

RIGHT ROYAL BASTARDS – The Fruits of Passion

ISBN 0-97 11 966-8-0 – 206 pages - £19.99

Peter Beauclerk-Dewar and Roger Powell have produced an excellent book, with a very perceptive introduction by His Royal Highness The Duke of Gloucester, KG, KCVO. It is splendidly illustrated with more than fifty pictures, some in colour; it is well referenced and indexed.

Beauclerk-Dewar's and Powell's work is presented by Burke's Peerage and Gentry in paperback, at a price only disclosed by a barcode. For the value of this work, this is no doubt the right format to be a compliment to an original remark. For its content, it is well worth giving it a library binding.

Peter Beauclerk-Dewar's introduction puts the context of royal bastardy into its correct position in the present age. Apart from alluding to the earlier period, generally covered by Christopher Given Wilson and Alice Curteis in *The Royal Bastards of Medieval England, 1066-1486*, the present work begins with Tudor Bastards 1485-1603. The end of this period appears to coincide with one of licence and the Stuart period of much debauchery. Somewhat more constrained times follow in the Hanoverian era, through to 1901, after which there appears to have been the embarrassing years. Yet, Anthony Hall the notorious claimant who annoyed King George V before the First World War is not to be found in the very comprehensive index, and with other lacunae no doubt invites further editions.

Humphery-Smith's essay on *Bastardy* in Appendix II of this book, and another on *Arms of Royal Bastards* in Appendix III, brings a fresh perspective on the genealogical and heraldic contexts. These also illustrate what an important work of historical research this book has become. The co-authors, Peter Beauclerk-Dewar and Roger Powell are to be congratulated for their work will be consulted until each library copy becomes irreplaceable. It will quickly find a home among readily consulted books in the libraries of historians and genealogists throughout Europe and, indeed, the rest of the world.