. But Hoccleve's poem differs substantially: it is not in the voice of a character who expresses only an implicit interest in the politics of the household; it is in the voice of a real person who was a functionary in a branch of the royal household. We now read the contrast between Hoccleve's description of his work as a poor – and petitionary – clerk of the privy seal and the body of the poem as a deliberately and wittily constructed interplay between the abstract imperatives of government and the individual fissures and gaps one sees when one is inside the government. But we would not have seen that, perhaps, if Tout had not called attention to how significant Hoccleve's position as a clerical administrator was. The best book on the importance of Hoccleve's administrative environment for his poetry, Ethan Knapp's *The Bureaucratic Muse*, begins with an extended discussion of Tout's contextualization of Hoccleve.⁶⁶

Hoccleve is also vitally important for the actual details of privy seal procedure that he set out in his extraordinary formulary (British Library, Additional MS. 24062). It would be hard to invent a better demonstration for Tout's argument that literary and administrative writing were thoroughly interdependent in London by the end of the fourteenth century. But Tout

⁶⁴ Tout, *Chapters*, v. 107.

⁶⁵ Tout, *Chapters*, v. 107.

⁶⁶ E. Knapp, *The Bureaucratic Muse: Thomas Hoccleve and the Literature of Late Medieval England* (Philadelphia, Pa., 2001).

did not know of Hoccleve's extensive involvement in the production of Middle English literature in the clerical environment of medieval London: Hoccleve worked on at least one manuscript of Gower's *Confessio Amantis* and several manuscripts of his own work, including of *The Regiment of Princes*, which has a famous image of Chaucer modelled on a portrait in the Ellesmere MS. of *The Canterbury Tales*. Recently Simon Horobin has argued that Hoccleve not only worked as a literary scribe but supervised the production of the two most important manuscripts of *The Canterbury Tales*.⁶⁷ The other scribe of one of these, the Hengwrt manuscript, was identified in 2006 as Adam Pinkhurst, a scribe Chaucer mentioned by name.⁶⁸ Hoccleve was not only Tout's witness to scribal practice in the privy seal, he was also a scribe whose work helped to define and disseminate the canon of Middle English literature. This is the ultimate vindication of Tout's intuition that the centralization of administrative practice paralleled the production of literature in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries and also of his intuition that literature revealed something about the workings of the administrative machine that mere records alone could not.

Paradoxically, Tout's trust in the judgment of literary scholars might have inhibited him from making further claims about the role of Hoccleve and his poetry, implications that it took several generations to work out. Tout can hardly be faulted for not doing work that it has taken almost a century to do. Indeed, that work may never have happened without the unusual attention Tout paid to the presence of literary texts in the heart of the practice of administration.

⁶⁷ S. Horobin, 'Thomas Hoccleve: Chaucer's first editor?', *Chaucer Rev.*, i (2015), 228–50.

⁶⁸ L. R. Mooney, 'Chaucer's scribe', *Speculum*, lxxxi (2006), 97–138.

18. The homage volume of 1925 – looking back and looking forward*

Joel T. Rosenthal

Both James Tait, Tout's long-time colleague at Manchester, and Frederick Maurice Powicke, his prize pupil there, said in their tributes to him that of all the honours heaped upon him through the course of his long career, none pleased Professor Tout more than the volume *Essays in Medieval History* presented to him when he retired from Manchester in 1925.¹ This impressive volume – 432 pages, with twenty-eight scholarly papers, a bibliography of his published writings (compiled by Mary Tout, née Johnstone), an index (compiled by Dorothy M. Broome) and a list of subscribers that, including libraries, ran to twenty pages – was a fitting tribute to a great historian whose first listed publication went all the way back to 1881 and among whose latter published works were three pieces he had produced in that very year of 1925 (and with a few rather important ones still to come).²

* My thanks to my co-editor for advice, corrections and information (including how to do English-style punctuation). Also, belated thanks to Fred and Joan Weinstein, who, years ago, gave me a copy of the *Festschrift* and thereby sparked an interest that I finally lay to rest with this chapter and the conference whence it came.

¹ Tait's tribute appeared in *English Historical Review*, where he says that the 1925 *Festschrift* was 'the honour which perhaps he valued most' (*Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xlv (1930), 78–85, at p. 84). Powicke wrote in the memoir for the British Academy: 'I doubt if anything in his academic life gave him more pleasure than the volume of essays' (repr. in *The Collected Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout* (3 vols., Manchester, 1932–4), i, 1–24, at p. 16). For other tributes, see: Sir Richard Lodge, 'Thomas Frederick Tout: a retrospective of twin academic careers', *Cornhill Magazine*, n.s., lxxviii (1930), 114–26; and a talk given to the Royal Historical Society, 27 November 1929: A. G. Little, 'Professor Tout', *History*, xiv (1929–30), 313–24. Little also lists Tout's publications after the 1925 bibliography by M. Tout in the *Festschrift*: M. Tout, 'A list of the published writings of T. F. Tout', in *Essays in Medieval History: Presented to Thomas Frederick Tout*, ed. A. G. Little and F. M. Powicke (Manchester, 1925), pp. 379–98. The tribute in the *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* carried a proposal for a Tout Memorial Publication Fund, giving first priority to works in medieval history, then to works from Manchester faculty and then to any worthy author, all in the likelihood that such work would 'appeal to a limited public'. The fund already had a chest (of undisclosed size) from the proceeds of the 1925 *Festschrift* (H. Guppy, *Bull. John Rylands Libr.*, xiv (1930), 305–8).

² Work after 1925 included the 1929 presidential address to the Royal Historical Society,

J. T. Rosenthal, 'The homage volume of 1925 – looking back and looking forward', in *Thomas Frederick Tout (1855–1929): refashioning history for the twentieth century*, ed. C. M. Barron and J. T. Rosenthal (London, 2019), pp. 277–94. License: CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0.

Table 18.1. Homage volumes and volumes of collective work, 1901–39

Honouree	Date	Authors	Countries ^a	Publisher	Women ^b	Editors	Misc.
F. J. Furnivall	1901	49	9	Clarendon			Reprinted 1969
Manchester Essays ^c	1902	16		University of Manchester	4	Tout & Tait	Reprinted 1907 572 pages
Charles Bémont	1913	48		Librairie Felix Alcon			5 in English, 1 German
Wm. Ridgeway	1913	48		Cambridge	1?	E. C. Quiggan	7 medieval – dinner menu, etc.
George Unwin ^c	1918	6		Manchester	2	Unwin	Student work, 1911–12. Reprinted 1962 – some Tout students
Wm. Ramsay	1923	33		Manchester		W. H. Buckler & W. M. Calder	Anatolian Studies
W. Ward	1924	9		Cambridge		Peterhouse	Memorial volume – all post-medieval
F Pollard ^c	1924	12		University of London	4	R. W. Seton-Watson	Reprinted 1967
Ferdinand Lot	1925	42		Champion, Paris			3 in English (Haskins, Powicke & A. E. Levett). Reprinted 1976
T. F. TOUT	1925	28	4	Manchester		Powicke & A. G. Little	Reprinted 1967
Henri Pirenne	1926	65	7	Uromont, Brussels			
R. L. Poole	1927	26		Oxford		H. W. C. Davis	Reprinted 1969 – 1 in Italian

Honouree	Date	Authors	Countries ^a	Publisher	Women ^b	Editors	Misc.
Charles Homer Haskins	1929	18	All US	Houghton-Mifflin		Charles Taylor	Honouring 40 years at Harvard
James Tait	1933	33		Manchester	3	Galbraith, Edwards and E. F. Jacob	
H. E. Salter	1934	13			6		Reprinted 1968
Henri Pirenne	1937	30	Papers in 3 languages	Novelle société, Brussels			Memorial volume
Alfons Dopsch	1938	42		Rohrer, Baden bei Wien? Leipzig			4 in English
James Westfall Thompson	1938	17	All US	University of Chicago	5	J. L. Cate & Eugene Anderson	Reprinted 1966 – 12 medieval, 5 historiographical
Herbert Grierson	1938	23	8	Oxford			Reprinted 1967
Mildred Pope	1939	35	6	Manchester	7		Vol. CCLXVIII of Manchester Publication Series

^a Some volumes do not give any identification of the contributors.

^b Because of the use of initials in many instances it is difficult to distinguish the gender of the author.

^c These were volumes of papers that emanated from a seminar or some sort of in-house gathering; they are not *Festschriften*.

In 1925 the ‘homage industry’ was fairly new, still a bit of a sideline as scholarly publishing went. Today such volumes are produced in impressive numbers, nor does this assessment take into account the numerous volumes of a scholar’s collected papers or such ephemera as conference sessions in honour or memory of some worthy or other.³ For a comparison between the small-time homage industry of the early twentieth century and some recent numbers – perhaps in keeping in good part with the overall growth of academia – we offer a tally of such recent work to set against the entries from earlier years, as the early ones are listed in Table 18.1. In *Speculum*, the Medieval Academy of America’s quarterly journal, the issues for 2017 had three separate categories of relevant items: fully fledged reviews; the listings in ‘brief notices’ where contents and authors were given; and finally the long list of ‘books received’, simply itemizing items sent to the academy for possible reviewing. In the journal’s four issues eight *Festschriften* received full reviews;⁴ twelve others were dissected for authors, titles and pages in the list of ‘brief notices’; and fourteen more were simply listed as ‘books received’. This gives us a total of thirty-four separate volumes covered in some fashion or other in what was probably a fairly typical year’s intake.

This tally of homage items for 2017 comes out to a number that exceeds the total of the *Festschriften* listed in Table 18.1 for the first quarter of the twentieth century. Nor, to continue a quantitative look at the homage industry, did these numbers grow appreciably between 1925 and the outbreak of the Second World War. Charles Gross’s comprehensive bibliography of historical work, in its second edition in 1915, had no category at all for items of this sort, nor were there any index listings to fill the gap. But by way of contrast, when Edgar Graves published his follow-up volume to Gross in 1975 *Festschriften* merited a separate category and forty-two volumes were named.⁵ Though many of these were in honour of scholars whose work was

‘History and historians in America’ (T. F. Tout, ‘History and historians in America’, *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 4th ser., xii (1929), 1–17, at pp. 1–2 (author’s thanks to Tom Sharp, Tout’s grandson and donor of an offprint of the paper)).

³ There were so many sessions in honour or in memory of someone that at the International Congress of Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University (Kalamazoo) in May 2017 the programme had a special index listing of them. There were fifteen such sessions with nine honourees.

⁴ This total does not include the review of a volume of the papers from a conference devoted to the work and influence of the late Jacques le Goff.

⁵ C. Gross, *The Sources and Literature of English History from the Earliest Times to about 1485* (London, 1900; 2nd edn. 1915; repr. New York, 1951); *A Bibliography of English History to 1485*, ed. E. B. Graves (Oxford, 1975), with a listing of 42 volumes of collected works in addition to the *Festschriften*. Of the 28 contributors to the 1925 *Festschrift*, Graves lists a *Festschrift* or some sort of homage volume for 7 of them: C. Bémont, C. H. Haskins, H. Pirenne, R. L. Poole, F. M. Powicke, F. Stenton and J. Tait.

not in the mainstream of English medieval history, the tally nevertheless bespeaks a very different world of homage and publication. So in 1925, when Frederick Maurice Powicke and A. G. Little turned to edit the volume to honour Tout, they had few models and few predecessors. In fact, it may be that the success of their 1925 volume (as attested in tributes offered in the *John Rylands Library Bulletin*), in addition to the eminence of the honouree, helped to open the doors for the publication of more volumes of this sort.⁶

To set the stage for the 1925 volume that marked Tout's retirement we can take a look at some of the earlier volumes in the homage industry. In 1901, to open the century, there had been an impressive tribute to F. J. Furnivall, father of the Early English Text Society and a man of numerous scholarly contributions and accomplishments. The forty-nine contributors to *An English Miscellany* constituted an impressive and diverse roster, coming from nine countries (counting Scotland) and with scholars from the US contributing no fewer than ten (or 20 per cent) of the papers. The Furnivall volume was an imposing tribute to and a reflection of international scholarship in the halcyon days before the Guns of August. It certainly snared some of the turn-of-the-century's big men in the field and W. W. Craigie, F. B. Gummere, J. J. Jusserand, F. York Powell and W. W. Skeat were among those who came together to mark the master's seventy-fifth birthday. Many of the forty-nine papers are very short – five pages or fewer – perhaps indicating that while it was an honour to contribute, a *Festschrift* may not have yet have been considered the place for a major chip off the block of one's scholarship. In what seems little more than a token contribution we have short pieces from some men – and all the contributors look to have been men, though the reliance on initials clouds the issue – who kept it brief: G. C. Moore Smith, with two pages on Shakespeare's *King John*; or George Hempl with two pages on English river names; or W. P. Ker with two or three pages on Panurge's English; or Friede Kluge with two pages on Anglo-Saxon etymologies (to name but a few of those with a perfunctory contribution).⁷

⁶ See n. 2 above, with its reference to the profitable nature of the Tout *Festschrift*. Manchester University Press followed with 3 more volumes of this sort between 1925 and the outbreak of the Second World War, with the 1902 volume of Manchester essays and the 1918 volume edited by G. Unwin already on the shelves. Various tributes to Tout mentioned that over one third of the 55 volumes in the Manchester series were from people who had worked under his supervision.

⁷ For a survey of the homage volume industry and with a focus on philology and literature, see S. G. Morley, 'The development of the homage-volume', *Philological Quart.*, viii (1929), 61–8; with additional information from A. Gudeman, 'The homage-volume once more', *Philological Quart.*, viii (1929), 335–8. After summarizing various problems, Morley quoted from a letter he had received: 'Maybe all *Festschriften* have their faults, but the Lot

An English Miscellany would soon have at least a few companions on the shelf; and sometimes they, too, opened with a poem to the honouree and details of the banquet at which the book had been presented.⁸ In 1913 E. C. Quiggin edited a volume in honour of W. M. Ridgeway, the archaeologist; and in 1918 George Unwin edited a volume of papers on economic history produced by Manchester students and mostly written just before the First World War had broken out.⁹ In 1924 – and much closer in substance and style as well as in date to the Tout volume – R. W. Seton-Watson edited a *Festschrift*¹⁰ for A. F. Pollard (who had shared *Dictionary of National Biography* duties with Tout and to whom Pollard had turned when he was establishing the Institute of Historical Research at the University of London in 1921). This 1924 collection was based on work done for London seminars and therefore had a strong similarity to the 1902 Manchester volume and to Unwin's 1918 volume. And if we open our doors a little, we can include the 1924 memorial volume for the late Adolphus Ward – Tout's one-time chair at Manchester – though this obviously came a bit late for a book-launch party.¹¹ These early homage volumes, as set out in Table 18.1, were clearly serious affairs: long volumes (despite those numerous short papers); many contributors; a long list of subscribers; the honouree's bibliography; and sometimes such vital data as the menu and the seating order at the launching banquet. Poems written for the occasion, plus photos of the dinner party,

Mélanges and the Tout *Memorial* show that something can be done by competent editing' (p. 68). Morley comes up with a total approaching 100 volumes (and Gudeman added still more). See also H. Nabholz et al., *Bibliographies Internationales . . . 1880–1939* (Paris, 1955), unit IX.

⁸ The Furnivall volume had 3 poems in his honour plus a 5-page 'commemoration' of his birthday (12 July 1899) (*An English Miscellany*, ed. W. P. Ker and A. S. Mapiér (Oxford, 1901), pp. iii–iv, 1–3). Other early volumes also run to comparable details about the honouree. In the volume for Ridgeway there was a poem in Greek and the seating order at the banquet and no less a figure than Sir Arthur Evans presented the book (*Essays and Studies Presented to William Ridgeway*, ed. E. C. Quiggin (Cambridge, 1913)). These dinners were a powerful example of the boys' club at work.

⁹ *Finance and Trade under Edward III*, ed. G. Unwin (Manchester, 1918). This was not a *Festschrift* but, like the 1902 Manchester volume discussed below, it was a show-off tribute displaying work being done at Manchester. Unwin acknowledged Tout's role in training many of those whose work he (Unwin) now published.

¹⁰ *Tudor Studies, presented by the Board of Studies in History in the University of London to Albert Frederick Pollard*, ed. R. W. Seton-Watson (London, 1918).

¹¹ Tout wrote a number of tributes to his old colleague: a memoir in *A Bibliography of Sir Adolphus William Ward, 1837–1924*, ed. by A. T. Bartholomew (Cambridge, 1926), pp. ix–xxx; the obituary in the *Manchester Guardian* for 20 June 1924 and the British Academy obituary notice (also for 1926). Ward had gone to Owens College in 1866 and left for Cambridge in 1897.

might further adorn the volume. Though these serious books were often published by the appropriate academic press, some, rather surprisingly, came with the offprint of a commercial house: Houghton-Mifflin for the Haskins tribute rather than the Harvard University Press.¹² That so many of these volumes have been reprinted, mostly in the 1960s and 1970s, argues for their value long after their first appearance.¹³

But in looking at volumes honouring a classical archaeologist or a student of Anatolia this chapter is being coy about setting the stage. The real predecessor to the Tout *Festschrift* – and in some ways the model for the 1925 volume – was the 1902 volume, co-edited by James Tait and Tout himself: *Historical Essays by Members of the Owens College, Manchester; Published in Commemoration of its Jubilee (1851–1901)* (reissued in 1907 as volume 5 of Manchester's 'Historical Series').¹⁴ In a number of ways this volume was an innovative – indeed, a ground-breaking – enterprise. In introducing the second printing in 1907 – which seems to indicate good sales and a good reception for the first edition – Tait pointed with understandable pride to the fact that Owens College was by now absorbed into and fully part of the new University of Manchester. In effect, what was really being honoured in 1902 was the Tout–Tait Manchester school of history and the research carried out there by the volume's many authors – male and female – and now on display to the larger world of scholarly endeavour. *Historical Essays* was a coming-of-age declaration. It appeared at a time when neither Oxford nor Cambridge had anything to rival such a volume, had anyone at Oxbridge been moved in this direction (which for the most part they were not).¹⁵ Clearly, Tout and Tait thought the time had come for a bit of

¹² The 1913 Harvard tribute to G. L. Kittredge – who was pretty much 'Mister Harvard' – was nevertheless published by the Boston firm of Ginn & Co.: *Anniversary Papers by Colleagues and Pupils of George Lyman Kittredge*, ed. F. N. Robinson, E. Stevens Sheldon and W. A. Neilson (Boston and London, 1913).

¹³ The volumes in honour of F. J. Furnivall, A. F. Pollard, F. Lot, Tout, J. W. Thompson, R. L. Poole, H. E. Salter and H. Grierson were all reprinted in the 1960s and 1970s, decades noteworthy for the general growth of academia (and of college and university libraries).

¹⁴ Between 1902 and its reprinting in 1907 Manchester University Press had brought out Tait's study of medieval Manchester as well as monographs on Roman imperial expansion and on pilgrimages to Jerusalem, among other volumes. By the time of the 1930 proposal to establish a Tout Memorial Publication Fund the Manchester series could boast 55 volumes and, according to J. Tait, nearly one-third were by Tout's pupils.

¹⁵ No *Festschrift* for either Stubbs or Maitland. In 1911 H. A. L. Fisher edited Maitland's papers: *The Collected Papers of Frederic William Maitland*, ed. H. A. L. Fisher (3 vols., Cambridge, 1911). His letters were edited by C. H. S. Fifoot for the Selden Society: *The Letters of Frederic William Maitland*, ed. C. H. S. Fifoot (London, 1965). For Stubbs, various volumes of his lectures and his introductions to the Rolls Series were published, the first in 1886. The closest Stubbs got to a tribute was in W. A. Shaw, *A Bibliography of the Historical*

academic self-advertisement and even a bit of professional puffery. In a very real sense, the 1902 volume was a *Festschrift* in honour of itself; and in his chapter in this volume Peter Slee refers to it 'as part of the campaign for an independent University of Manchester'.¹⁶

The list of contributors to the 1902 volume identified each in a fashion that emphasized her or his Manchester connection and that, implicitly but quite clearly, pointed to the leadership and influence of Tout (and Tait) and to their success in combining the scholarship of Manchester veterans with that of Manchester students now just learning the trade, that is, of becoming research historians. Of the twenty contributors, sixteen had had at least three years teaching or studying at Manchester; six also had Oxbridge degrees (Oxford, five; Cambridge, one); four chapters came from established Manchester faculty with anywhere between twelve and thirty years of service there. Thus we have a volume with contributors whose credentials antedated both the break-up of the federal university and Tout's arrival in 1890 set beside work of young scholars just beginning to spread their wings.¹⁷

Table 18.1 offers some comparative data about the various early homage volumes and a look at those volumes of collected papers from seminars or as produced by collective or collegial research enterprises: Manchester in 1902, Unwin in 1918 and Pollard in 1924. All these volumes were published before the Second World War; and we can see how well the 1902 Manchester collection fitted into the family of such works and in some ways even provided a lead for those who would follow.¹⁸ While most of the homage volumes, both before and after 1925, offered a scattered if impressive assemblage of contributors and contributions, they were basically male enterprises. In the R. L. Poole volume from Oxford and the Haskins volume from Harvard it was the boys' club and only the boys' club. Given that *Manchester Essays* appeared but one year after the massive Furnivall volume, its inclusion of juniors as well as seniors and of women as well as men was a bold step. It was clearly a step in keeping with Tout's well-enunciated views on the value

Works of Dr. Creighton, Late Bishop of London; Dr. Stubbs, Late Bishop of Oxford; Dr. S. R. Gardiner and the Late Lord Acton (London, 1903), for the Royal Historical Society.

¹⁶ In their preface, Tout and Tait said: 'In short the programme of the last five years has been so gratifying that we may well look with increasing confidence to the future' (Tout and Tait, *Historical Essays by Members of the Owens College*, p. vii). See also P. Slee, ch. 3, this volume.

¹⁷ In the preface Tout names four more students who were just too busy to prepare work to go into the volume (Tout and Tait, *Historical Essays by Members of the Owens College*, p. viii).

¹⁸ E.g., *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. E. Power and M. M. Poston (London, 1933). It had 8 chapters (with an even mix of men and women).

of historical research, on the social and civic role of the emerging university and on the role of women in every step and every stage of the enterprise.

Historical Essays had twenty contributors. Some – former students – were identified as having been university scholars and/or Jones fellows and/or Bishop Berkeley fellows at Manchester. Others were obviously older: A. W. (Sir Adolphus William) Ward, whom we have already mentioned and who had left Manchester to become vice-chancellor of Cambridge, writing on Elizabeth, Princess Palatina; or Walter Rhodes, the university librarian since 1895 (writing on the loans of Italian bankers to Edward I and Edward II); and Tout and Tait themselves, Tout on Wales and the Marches, Tait on Richard II and the murder of the duke of Gloucester. Mary Tout, MA, and a Jones fellow back in 1892–5, wrote on the legend of St. Ursula and her eleven thousand virgins; Powicke wrote on Pierre Dubois, ‘medieval radical’; and three others – full credit to the broader reach of the history school and to an aspect of academia near and dear to Tout’s own interests since his Lampeter days – wrote on the teaching of history, with particular attention to how it was presented in the lower grades. We have one ‘Reverend’ among the authors (Joseph Edmund Hutton, on Moravian contributions to the eighteenth-century evangelical revival in England); one article published posthumously (‘a fragment’ from R. Copley Christie, professor of history from 1854–86 and writing here on Sebastian Gayphus, printer); and four women. And though mostly focusing on medieval topics, as we would expect, there were also chapters on Caesar-worship, several on Napoleon (one by J. Holland Rose, employed at the time by the London Society for the Extension of University Teaching) and those we have referred to that focused on teaching history.¹⁹

If this covers the extent of English interest by 1925 (and in the fourteen years beyond) regarding the publication of homage volumes we should note that the world of French and Francophone medieval studies was also beginning to turn in this direction and that some English scholars were among those being asked to contribute to such collections. The *Festschrift* for Charles Bémont was dated 1913; that for Ferdinand Lot 1925; and the first of the two such volumes that would honour Henri Pirenne came out in 1926 (while the second, in 1937, was destined to be a memorial volume). These volumes lend themselves to a comparison with what was being done in England; and they offer a gauge by which we can measure the honouree’s international stature, the breadth of *his* network of admirers and

¹⁹ Tout (and Tait) said in the preface that ‘the instruction of teachers forms no unimportant part of the work of the history department’ (Tout and Tait, *Historical Essays by Members of the Owens College*, p. xi).

students and colleagues and friends. Table 18.1 also shows that most of these books were big books: many contributors, many pages and presumably a considerable outlay by the publisher and the long lists of subscribers. They cast a wide net regarding those invited to contribute, though usually there was a heavy reliance on senior figures in contrast to the more inclusive intake of the 1902 and the 1925 volumes from Manchester.

We can jump from the 1902 Manchester volume to our real centre piece, the 1925 *Festschrift* to Tout, presented to him to mark his retirement from Manchester. This volume was deemed, as we have noted, to be the honour he prized the most: students, friends, family, all coming together with a range of papers to honour a great pioneer who had just retired from an academic career that went back to his appointment at Lampeter in 1880 and that had run, at Manchester, from 1890 until the retirement year now being marked. Who were the twenty-eight contributors to this impressive volume? The volume – and this comes as no great surprise – was much in the footsteps of the 1902 collection, though now it would look outward, beyond Manchester, as well as inward, as we see from the affiliations listed in Table 18.2.²⁰ We find that the contributors vary considerably in age, as they do in national and academic affiliation, in long-established eminence, in professional focus and – of interest to us today – in gender. They were a mix of old boys and some new (or newer) boys, with a number of women (girls?) also in the mix. Of the twenty-eight contributors, we can number Powicke, James Tait and Mary Tout as veterans of the 1902 collection.

In taking the 1925 volume apart, we might begin by looking at the distinction between the old and the new (or the young and the old) – a distinction between Tout's own contemporaries and the world of his students (though they, too, cover a fair span given how long he had been training them). Table 18.2 sets the twenty-eight contributors in the order in which they appear in volume (seemingly by the chronological coverage of their chapters), running from Margaret Deanesly – she of Lollard Bible fame – to Robert Fawtier, who would go on to distinction for his work on Capetian France. Tout himself should be set among his contemporaries – many of them the grand old men of late Victorian and Edwardian scholarship – standing in contrast, in both *res gestae* and in years, to those just making (or about to make) their mark. If we remember that Tout had been a prize pupil of Stubbs at Oxford and a man whose life and career bridged late (or latish) Victorian times and scholarship with that of post-First World War endeavours (such as the Institute of Historical Research), we can think of the *Festschrift* as a recognition of longevity as well as of innovation

²⁰ In several instances no affiliation is given so Manchester is assumed (and listed as such).

The homage volume of 1925 – looking back and looking forward

Table 18.2. The 1925 *Festschrift* – the personnel

Contributor^a	Dates	Age in 1925	Academic affiliation	Tout Pupil
Margaret Deanesly	1885–1944	40	Manchester	X
F. M. Stenton	1880–1967	45	Reading	
Felix Liebermann	1851–1925	74	Berlin	
H. W. C. Davis	1874–1928	51	Oxford, regius professor	
Reginald Lane Poole	1857–1939	68	Oxford	
Charles Homer Haskins	1870–1934	55	Harvard	
James Tait	1863–1944	62	Manchester	
Charles Petit-Dutaillis	1868–1947	57	Director, l'office des Université, France	
F. M. Powicke	1879–1963	46	Manchester	X
Charles Johnson	1870–1961	55	Public Record Office	
Henri Pirenne	1862–1935	63	Ghent	
Agnes Sandys	1890–1952	35	Oxford (St. Hilda's)	X
Charles Bémont	1848–1939	77	Paris	
Hilda Johnstone	1882–1961	43	London (RHC)	X
Paul Vinogradoff	1854–1925	71	Oxford	
J. G. Edwards	1891–1970	34	Oxford	X
James Willard	1876–1935	49	Colorado	
V. H. Galbraith	1889–1970	36	PRO	X
A. G. Little	1863–1945	62	??	
Charles Langlois	1863–1929	62	French National Archives	
Robert Dunlop	1861–1930	64	Manchester	
Dorothy Broome ^b	1895–1972	30	Manchester	X
Eugène Déprez	1874–1951	51	Rennes	
Margaret Sharp (née Tout)	1896–1987	29	Manchester	X
G. Crump	1862–1935	63	PRO	
W. T. Waugh	1884–1932	41	McGill, Montreal	X
Florence Higham	1896–1980	29	Manchester	X

Contributor ^a	Dates	Age in 1925	Academic affiliation	Tout Pupil
Robert Fawtier	1885–1966	41	Manchester	
Mary Tout – bibliography (née Johnstone)	1873–1960	52	Manchester	X

^a Tout lived to write memorials for Vinogradoff, Waugh and H. W. C. Davis.

^b Dorothy Broome does not seem to have had an academic career. She did much of the work on the last volumes of Tout's *Chapters* and this is well acknowledged in the introductory material to those volumes. She published in the Camden Society Miscellany volume in 1926 and became a professional researcher, working for – among others – H. G. Richardson and G. O. Sayles in the Public Record Office. I owe this information to personal communications from Paul Harvey, Matthew Raven and Dorothy Clayton.

and leadership. That six women contributed in 1925 – all, of course, of a younger generation – was in good part a tribute to Tout's own views about education, views that probably helped bring about winds of change now discernable in 1925.

But first, the old men. Given Tout's age in 1925 (b. 1855), Charles Bémont was the oldest of them all (b. 1848) and after him only Felix Liebermann (b. 1851), R. L. Poole (b. 1857) and Sir Paul Vinogradoff (b. 1854) were from the decade of Tout's birth, while Tait (b. 1863), Charles Petit-Dutaillis (b. 1868), Henri Pirenne (b. 1862), A. G. Little (b. 1863), Charles Langlois (b. 1863), Robert Dumby (b. 1861) and C. G. Crump (b. 1862) were from the next decade. Some were distinctly younger; and if we go to the farther end of the spectrum for the contributors born in or after 1880 – though actually well into middle age by 1925 – we have Margaret Deansley, Frank Stenton, Hilda Johnstone (Tout's sister-in-law), V. H. Galbraith, W. T. Waugh, Margaret Sharp (Tout's daughter)²¹ and Robert Fawtier. Clearly, academic status, as judged by inclusion in this volume, embraced both some grand old men who were still on the scene (albeit not for much longer) and others who would mostly make their most notable mark after 1925. Students of Tout are so noted in the volume's table of contents; eleven men and women have the identifying * after their name and of these only Powicke goes back to the 1870s (b. 1879).

When we looked at the *Festschriften* for such as F. J. Furnival we remarked at the international character of the cast list and we see this kind of impressive outreach for some of the other volumes listed in Table 18.1. Though the Tout *Festschrift* had a mere twenty-eight contributors in

²¹ She was the youngest of the group, born in 1896 (and living until 1987).

comparison with the Furnivall collection, it was hardly without deference to friends and colleagues across the Channel (and the ocean: Charles Homer Haskins at Harvard; James F. Willard at Colorado; and W. T. Waugh, now at McGill in Montreal).²² Tout had pushed hard to have the one German contributor, Felix Liebermann, re-accepted in scholarly circles in England and Liebermann – oldest of them all – responded by contributing with a chapter on ‘Nennius the author of the *Historia Brittonum*’. Whether he would have been invited but for the editors’ awareness of Tout’s public expression of his sympathy is a point to consider.²³ The other European names are familiar ones: Petit-Dutaillis, Pirenne, Bémont, Langlois and Déprez.²⁴ Vinogradoff, despite his exotic origins, was by the 1920s very much part of the establishment, having for some years been the Corpus professor of jurisprudence at Oxford; and Robert Fawtier – to become the distinguished scholar of the Capetians – was one of the youngsters of the crowd but already a lecturer in French history at Manchester (and soon to take up a chair at Bordeaux).²⁵

A look into the inbred nature of academia comes when we take note of those who appeared in more than one of the homage volumes of the inter-war years: the ‘usual suspects’ idea comes to mind. The old boys – and by now even some girls were coming to the fore – knew each other: ten of the Tout authors also had chapters in the 1927 volume for R. L. Poole, who had been at Oxford with Tout (but no women in the Poole volume). Eight of the Tout authors were still around to contribute to the 1933 volume *Historical*

²² In 1925 both Waugh and Willard were teaching in North America. Waugh had gone across the ocean to teach in Canada whereas Willard, a fixture at Colorado, was from the US.

²³ Liebermann had defended the German position in the war and many English (and probably French) scholars and former friends found this hard to forgive, let alone to welcome him back to the ranks. It would be interesting to know how Pirenne felt about this, but whether it was from personal feeling or a recognition of a need for reconciliation, Tout wrote a very generous appreciation (‘Felix Liebermann’, *History*, x (1926), 173–7). Tout refers to a 1921 *Festschrift* for Liebermann but laments its narrow boundaries, calling it ‘regrettable that no foreign collaborator seems to have been sought for this purely German tribute to a scholar of world-wide fame. English medievalists would gladly have joined ... even if they had little sympathy with his recent political opinions’ (p. 174).

²⁴ The story is that Tout was converted to working on administrative history after writing a review of Déprez’s *Études de diplomatie anglaise, 1272–1485: le sceau privé – le sceau secret – le signet* (*Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xxi (1908), 556–9). Various papers in this volume enlarge on this and on Tout’s evolution as an administrative historian.

²⁵ Vinogradoff was never to be the recipient of a *Festschrift*. However, two volumes of his collected papers, with an appreciation by H. A. L. Fisher (who also edited Maitland’s papers), were published in 1928: *The Collected Papers of Paul Vinogradoff, with a Memoir by the Right Hon. H. A. L. Fisher* (2 vols., Oxford, 1928).

Essays in Honour of James Tait (a volume edited by two of Tout's students, J. G. Edwards and V. H. Galbraith, along with E. F. Jacob, Powicke's successor at Manchester and a new boy in the boys' club).

The older men in the Tout volume were great pillars of the temple and had been so for many years. Pirenne had been *the* historian of Belgium for decades, apart from his voluminous general writing, though *Mohammed and Charlemagne* (1937) would only come as a posthumous publication; *Medieval Cities (Les Villes de Moyen Âge)* was published in 1925, though publication merely gave final form to ideas about urban revival that Pirenne had been disseminating for a long time. Liebermann's great work on Anglo-Saxon law had been the canonical scholarship since well before the turn of the twentieth century. Petit-Dutallis on Stubbs's charters dated back to 1911 and his seminal study of the Peasants' Rebellion of 1381 had appeared in 1898. Though Charles Bémont is best known in the Anglophone world for his *Simon de Montfort* (1884) he may have been just as proud of work as an editor of several volumes of the Gascon Rolls. Charles Homer Haskins – born in 1870 and the only full-career US scholar among the old boys and a regular member of the French homage-club – had produced most of his work on the Normans, on medieval medicine and on the medieval university by 1925 (though *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* was two years away). R. L. Poole's *Illustrations of the History of Medieval Thought and Learning* had its first edition in 1884 and a revised edition had been brought out in 1920. Charles Johnson's work on English court hand dated from 1915 and he would still be around to work with Powicke on the *Handbook of British Chronology* in the 1930s. Frank Stenton in 1925 was still as much a major Anglo-Norman scholar as he was one of Anglo-Saxon England; his Ford lectures on 'The First Century of English Feudalism 1066–1166' went back to 1912–13.²⁶ A. G. Little's Ford lectures on the English Franciscans had been published in 1917 (presumably read that year or just before). These people were obvious choices and they evidently were pleased to be counted in the ranks. Also, we note that by 1925 contributors to homage volumes were offering full-length chapters, much in the mainstream of their current research; gone were the Furnivall days of three-pagers. That these old men spanned both the Channel and the Atlantic was a tribute to Tout's status as a working historian and as an elder statesmen of, and innovator within, the academy.

The eleven younger contributors, the Tout students, must have been a group whose inclusion was pretty much a given when the volume was being

²⁶ His *Anglo-Saxon England* first appeared, as the 2nd volume in the Oxford History of England, in 1943. This was such a towering volume that it rather eclipsed his earlier contributions.

organized, especially as Powicke, the senior junior among them, was its co-editor. In so many ways the 1925 volume followed in the steps of the 1902 volume and we have noted the three who were on hand both early and late. We clearly see the hallmarks of the 1902 collection: old and new; young and old; women and men; some making what was virtually their first scholarly mark; others well launched into a successful career. Of course, by 1925 some of the younger contributors were already well established, though we can also note how much was yet to be accomplished. Powicke's *The Loss of Normandy (1189–1204)* had appeared back in 1913. Margaret Deanesly had already edited Richard Rolle's *Incendium amoris* and the first edition of her *Lollard Bible* had appeared in 1920. Others, like V. H. Galbraith and J. G. Edwards, were just getting started, perhaps still showing more promise than trophies. Nor does this skimming of the younger contributors just in terms of where they stood in 1925 keep us from looking ahead to the many important roles they would come to play in the historical profession beyond what they would publish. From our class of 1925 we can look to the future and number professors, regius professors and heads of department. There will be presidents of learned societies, directors of the Institute of Historical Research and veterans of the academic (and popular) lecture circuits. We have Ford lecturers, an editor of the *English Historical Review* and more of this sort of high-level and high-prestige academic citizenship. In 1925 the Tout stable was full of promise and, speaking of them as a group, that promise was going to be fully realized. They went on to 'do' a lot of history and in this they also helped to keep the master's legacy alive.

What about the *Festschrift* of 1925 as a volume? Two final considerations seem appropriate. One, as we said at the start, is that we know how highly Tout valued the honour done him. But what did he think of it as a book, had he been asked to review it? As he went through its pages – and nothing in the book tells us whether he knew of it in advance or whether there had been a book-launch party and a lot of face-to-face tributes – what did he see? In terms of content or subject matter, three of the twenty-eight papers dealt with the early middle ages; seventeen with the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (with a division between administrative and ecclesiastical history); and only two from some later date: Waugh on fifteenth-century Normandy and Florence Higham on the pre-Tudor secretary. The majority of the chapters reflect the heavy focus of historical scholarship on the high or central middle ages that largely dominated scholarly work through Tout's career. There was as yet little light on the darkness of the fifteenth century, this being about a decade before the early work of K. B. McFarlane. To preserve the international flavour that was a common feature of homage volumes, there were five chapters from the continental scholars and in

Table 18.3. The 1925 *Festschrift* – analysed by contents

Author	Category of historical research	Focus of paper
Margaret Deanesly	Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical	The Familia of Christ Church Canterbury
F. M. Stenton	Anglo-Saxon England	South-west element of the Old English Chronicle
Felix Liebermann	Anglo-Saxon England	Nennius, <i>Historia Brittonum</i>
H. W. C. Davis	Anglo-Norman ecclesiastical	St Paul's lands and liberties (appendix of documents)
R. L. Poole	Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical	Englishmen at the papal court, mid 12th century
H. Haskins	Henry II	The king as a patron of literature
James Tait	Legal-administrative	The meaning of 'liber burgus'
Ch. Petit-Dutaillis	Anglo-Norman Administrative	Government of 13th century Normandy (in French)
F. M. Powicke	Henry III – political	Baronial councils, 1258–60
Charles Johnson	Ecclesiastical history	Keeper of papal bulls, 13th century (appendix of documents)
Henri Pirenne	13th-century Flanders	Charter of Ypres, 1295 (in French: appendix of documents)
Agnes Sandys	13th-century ecclesiastical	London Temple, with a list of the treasurers: 13th century
Charles Bémont	Administrative	Edward I and statutes (in French)
Hilda Johnstone	Ecclesiastical	Archbishop Pecham and the Lambeth Council, 1281
Paul Vinogradoff	Legal history	Chief Justice Ralph of Hengham (Appendix: a case of 32 Edward I)
J. G. Edwards	Parliamentary history	Personnel during reigns of Edward I and Edward II (tables of representation by shires and boroughs)
James F. Willard	Administrative	Memoranda Rolls, 1282–1350
V. H. Galbraith	Administrative	Tower as exchequer record office (appendix of misc. documents, Edward II)

The homage volume of 1925 – looking back and looking forward

Author	Category of historical research	Focus of paper
A. G. Little	Ecclesiastical – administrative	Constitutions of Minorite provincial chapters
Ch. V. Langlois	Ecclesiastical history	Hugo de Novocastro, Minorite and author
Robert Dunlop	Irish history	Barbour's <i>Bruce</i> , 1315–8
Dorothy M. Broome	Administrative	Exchequer migrations to York, 13th and 14th centuries (with a map)
Eugène Déprez	Ecclesiastical-diplomatic	Avignon conference of 1344 (in French)
Margaret Sharp	Administrative	The Black Prince's chancery
C. G. Crump	Administrative	14th-century chancery blunders (appendix: Coram Rege Roll, 42 Edward III)
W. T. Waugh	Administrative	Administration of Normandy, 1420–22
Florence M. G. Higham	Administrative	The pre-Tudor secretary
Robert Fawtier	Administrative	Artillery of Louis XI (in French)

French. The one paragraph of editorial guidance that opened the volume simply and tersely offered that 'many [of the papers] are concerned with problems in the administrative history of England'. This certainly seems in accord with the work of Tout's last decades. The volume was offered to the master 'in grateful recognition of his work as teacher, scholar and counsellor' during his thirty-five years at Manchester. There seemingly was little need to say more.²⁷

However this chapter does have a little more to say. An aspect of the *Festschrift* that comes through here – this being the last chapter in this collection and thereby claiming some privileges of hindsight or summation

²⁷ Though other chapters in this volume focus on the Manchester school and Tout as an educator, for some reflections on his role as a teacher and educational crusader, see F. M. Powicke, 'The Manchester history school', in F. M. Powicke, *Modern Historians and the Study of History* (London, 1955), pp. 19–95, with special attention to Tout's role on pp. 21–44; P. R. H. Slee, *Learning and a Liberal Education: the Study of Modern History in the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and Manchester, 1800–1914* (Manchester, 1986), ch. 7, 'An endeavour to train men capable of adding to knowledge: Bury, Firth and Tout – The New School' (pp. 122–64).

– concerns the degree to which the 1925 contributors as a group can be thought of as a snapshot version or a collective summary of Tout's own career and leadership. This is the goal, of course, of a *Festschrift* and in this regard the 1925 volume stands as a striking success. The chapters offered in the current volume by colleagues have enlightened us about Tout as a teacher (at Lampeter and then at Manchester); an educational innovator; a good citizen; a supporter of women's education; a friend of students; an advocate of archival research; a man who could bring together the seemingly disparate goals of the Royal Historical Society and the Historical Association. He was an international apostle of historical studies and co-operative enterprises, both foreign and domestic. The papers of 1925 illuminate these many sides of what was truly an awesome career. We can go from Pirenne and Déprez and Liebermann to Haskins to Vinogradoff and Powicke to James Tait to Dorothy Broome to Margaret Sharp to Frank Stenton in whatever order we wish. There was a very large waterfront to cover and Tout had pretty much managed to cover most of it. Those asked to write in his honour were presumably honoured to be asked, to have a chance to become part of a select band of brothers and sisters who were joined in doing homage and fealty to a master. Stubbs's early judgment about Tout's ability proved prescient. Those who wrote in 1925 were, in effect, but seconding the bishop's view of the man under examination.

V. Tout remembered

19. Reflections on my grandfather, the historian T. F. Tout

Tom Sharp

I was born in 1931 and my grandfather had died in 1929. Therefore I have no personal recollections of him whatsoever. He nevertheless played an important part in my life. My mother, Margaret, born in 1896, was his first-born child and he clearly loved her and she loved him. She was the only one of his three children to go from school to the undergraduate study of history, which she did in his department at Manchester and then went on to do a PhD under his supervision. Before she had children (I had two brothers, born in 1927 and 1929; both are dead) my mother pursued an academic career: first, in the 1920s at Queen Mary College, London; and then from 1944 to retirement in 1963 she was a member of the history department at the University of Bristol. Throughout her life she revered her father.

Like my mother, my grandmother, Mary Tout, was immensely proud of her late husband and did much to maintain his reputation until she died in 1960, when I was nearly thirty. Until I was seven, when my parents' marriage broke down, we lived in the Hampstead Garden Suburb and my grandmother, by then a widow, lived nearby. Even when we moved away, first to the Lake District and then after the war to Bristol, we visited her almost every school holiday.

When I went to Oxford in 1951 I, too, read history; and two of my grandfather's pupils, Maurice Powicke¹ and Vivian Galbraith,² were both still alive and active – both were friends of my mother and I would go to tea with them. I remember particularly the vigour with which Powicke declared that behind Tout's knowledge of administrative history lay a deep understanding of the chronicles.

Although I never knew my grandfather, I lived under his shadow through my mother, my grandmother and his pupils. At home and at college I read a lot of his work and was influenced by it. I recall being particularly

¹ Sir Frederick Maurice Powicke (1879–1963).

² Vivian Hunter Galbraith (1889–1976).

interested in his lectures on the cities of London and Westminster and on town planning.³ I remember, for example, being intrigued to find him highlighting the different interests of, on the one hand, the individual and/or institution promoting some new development and, on the other, the town or village responsible for the interests of the community as a whole. These are lessons relevant to the present day. I rather think that both my mother and grandmother were disappointed when I decided to join the civil service rather than seeking to pursue an academic career myself, but, like my grandfather, I had never felt well-off at Oxford and was anxious to be financing myself rather than, as a studentship at Nuffield in 1954 would have meant, undergoing a means test and continuing dependence on my mother.

What do I know about my grandfather, Thomas Frederick Tout?

He was born in 1855 in South London. We know very little about his father, Thomas Edward Tout, except that his father, Tout's grandfather, had come up to London from Somerset in the 1820s and established a successful victualler's and wine merchant's business based on a pub called the Dorset Arms in Clapham. At some point in the late 1850s Thomas Edward took over the running of the pub and it appears that the family lived there until about 1870. There are several indications that all was not well with the marriage and it may be that the ready supply of alcohol in the business did not help. My grandfather was the only child and he seems to have been largely brought up by his mother, to whom he was very close. The parents seem to have split up in the early 1870s and in the 1881 census his mother is recorded as living by herself in Croydon. Young Thomas Frederick went to St. Olave's grammar school in south London and from St. Olave's competed twice for the Brackenbury scholarship at Balliol College Oxford, first in 1872 when he was seventeen and then again, successfully, in 1873. At the time this was the only scholarship available for studying modern history at Oxford.

Sir Richard Lodge,⁴ a fellow contender for the scholarship, who like Tout went to a London school and then to a career as an academic historian, gave an address to the Royal Historical Society about my grandfather in November 1929, just after his death.⁵ In this he describes how the two of

³ T. F. Tout, 'The beginnings of a modern capital: London and Westminster in the fourteenth century', *Proc. Brit. Academy*, x (1921–3), 487–511; 'Medieval town planning', *Bull. John Rylands Libr.*, iv (1918), 26–58.

⁴ Sir Richard Lodge (1855–1936).

⁵ Address given to the Royal Historical Society in Nov. 1929, printed as R. Lodge, 'Thomas Frederick Tout: a retrospect of twin academic careers', *Cornhill Magazine*, n.s., lxviii (1930), 114–26, at p. 115.



Figure 19.1. Tout with his parents, c.1860.

them, both from London (Lodge was from Christ's Hospital), were the only candidates not already in their first or second year at Oxford and the fact that my grandfather did not go up and try the second time from a college base suggests that he was in large part dependent upon the scholarship to meet his fees and expenses at Oxford. Both of them, Lodge said, were, compared with the established undergraduates, 'rather uncouth and untidy in dress and appearance'. He then added that Tout 'was short rather than tall, with a head large in proportion to body and with a curious gait, the left shoulder always seeming in advance of the right. When he talked, he swayed slightly backwards and forwards from the hips, and a slight hesitation beginning in his first sentence left you surprised at the fluency with which the following words were uttered'. He then went

on to say: 'But what surprised me most was the rapidity with which he wrote. As soon as he got the paper of questions, he bent his head over the table and with a quill pen (it shows how long ago it was when I say that quills were the only pens provided) he filled sheet after sheet of foolscap with his upright handwriting, which remained much the same through life'.

So that was Tout aged eighteen at the beginning of his career in history. His subsequent career consisted of five years in Oxford, ten years in Lampeter, twenty-five years in Manchester and finally some four very busy years of supposed 'retirement' based in Hampstead. I propose to go through these in turn and to highlight features of each period which particularly fascinate me and cast light on his personality and character.

Oxford

Tout secured his scholarship in November 1873 and began study at Oxford late in the January that followed the scholarship exam rather than in October. He secured his degree two-and-a-half years later – the only first



Figure 19.2. Tout at Oxford aged eighteen.

in the year. As Stubbs famously remarked, ‘unus, solus, totus’. He then stayed on in Oxford and over the next two years took a classics or, as it is known, a ‘greats’ degree, securing a second, not a first. A purpose in staying on may have been to compete for fellowships becoming vacant, first at All Souls and then at Brasenose. But he failed to secure either. He did some private tutoring, which presumably brought him some income, and also spent time learning Anglo-Saxon and Icelandic, the latter a particular interest of one of his mentors, York-Powell.⁶ We also know that it was during this period that he applied for, and was offered, a civil service job but decided not to accept it.

What is memorable about his Oxford time? Lodge speaks of his social unease and the development of a few, but not many, deep

friendships. He was not a club or a union man and played no active sport. Reading about him in those days gives me an impression of a shy and diffident young man, conscious of his relative poverty compared to many of the other students and, partly in compensation, throwing himself into his academic studies. He seems, however, during those years to have increased substantially in self-confidence, partly, I suspect, thanks to his academic success and the attention and praise he received from Stubbs and other academics. T. H. Green, for example, was a champion of his talents. We have also to remember that he was not successful in everything he tried for: he did not win the Brackenbury scholarship first time; he failed to win the fellowships he sought at All Souls or at Brasenose; he did not obtain the Lampeter job when it was first advertised; and his much prized fellowship at Pembroke College only came after he had begun to make a success of the Lampeter appointment. He may have gained in confidence but he was still very much feeling his way.

⁶ Frederick York Powell (1850–1904).

Lampeter

Tout's contribution to the college at Lampeter, his active participation in Welsh history and his own development as a historian during this time have been discussed in other chapters. I can add nothing on these topics. What I can and would like to do is to talk about Tout's growing confidence in himself while at Lampeter and his development as a citizen and a member of society. Some time after he moved to Lampeter in 1881 his mother moved from London to keep house for him there, giving him scope to spend time on other things. He was one of a group of ambitious young men whom the new principal, Francis John Jayne,⁷ had recruited to help revive the college and, unlike the Oxford days, he, Tout, was very much a central player in the group. Between them they helped to revive the moribund government of the town, leading the fight for borough status: he learnt and spoke Welsh, became a councillor and went on to become one of the borough's four aldermen. He became a keen bicyclist and seems to have cycled all over Wales, no doubt visiting some of the places where the many Welsh dignitaries whose lives he summarized for the *Dictionary of National Biography* had lived. He also formed a deep and lifelong friendship with John Owen, who later became bishop of St. David's⁸ – indeed, it was he who, at my grandfather's request, presided over my mother's marriage in 1920.

It was during the Lampeter years that Tout's collaboration with York Powell over the production of a three-volume textbook on British history began. The first volume, covering the period up to 1509, was written by York Powell and published in 1885. Tout's volumes covering 1509 to 1689 and from 1689 to the death of Edward VII appeared later. What Tout's motivation was for becoming so involved we do not really know, particularly since he did not write the volume covering the medieval period, but the books continued to be brought up to date as necessary and sold on quite a scale until the 1920s. These books were not, in my view, excessively Anglo-centric and gave reasonable coverage to Wales and Scotland. They provided a comprehensive overview of events and were strong on family trees, dates and maps but perhaps not so good on social, economic and cultural history. They undoubtedly proved to be a steady and useful source of income and even as late as the 1950s were paying royalties, largely by then from sales in India, to my mother.

⁷ Francis John Jayne (1845–1921), principal of St. David's College, Lampeter (1879–86) and bishop of Chester (1889–1919).

⁸ John Owen (1854–1926), principal of St. David's College, Lampeter (1892); bishop of St. David's (1896–1926).

All these activities helped to hone his skills in teaching and administration. We know that initially he taught both literature and history and that, even when he was able to drop the literature, he taught all and every aspect of history, which perhaps explains his willingness to write the textbooks on these wider periods. He clearly did a lot of teaching and was good at it, being famous for lecturing without notes. In relation to his teaching he reorganized the history curriculum at Lampeter, beginning to develop his ideas on the need for a broad base on which to build special subjects; and he took on administrative tasks, for example, re-organizing the library at Lampeter and cataloguing its substantial collection of eighteenth-century pamphlets. He was twenty-five when he went to Lampeter and thirty-five when he left. He had all the energy of a young man of that age and threw it into whatever he did – and he found that he was successful at many of the tasks to which he turned his hand. In this sense he became a big fish in a little pond, but it was this experience that gave him the self-confidence to go on and apply those same energies and capabilities to the bigger pond of the University of Manchester.

Manchester, 1890–1925

Reading about my grandfather in preparation for this chapter, I have been impressed by the range of activities which engaged his attention at Manchester. The enthusiasm and energy which characterized his years at Lampeter were focused not just on his own history department but on many wider issues within the university and the discipline of history. I was interested in the amount of time and effort he gave to the establishment of the non-denominational faculty of theology with its emphasis on co-operation between different faiths. He also, of course, had a large role in ensuring that the John Rylands Library developed a close relationship with the university; and he was seminal in the setting-up of the Manchester University Press, recognizing its importance to the dissemination of the research work not only of his own pupils but of the university as a whole. I had not realized, either, how involved he had been in establishing and helping to develop the Manchester University Settlement, which was modelled on Toynbee Hall in the East End of London and aimed to provide education and culture for the poor while providing opportunities for both staff and students to experience the social conditions and poverty of the working classes.⁹ He was an active contributor and reviewer for the *English Historical Review* from its foundation in 1886 and continued that role throughout his life; he

⁹ M. Tout, 'T. F. Tout as a citizen', in *The Collected Papers of Thomas Frederick Tout* (3 vols., Manchester, 1932–4), i. 27–38, at p. 31.

likewise played a leading part in the early years of the Historical Association and was a regular contributor to its journal, *History*. Indeed, by inviting the association to hold its second annual meeting in Manchester he helped to establish the tradition that the association would meet away from London every second year.

Some academics resent the amount of time spent on teaching and administration – my grandfather, in contrast, seems to have gloried in it, although I doubt whether he would have had much time for the interventions by recent governments in university teaching, research and administration. I have been interested in how inspiring and caring a teacher my grandfather was. To me he had always had the aura of the ‘great professor’, a somewhat remote figure. But it is clear that he was far from remote, taking a personal and immediate interest in a student’s work, bringing the subject alive through his own teaching, talking about his research and responding readily to their needs. He was also very considerate to his students, believing firmly that they should make their own choices (for example, of special subject or research project) and backing them up in those choices. He believed strongly that teachers of history at school and at university belonged to the same tribe and that their job was to inspire young minds – a view which his daughter, my mother, impressed on me and which underlay her consistent support not just for the Historical Association but also, at a later date, for the Institute of Historical Research and especially for its Anglo-American conferences. The prize example of support for his students is the way in which, following his pupil Mark Hovell’s death on the Western Front, he completed and prepared for publication Mark’s book about the Chartists, neglecting his own work in order to do this.¹⁰

My grandfather moved to Manchester in 1890 and five years later, in 1895, when he was forty, he married one of his early students, Mary Johnstone, herself then aged twenty-two. She was one of three daughters of Stockport headmaster Herbert Alison Johnstone, all of whom attended the university and two of whom, my grandmother Mary and her sister Hilda Johnstone (who subsequently became a professor at Royal Holloway), studied history. Perhaps partly as a result of his wife’s influence, Tout gave steady support to women students and women members of staff, insisting upon the same opportunities in the university for women as for men. Mary in turn had a professional life of her own, writing a short piece about St. Ursula (perhaps based on her undergraduate thesis) and subsequently taking a leading part in the suffragist movement – those who wanted votes for women but eschewed the violence of the Pankhurst suffragettes. My grandfather was

¹⁰ M. Hovell, *The Chartist Movement* (Manchester, 1918).



Figure 19.3. Thomas and Mary Tout at Oak Drive, Fallowfield, Manchester, date unknown.



Figure 19.4. Mary Tout with Margaret, eldest child of Thomas and Mary Tout, aged three months, 1897.



Figure 19.5. Thomas Frederick Tout, c.1897.

throughout his life a supporter of women's suffrage, one suspects influenced by his mother and his wife, both women of intelligence and independent minds. Among Tout's students in the early years of the twentieth century were two other women of distinction: Ellen Wilkinson, who was a Labour MP and became minister of education in the 1945 Atlee Government;¹¹ and Dame Mabel Tylecote, who wrote about mechanic institutes and was a distinguished chairman of the Manchester Education Committee.¹²

Tout's mother moved with him to Manchester, initially to a separate house but by the 1901 census she was recorded as living in her son's household and she continued to do so until she died in 1904. My mother Margaret was born in 1896, a year after the marriage, to be followed three years later by a boy who died in infancy and then Herbert in 1904 and Arthur in 1905. Those were the days when a professor was able to maintain a substantial household, although perhaps the income from the textbooks helped. There are photographs of the family replete with nanny, cook and general maidservant standing outside a large house in Mauldeth Road (Figure 19.6). Mary Tout, my grandmother, was also a great socialite and enjoyed the role of wife to a respected and well-liked professor. There were dinner parties and smaller gatherings. My grandfather was apparently an excellent talker and raconteur, delighting in company and the house was a ready meeting



Figure 19.6. Family and servants at Mauldeth Road, Manchester, c.1907.

¹¹ Ellen Wilkinson (1891–1947).

¹² Dame Mabel Tylecote (1896–1987).



Figure 19.7. The Tout family at Edale, c.1909.

place for a wide circle of friends including, for example, C. P. Scott, editor of the *Manchester Guardian*.¹³

You may wonder how Tout fared as a father. We have little evidence of this but there are two stories from the memoirs of his life by Powicke and A. G. Little which I might repeat.¹⁴ The one related by Little tells of how my grandfather used to try to get the family to play ‘the quiet game’, in which participants would see which of them could remain quiet longest – as one can imagine, this was not a game designed to thrill young children! The other story, from Powicke, is about how Tout took his children exploring the streams that flowed into Manchester’s two rivers, the Mersey and the Irwell. He retained his addiction to the bicycle in Manchester; and he and Mary and, one imagines, the family as they grew up used to bicycle all over the place. The two of them in 1902 bicycled from London to Manchester, quite a feat on the heavy bicycles of the day. There is another attractive story, which may well have no basis in fact, of the rather portly Tout struggling up a hill near the site of the battle of Bannockburn and observing, as he got off his bicycle to walk, that chain-mailed cavalry could not have charged up that slope. The observation, so the story goes, led to the subsequent changing of the location of the battle in his writing. It is a good story and

¹³ Charles Prestwich Scott (1846–1932).

¹⁴ F. M. Powicke, ‘T. F. Tout’, *Proc. Brit. Academy*, xv (1931), 1–30; A. G. Little, ‘Professor Tout’, *History*, xiv (1929–30), 313–24.

sounds characteristic of the man, though I have no grounds for knowing whether it is accurate.

My mother, his eldest child, was clearly very fond of him and he of her. Her secondary schooling was at Manchester High School for Girls, a school which her mother had attended and where her father was chairman of the governors from 1904 until 1924. She went on in 1914 to study history at Manchester University under her father, gained a first-class degree and then, with a brief break in Oxford, went on to do a doctorate under the supervision of her father. Both she and her aunt Hilda subsequently contributed the parts of volume 5 of Tout's *Chapters in Administrative History* dealing respectively with the administrative systems of the Black Prince and Queen Eleanor. Later, together with C. W. Prosser, she wrote a *Short Constitutional History of England*.¹⁵ I say it was 'short' but it was 250 pages long! The aspect of her professional life of which I became very much aware – partly because in the end I prepared it for publication – was her editing, spread over twenty years from the 1950s to the 1970s, of the accounts of the constables of Bristol castle in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.¹⁶ It was a project very much in line with her father's interests but sadly also a story of powers which, with age, were diminishing, coupled with a determination on her part to produce work to a standard to match her father's.

The two boys of the family were respectively eight and ten years younger than my mother, too young to have been mobilized for the First World War.



Figure 19.8. Tout with bicycle, c.1920.

¹⁵ C. W. Prosser and M. Sharp, *A Short Constitutional History of England* (London, 1938).

¹⁶ M. Sharp, *Accounts of the Constables of Bristol Castle in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries* (Gloucester, 1982).

Herbert, at age thirteen, was sent away to boarding school at Sherborne School in Dorset, apparently because the grimy atmosphere of war-time Manchester was making him asthmatic. He went on to Oxford, being among the first to study for the (then) new PPE degree and followed this with postgraduate work in Minneapolis, where he was when his father died in 1929. In the early 1930s his mother joined him for a while in the US before he returned to take up academic posts in economics, first at Bristol and subsequently at University College London. The younger son, Arthur, followed his brother to Sherborne and subsequently went into publishing. Both served in different capacities during World War II, Herbert as a civil servant in the Board of Trade (and an air raid warden at night) and Arthur in the RAF and the under-cover Special Operations Executive. Herbert never married. Arthur married in 1936 and his only son, Brian, is, with me, the only other surviving grandson of T. F. Tout. He has the distinction of having the right surname while I have to make do with the right first name! The picture we have from the Manchester years is of a man who, in his public life, was living fully up to the potential already evident at Lampeter and of a home life which was very active and loving but where, perhaps, the wife and children may sometimes have felt a little neglected.

The final years, 1925–9

For Tout retirement did not mean a quiet, relaxed period. For one thing he was completing his great work, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Mediaeval England*, with help from Dorothy Broome and others.¹⁷ Indeed, when he died he had only just finished checking the proofs of his part of volume 5. In 1926 he became president of the Royal Historical Society and it may have been, in part, in anticipation of this role that he and Mary decided in 1925 to move from Manchester to Hampstead in London; another factor was probably that my mother, now married, was at that time living in London. As president he gave four noteworthy presidential lectures, which must have taken some preparation. He was certainly active in international spheres, having represented the British Academy, of which he was elected a fellow in 1911, at the Union Académique Internationale at Brussels and played a key role in establishing the International Committee of Historical Sciences. Indeed, at the time of his death he was busy arranging its annual meeting to be held in England in 1930.

Tout clearly was a committed internationalist and enjoyed these international get-togethers. His love of France went back a long way: he

¹⁷ T. F. Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Medieval England: the Wardrobe, the Chamber and the Small Seals* (6 vols., Manchester, 1920–33).

and Mary had spent their honeymoon in Brittany, amongst other things purchasing some old oak furniture, some of which to this day lives on in the family. There was a rumour that over the years he had visited every department in that country. He gave lectures at the university in Rennes and was a visiting fellow at the University of Caen. His admiration for German scholarship is also well known and in the light of this I can only assume that, at least prior to 1914, he had visited Germany and spoke or at least read German fairly fluently.

In 1928 Tout paid his first visit to the US, giving the Messenger lectures (a small matter of twelve lectures) at Cornell University.¹⁸ These were entitled 'The administration of medieval England' and Little, in his tribute after Tout's death, expressed the hope that the manuscript was in a form which could be published. However, it was not. Tout went to lecture in some thirty universities and colleges in the US and Canada and also managed to fit in time to do some research at the Huntington Library in California. One of his final lectures on the tour was in Toronto on 2 April 1928 on 'The unity of medieval civilisation'.

The mention of Toronto gives me an excuse to tell of a particular debt I owe to the Touts. An uncle of Mary Tout emigrated to Canada in 1880 and his granddaughter Marie Williamson and her husband came to England in 1923 and called on both the Touts in Manchester and on my mother, Margaret, now married with the surname Sharp, in London. Later the Touts, on their grand tour in 1928, met up again with the Williamsons when they were in Toronto and, in gratitude, Mary Tout, after Tout's death, sent offprints of the Tout memoir with appreciative words to the Williamsons. Then in 1940, with the threat of a German invasion, the Williamsons offered to look after Margaret Sharp's three sons in Toronto for the duration of the war. The invitation was accepted. I was the youngest of those three boys, then aged nine, and I spent the next four years in Toronto with the Williamsons. They were a memorable four years and I acknowledge a continuing debt of gratitude to both the Touts and the Williamsons for maintaining the family connections.¹⁹ We remain in close touch to this day.

Mary and Thomas Tout moved to a house at 3 Oak Hill Park in Hampstead in 1925. The records of the parish church of St. John at Hampstead reveal that the Touts were conscientious but not particularly prominent members

¹⁸ These lectures were endowed in 1924 by a 'fund to provide a course of lectures on the Evolution of Civilization for the special purpose of raising the moral standards of our political, business and social life'.

¹⁹ For further details of this transatlantic friendship, see *Just a Larger Family: Letters of Marie Williamson from the Canadian Home Front 1940-1944*, ed. M. F. Williamson and T. Sharp (Waterloo, 2011).



Figure 19.9. Tout in the garden of Oak Hill Park, Hampstead, May 1927.

of the congregation.²⁰ Their names are to be found on the roll of communicants; their sons Herbert and Arthur seem to have been confirmed in 1925 to 1926; and until his death Tout contributed an annual subscription of two guineas a year to general church expenses. In 1927 he paid for two ‘pew places’ and all four Touts were added to the electoral roll. On 28 October 1929 Thomas Frederick Tout had an impressive funeral in the parish church at which the address was given by Canon Claude Jenkins, the eccentric and learned professor of ecclesiastical history at Oxford, who was still lecturing to modest audiences when I went up to Oxford.²¹ The address and the service were fully recorded in the *Manchester Guardian*, where it was reported that a group of children had gathered on the pavement next to the railings to observe the mourners and the heaps of floral wreaths. ‘Perhaps’, the reporter mused, ‘in later years they may

realise its significance and feel glad that they were there.’²² The tomb has now been cleaned and restored and in spring it is surrounded by a host of golden daffodils. On the side of the tomb are carved the words (which can be read through the railings):

²⁰ The information in this paragraph has been provided by Caroline Barron. The records of Hampstead parish church are now kept at the London Metropolitan Archives; see in particular P81/JN1/127, 450, 196A, 385.

²¹ Claude Jenkins, canon of Canterbury and from 1934 regius professor of ecclesiastical history at Oxford (1877–1959). The considerable funeral expenses, amounting to over £78, are recorded in the Hampstead parish church Burial Fee Book (LMA, P81/JN1/115A f.5v).

²² The account of the funeral was fully recorded in *The Manchester Guardian* and reprinted in the Hampstead Parish Church Magazine, December 1929, pp. 5–6, London Metropolitan Archives, P81/JN1/598.

Reflections on my grandfather, the historian T. F. Tout

Thomas Frederick Tout, Historian
28 September 1853 – 23 October 1929²³

And on the further side have later been added the words:

Also MARY his wife
Married 18. Dec. 1895
12 December 1873 – 30 December 1960

But carved into the lower part of the plinth, and until recently almost totally obscured by fallen foliage, is the well-chosen line from Chaucer's description of the clerk from Oxford in his Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*:

And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche.

²³ Inexplicably, the wrong date has been carved for the year of Tout's birth: he was born in 1855.

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Thomas Frederick Tout (1855-1929) was arguably the most prolific English medieval historian of the early twentieth century. The son of an unsuccessful publican, he was described at his Oxford scholarship exam as 'uncouth and untidy'; however he went on to publish hundreds of books throughout his distinguished career with a legacy that extended well beyond the academy. Tout pioneered the use of archival research, welcomed women into academia and augmented the University of Manchester's growing reputation for pioneering research.

This book presents the first full assessment of Tout's life and work, from his early career at Lampeter to his work in Manchester and his wide-ranging service to the study of history. Selected essays take a fresh and critical look at Tout's own historical writing and discuss how his research shaped, and continues to shape, our understanding of the middle ages, particularly the fourteenth century. The book concludes with a personal reflection on Tout by his grandson, Tom Sharp.

Cover image: Thomas Frederick Tout, 1855-1929, photograph from the family's personal collection.



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