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a good republican. On the face of it this suggests a certain political schizophrenia, but in reality, it reflects the ambiguity of political identity in revolutionary Ireland.

This is a first class piece of work and will be indispensable to those interested in the history of ordinary people in Ireland during the war of independence as well as university level students of Irish and British history.

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Michael Livingston and Kelly DeVries (eds), *The Battle of Crécy. A Casebook*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2015. xiv + 524pp. ISBN: 978-1-781-38264-6. Hardback. Price £75.00.

The ambitious aim of 'gathering together in one place the most important primary documents' on the battle of Crécy has produced this welcome collection, consisting largely of chronicle accounts as very few administrative records are included. The contrast with George Wrottesley's *Crécy and Calais* (London, 1898) is striking, for he gathered a huge number of writs and other documents to demonstrate how the English army was recruited, and to identify many of those who took part in the campaign. This volume is not concerned with such matters, though they do much to explain the English success. Instead, the sources, impressive in number, located by the editors show the widespread interest of chroniclers across Europe in the battle, and the difficulty that they faced in describing it. Admirably, the sources are provided both in the original language and in translation. The texts are accompanied by half a dozen explanatory essays.

The arguments that the battle was not fought at the traditional site will attract much attention. In one of the essays, Michael Livingston suggests that it took place near Domvast, over five kilometres from the village of Crécy. One problem with this is presented by the sources which describe the battle as taking place at (*apud*) Crécy; this is dealt with by the simple expedient of translating *apud* as 'near'. A letter from Edward III described how the French army appeared 'a nostre venue a Cresci'; the questionable translation is 'as we approached Crécy', rather than 'at our arrival at Crécy'. Further investigation is needed to determine whether a ditch at Domvast, five metres deep and ninety metres long, was dug by English archers in a few hours as Livingston suggests, or is the remains of a late nineteenth century phosphate excavation. It seems improbable that a field name, the *Jardin de Geneve*, refers to the death of the Genoese crossbowmen in the battle. The alternative suggestion that it

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refers to juniper bushes seems more likely. The case for moving the battlefield is far from proven.

Surprisingly, the editors disagree as to when the English arrived at the battlefield. Livingston suggests that early on the day of the battle, 26 August, they left an encampment some twenty kilometres from the traditional site at Crécy, marched for five hours, prepared their defensive position, and began the fight at about 6 p.m. Kelly DeVries considers that the English arrived at their chosen battlefield on 25 August, in ample time to prepare for the fight. Neither suggestion takes due account of the strong evidence provided in the sources, showing that Edward camped in the forest of Crécy on 25 August, and marched to battle on the following day.

The editors challenge conventional views on the way the battle was fought, and rely on Italian and some French sources which suggest that the English were formed up within a defensive circle of carts, or *wagenburg*. Typically, they give little more than scant acknowledgement to Richard Barber's advocacy of this scenario in his *Edward III and the Triumph of England* (London, 2013). Much is made of the account in the Italian *Anonimo Romano*, though it contains many errors, placing the engagement eight leagues from Paris, and dating it to 3 September. Accepting the *wagenburg* interpretation of the battle means discounting all the English sources, as well as some other accounts, such as the Saint-Omer and Artois chronicles which suggest that only one division of the English army used carts as a protection.

One issue about the battle is whether the English used guns, and this book is helpful in showing which chronicles mention them, notably the Italian ones, and which do not, especially the English. However, the records which are also essential in untangling this problem are not included, and though his work is cited in a footnote, no account is taken of the recent research by Thom Richardson, demonstrating that the hundred *ribauds* ordered by Edward III were small carts equipped with lances, not multi-barrelled guns.

Alongside the essays by the editors on the location and course of the battle which accompany the texts, Niccolò Capponi provides a very valuable analysis of the Italian chronicles, and collaborates with DeVries in discussing the Genoese involvement in the battle, though without using all the available documentary evidence. The Bohemian contribution to the French cause is usefully examined by Jan Biederman and Václav Žůrek. DeVries and Livingston discuss Froissart's much debated use of the term 'herce' to describe the way the English archers were arrayed. The final essays, by Livingston, discuss the inaccurate reporting of the casualties at the battle, and provide a tantalizing glimpse of the development of the legends that came to surround it.

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This is not an easy book to use, for it demands much of the reader. The notes provide help, but their scale varies; two short poems by Iolo Goch receive nine pages of explanation, whereas Jean le Bel's important chronicle is dealt with in less than a page. Nor is the book well-supplied with maps; those giving the place names which form part of Livingston's argument are not reproduced in it.

The editors hope that they have been able to 'bring the story of what happened at Crécy over 650 years ago closer to the truth than has ever been possible before.' It is not, however, possible to do this without taking into account the evidence for the recruitment and supply of the armies. Nor are all of what might be called their 'alternative facts' convincing. In providing a valuable collection of the narrative accounts of the battle, what the book demonstrates is how difficult it was for contemporaries to discover what happened at Crécy, and how impossible it can be for historians to discover the truth.

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Norman Ohler, *Blitzed: Drugs in Nazi Germany*. London: Allen Lane, 2016. Bibliography, Index, 360pp. ISBN: 978-0241256992. Hardback. £20.00.

Norman Ohler's *Blitzed: Drugs in Nazi Germany*, the English translation of his 2015 book *Der totale Rausch*, is a readable, entertaining, journalistic and deeply flawed historical study. Appearing to much acclaim and significant interest in the British popular press, the focus on the Nazis and their use of drugs has always provided something of an unhealthy fascination for tabloid newspapers, reflecting the intersection between two subjects defined by deviancy; deviancy squared if you will. One of the most interesting responses to the work of Ohler, well-illustrated by the *New Yorker's* (20 March 2017) headline: 'The Writer Who Uncovered The Nazis' Drug Use', are the claims for the originality of the work. While Ohler has undoubtedly considered some important archival material, especially the records of Hitler's physician, Dr Theodor Morell, and there is some engagement with the relevant secondary sources, including the key work of Steinkamp ('Pervitin Testing', 2006) and of Snelders and Pieters ('Speed in the Third Reich', 2011), his study very much follows the already developed scholarship that has considered drug use in the Third Reich; including the work of Nicholas Rasmussen (*On Speed*, 2008).