

on occasion blurs the distinction between the involvement of Englishmen in the conflict and the intervention of England. His assertion that English involvement in the Swedish army in the 1630s “showed that England was still a capable military power” (181) is puzzling considering the humiliating English defeats at Cádiz and La Rochelle in the later 1620s and then at the hands of the Scots Covenanters in the First and Second Bishops’ Wars in 1639 and 1640.

Marks concedes in the introduction that the work is not a comprehensive study of all forms of English intervention in the Thirty Years’ War, as it does not address the topics of naval action or service in pro-Habsburg armies. However, when one considers these other aspects of English involvement in the European war, some of the broader conclusions in this work become less convincing. For example, it is asserted that the decisions of James VI and I and Charles I to allow foreign powers to levy troops within the British Isles constituted active Stuart involvement in the continental conflict and was “an alternative method of conducting foreign policy and war” (3). Whilst certainly applicable to the aspects of English intervention addressed in this book, this was hardly the case with the levies conducted on behalf of pro-Habsburg powers which Marks omits. The main aim of Stuart foreign policy during the Thirty Years’ War was the restoration of the Electoral Palatinate to James’s son-in-law from the occupying forces of Spain, the Bavarian-led Catholic League, and the Imperial army. If, as Marks argues, the decision to permit levies was always indicative of the policy of the monarch, it is curious that James VI and I allowed the Earl of Argyll to raise troops for Habsburg service in February 1622, over a year after Spanish soldiers first invaded the Palatinate.

Marks complements the work of Steve Murdoch and Alexia Grosjean on Scottish involvement in the Thirty Years’ War, and makes an excellent contribution to our understanding of England’s place within the events unfolding in mainland Europe during the first half of the seventeenth century. With examinations of how military experience gained in European armies influenced the conduct of the Civil War—and how the proliferation of radical political and religious pamphlets in the 1640s had its origins in the demand for printed news in the 1620s—Marks demonstrates how military, political, and social aspects of the Wars of the Three Kingdoms were influenced by the continental conflict. In addition to the sheer number of volunteers for anti-Habsburg armies, the substantial financial donations and the popularity of sermons lamenting the plight of the “Protestant side” demonstrate that Englishmen in the 1620s and 1630s did not regard the war engulfing the Holy Roman Empire as some distant event of no interest. As a result, *England and the Thirty Years’ War* is a valuable addition to the growing literature highlighting the need to place “British History” in its broader European context.

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## **Andrea McKenzie. Conspiracy Culture in Stuart England the Mysterious Death of Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey**

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In 1903, Andrew Lang investigated the case of Edmund Berry Godfrey’s mysterious death in October 1678, and remarked that “whosoever discusses historical mysteries pleases the

public best by being quite sure and offering a definite and certain solution” (*The Valet’s Tragedy and Other Studies* [1903], vii). Here we have just such a solution offered to us.

Certainly, when faced with an embarrassment of explanations to this historical mystery, there is a tendency to delve ever deeper into the minutiae of the case, which in turn inclines most authors to uncover ever more puzzles due to the very murky evidence. That said, Andrea McKenzie has made a very good attempt at resolving the mystery and engagingly leads the reader through the various combinations of evidence available, even adding some important new evidence of her own into the mix. However, since he was found dead in a ditch near Primrose Hill in October 1678, melancholic Edmund Godfrey still keeps many of his secrets and the actual quality of evidence remains tainted by the era’s politics and prejudice. The early evidence should be the best but isn’t. The later evidence was often deliberately misleading. Still, the mystery does allow for numerous theories and solutions, most of which are dealt with in some detail here. Some are convincing, others less so. McKenzie outlines the various theories put forward, and she deals with the many suspects, while ultimately suggesting one of her own as her solution.

However, McKenzie’s book also adds to our understanding of the conspiratorial context and culture of the reign of Charles II. Although, one major question that emerges is just how important was the death of Edmund Godfrey? Was it the spark that lit the “Popish Plot” or merely a sinister side show to the bigger political questions already raised in court and in Parliament about a Catholic succession? Had in fact Titus Oates and the other informers’ testimonies already escaped into the wider political world to wreak havoc on their own, even before Godfrey died? In a sense, the Godfrey mystery certainly fitted in quite well with the culture of the court and public, which by the late 1670s seem to have no illusions about heroes or providential justice coming to the rescue.

Yet, as is clear here, Godfrey’s death was very much a political one. Once it had happened, it was quickly swept into the political world and fiercely fought over by the Whig and Tory parties, added to by a continual stream of dubious informers, and by numerous courtiers, both high and low. Even the King’s brother, James, Duke of York, the real focus of the crises of the 1670s and 1680s, had his say on Godfrey’s death. And Godfrey’s death became part of a much wider Restoration political crisis over his succession and the relationship between monarch and Parliament. So, the case is most useful perhaps not just as a mystery to be solved but a means to explore some of the larger historical questions of the reign: how much should the people themselves trust their rulers? Could they trust the press and conspiratorial pamphlet literature they read in the public sphere of the day? On one level, Godfrey’s death and the Plot could be seen as a “court stratagem”: an inflated political design for which ultimately no real resolution was needed as no one really wanted one for it was far too useful in the court and parliamentary conflicts to abandon.

Chapter one of McKenzie’s book deals with the many anti-Catholic issues, solutions, and rumors swirling around in the reign. Chapter two examines the actions of the Earl of Danby (the King’s first minister) and the “moral panic” which overwhelmed him. Chapter three then takes the reader through the important question of Godfrey’s suicide or nonsuicide; does the case really support this solution? McKenzie thinks not but deals in detail with Godfrey’s state of mind and (as much as is possible at this distance in time) with his actual movements on the day of his death. Certainly, the later activities and interviews of the many witnesses by Sir Roger L’Estrange, investigating the case in 1685, and his “interventions” into the evidence were a significant matter here. Chapter four then explores the Whigs’ response to Godfrey’s death and their use of it for their own purposes. Chapter five, on the other hand, examines some new evidence that McKenzie has unearthed from William Lloyd. As Godfrey’s local curate and later Bishop of St Asaph, Lloyd evidently knew a lot more about his parishioner than he let on publicly, and he revealed this in a secretive shorthand to L’Estrange. Lastly, McKenzie’s conclusion draws up her potential solution to the case: a moderate Godfrey gets into trouble by mediating between “great men,” reading “secret papers,” crossing George, Duke of Buckingham, who had been taking French money (although who wasn’t

in this period?), and was murdered for it by Colonel John Scott. While a satisfyingly written solution, much of this still has a somewhat circumstantial air to it.

Perhaps given that we can never really know how Godfrey met his death, the major question we now really need to ask is how an obviously intelligent monarch such as Charles II, who oversaw all of the lies and counter lies that made up the “Popish Plot” and its various side lines, did little to stop it all happening, even though he knew that it was all false. An understanding of the King’s own motives in the period remains essential to a real understanding of the plot’s politics for he set the tone for much that happened around him both at court and in the reign itself and so, if we need to blame anyone for what happened to Godfrey, then perhaps we already have our real culprit standing in plain sight.

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## Jonah Miller. *Gender and Policing in Early Modern England* **Cambridge Studies in Early Modern British History. Cambridge:** **Cambridge University Press, 2023. Pp. 252. \$110.00 (cloth).**

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In his highly anticipated new book, *Gender and Policing in Early Modern England*, Jonah Miller demonstrates considerable skill and knowledge in explaining many aspects of early modern policing. He argues that a new type of gendered policing emerged over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. English policing, conducted in the Middle Ages and sixteenth century by amateur patriarchs, began to be dominated by professional male officials unconnected with the household. Building on a model proposed by the political theorist Carole Pateman, he explains these changes by arguing that policing was becoming fraternal rather than patriarchal. “Only by paying attention to gender,” Miller suggests, “can we properly understand how new practices of policing emerged from the old officeholding system and what it was that made them so distinctive” (10).

Over the course of this period, we are told, lawyers and other commentators began to make a clearer distinction between person and office, which “undermined the association between office and household” (62). This is said to be reflected in the relatively new distinction between judicial action (action taken on one’s own authority) and ministerial action (action taken on another’s authority). Miller also argues that, over the course of the seventeenth century, officeholding became an even more predominantly male preserve than it always had been. He then examines how gendered policing worked in practice through a discussion of arrests and searches in early modern England. He notes the interesting fact that search of person was far less regulated by law than was search of property. Most of the examples in *Gender and Policing in Early Modern England* concern the office of constable, with a secondary focus on the excisemen introduced in the mid-seventeenth century, who were more like professional modern bureaucrats than any officeholders England had seen before. Excisemen were deliberately kept dependent on the state and subjected to frequent transfers to prevent them from becoming rooted in one location (a practice also followed, as it happens, by the old Chinese civil service). Bailiffs and other petty officials make an occasional showing in the book too.