

Charles Burns, ed., *Calendar of Scottish Supplications to Clement VII and Benedict XIII of Avignon 1378-1419*. Edinburgh: Scottish Record Society, 2021. 354 pp. £40 hardback. ISBN: 9780902054714.

Charles Burns's new volume, produced by the Scottish Record Society, acts as a continuation of the *Calendar of Scottish Supplications to Rome* series begun under the Scottish History Society in 1934. As a result, the publication finds itself in excellent company and hopes to offer researchers further material through which to explore Scoto-papal relations in the later Middle Ages. Covering the period 1378 to 1419, the volume is firmly situated in the period of the Papal Schism (also referred to as the Western Schism), which witnessed the contested election of the papal seat. During this thirty-nine-year span, western Christendom was divided between adherence to two different papal administrations and popes, based at Avignon and Rome. Burns's contribution offers up material on the two so-called 'antipopes' based at Avignon, Clement VII and Benedict XIII, that the Scottish Crown supported during the schism.

The publication's concept at the outset may be somewhat confusing to those unfamiliar with the Scoto-papal materials that have already been published, since aspects of the work are already in print. In 1976, two calendars of papal letters, edited by Burns and Francis McGurk respectively, were published with the Scottish History Society.¹ They were comprised of materials created during the pontificates of Clement VII and Benedict XIII and taken from the Vatican and Avignon Registers. These works moved beyond the *Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland* by including the original records created in Avignon.² Crucially, their entries were primarily letters sent from the pope and his administration to Scotland. Burns's new volume collates these materials and synthesises them with the corresponding supplications sent to the Avignon popes. According to the editor's introduction, his calendar of Clement VII's supplications had 'gathered dust' for some sixty years, before the present volume was suggested and the corresponding work completed for Benedict XIII.³ Therefore, the work's title, *Calendar of Scottish Supplications*, is a little misleading, because it includes letters to *and* from the Avignon popes.

Beneath the beautiful dust jacket, which features the roof of St Martial's chapel at the papal palace in Avignon, the work boasts a rather generous glossary and index that will be of help to students of the medieval past. After a brief introduction, the remainder of the volume is split simply between the two pontificates, with a short biography of each pope introducing the two sections of the calendar. The organisation of the entries follows the style used in Burns's *Calendar of Papal Letters to Scotland of Clement VII*, meaning that scholars already familiar with this work should find the volume accessible and easy to use. Burns has also reorganised the entries according to the *Registrum Supplicationum*'s re-numbered system, established at the beginning of the twentieth century, so the entries' relationship to their source material is easier for researchers to trace.⁴ The entries are then organised in chronological order, departing

¹ *Calendar of Papal Letters to Scotland of Clement VII of Avignon 1378-1394*, ed. Charles Burns (Edinburgh, 1976); *Calendar of Papal Letters to Scotland of Benedict XIII of Avignon 1394-1419*, ed. Francis McGurk (Edinburgh, 1976).

² *Calendar of Papal Registers Relating To Great Britain and Ireland*, ed. W.H. Bliss et al., 14 vols (London, 1893-1960).

³ *Calendar of Scottish Supplications to Clement VII and Benedict XIII of Avignon 1378-1419*, ed. Charles Burns (Edinburgh, 2021), p.xxiii.

⁴ *Calendar of Scottish Supplications to Clement VII and Benedict XIII*, p.xxv-xxvi.

from the form used by W.H. Bliss, which followed the foliation of the registers', but perhaps makes more sense for those wishing to use the volume as a reference work.

While the volume's accessible style offers much to recommend it, researchers may find themselves referring back to the older *Calendar of Papal Letters*. The introduction is very short, offering only six pages of commentary on the *Calendar*. As a result, Burns and McGurk's introductions for the volumes of papal letters may be of greater value to those new to the subject. Similarly, the two brief biographies of the popes mainly detail the two men's careers before their election to the papal seat and offer little detail about their time in office. The work is also inconsistent in its approach to place-names, which may frustrate those attempting to trace an individual's ecclesiastical career, a particular geographic area, or a family. For example, the names of religious houses are sometimes rendered in their modern form, 'prior of Saint Andrews' or 'convent of Holyrood', while others are left in their medieval form, 'Dunfermlyne', 'Londorys' and 'Abirbrothok'.⁵ A similar issue arises when comparing personal names in the entries to those in the index. The entries follow the medieval form, 'William de Wardlau', and are then rendered in their modern form, 'Wardlaw', in the index. However, for those names that could be given in multiple forms this presents some problems. Thomas 'Edinham' and William 'Edinham' are rendered in a single modern form, 'Ednam', in the index. Instead, it would have been useful for the editor to offer a brief note about each name's phrenology, or a list of all name forms included in the volume. However, these are but a few small reservations. Indeed, Burns expanded the scope of this publication to include those requests that refer to Scottish patrons, as well as the usual entries concerning Scottish locations and recipients. As such, this work offers 200 previously unpublished entries, making it a valuable reference work for future researchers.

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⁵ *Calendar of Scottish Supplications to Clement VII and Benedict XIII*, p.3, 4, 6.