



The Military Orders. Vol. 5, Politics and Power

Peter W. Edbury

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Scholarly interest and popular interest in the military orders show no sign of abating. Their history stretches from the early twelfth century to the present. They were among the richest and most powerful religious corporations in pre-Reformation Europe, and they founded their own states on Rhodes and Malta and also on the Baltic coast. Historians of the Church, of art and architecture, of agriculture and banking, of medicine and warfare and of European expansion can all benefit from investigating the orders and their archives. The conferences on their history that have been organized in London every four years have attracted scholars from all over the world. The present volume records the proceedings of the Fifth Conference in 2009 (held in Cardiff as the London venue was in the process of refurbishment), and, like the earlier volumes in the series, will prove essential for anyone interested in the current state of research into these powerful institutions. The thirty-eight papers published here represent a selection of those delivered at the conference. Three papers deal with the recent archaeological investigations at the Hospitaller castle at al-Marqab (Syria); others examine aspects of the history of the military orders in the Latin East and the Mediterranean lands, in Spain and Portugal, in the British Isles and in northern and eastern Europe. The final two papers address the question of present-day perceptions of the Templars as moulded by the sort of popular literature that most of the other contributors would normally keep at arm's length.

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