

**Margaret Harvey  
Chancellor's Medal  
30 April 2018**

There may appear a certain incongruity in Margaret Harvey being presented for the award of the Chancellor's Medal by someone who only joined the Department of History a decade after her retirement. But, even as a young academic working in another institution and in a different field, Margaret's name was well known to me as one of a small group of historians sustaining Durham's reputation as one of the most important centres in the world for medieval history. And one of the pleasures of moving here six years ago has been to get to know her a little personally, especially as her own research interests have moved closer to my own.

Margaret comes from the North-East. Born in Cleadon, near Sunderland, she fell in love with History at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, diverting her from an early ambition to be a probation officer. Her association with the University began in 1964, when she was appointed to a Resident Tutorship at St Aidan's College and part-time Lectureship in the Department of History. She later became a full-time Lecturer and then Senior Lecturer.

Margaret is best known as one of the leading authorities on medieval ecclesiastical history, especially English relations with the papacy in the period of Lancastrian kingship. She spent many summers working tirelessly in European archives, particularly in Rome, Paris and Tübingen, which provided the basis for an authoritative series of articles, which are international in scope and continue to be a major source of reference.

Since retiring in 2003 Margaret's research interests have shifted to the ecclesiastical history of medieval and early modern Durham. Her book on *Lay Religious Life in Medieval Durham*, published in 2006, demonstrates the same forensic attention to the complexities and details of archival material as her earlier work, and it is one of the best examples of recent attempts to get to grips with the understanding of lay religion. Margaret is continuing to develop new insights into the history of Durham cathedral and priory as they were before Henry VIII's dissolution.

This research is coming to a climax in the new edition, in collaboration with Lynda Rollason, of the *Rites of Durham*, a late sixteenth-century text describing the cathedral before the Reformation. Nothing like it survives for any other cathedral, and the document is of enormous significance for our knowledge of the pre-Reformation across England. The edition will be a major work. Drawing on Margaret's unrivalled knowledge of the recusant tradition in the North-East, it will place the text in an entirely new context, casting fresh light on attitudes to the past in post-Reformation England.

It would be inappropriate not to finish with a few words on Margaret's wider contribution to Durham. She is still in contact with many of the students she knew as Resident Tutor at St Aidan's and undoubtedly played a major role in the success of the College. She was an imaginative and innovative teacher. She has been an enthusiastic Vice-President of the Surtees Society, assisting editors of volumes who otherwise would have found it difficult to complete their work. And, as I can testify, she remains a regular presence at seminars around the University, always an incisive presence and always willing to devote time and energy to the support of younger scholars.

Chancellor, I present Margaret Harvey to receive the Chancellor's Medal.