

1710,” *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 17, no. 4 [2017]: 113–32), but that distinct material on homoplastics and the nose here benefits from its wider engagement with the altered face, and within the book. Skuse shares my fascination with the rhinoplasty operation made famous by surgeon Gaspare Tagliacozzi and associated in the early modern period with concerning tales of failed nose transplantation. Here, the altered face raises even more pointed questions about the body and identity and the potential for facial disfigurement to be read as disabling in different circumstances and for different people. The sympathetic death of the grafted nose also leads to my favorite chapter, where Skuse dives into the tricky post-mortem fates of altered bodies and their parts. Here, Skuse engages with the questioned relationship of body to identity that was raised by the Resurrection, ultimately focusing on the writings of Robert Boyle and John Donne and pairing these with a surgical reading of the Miracle of the Black Leg. She adds to the work of disability historians like David M. Turner and Irina Metzler with further evidence for theological debates on whether impairments and deformities were sufficiently part of the individual’s identity and capacity for sociability to accompany them at Judgement Day, or whether all people would rise flawless and thus in some cases unrecognizable.

Throughout *Surgery and Selfhood*, Skuse carefully but confidently draws productive links across time, including when acknowledging the research questions and synergies that arose through public engagement work on this Wellcome Trust-funded project. This is most apparent in the final chapter, where Skuse uses current engagements with the “hard problem” of “how consciousness can arise from matter” (139) to engage with early modern writing on phantom limb pain, especially from surgeon Ambroise Paré and philosopher René Descartes, and the first-hand account of eighteenth-century Scottish physician William Porterfield. This is an apt chapter with which to close the book, since it captures threads from across chapters on the “varied and often fluctuating ways” people understood embodiment, where “the body could be imagined as entirely entwined with one’s mental subjectivity, or as utterly divorced from it” (146).

My only quibble with *Surgery and Selfhood* is essentially a wish that the book was longer. Skuse covers six different case studies (plus introduction and conclusion) in 173 pages, and within chapters, she moves between focus texts and across the full sixteenth to eighteenth centuries (and even further back into late medieval illustrations of the Miracle of the Black Leg). Because of this, some of the moves are a little abrupt. In my view, the book would have benefited from the space for some more expansive framing in the introduction and especially within chapters to set up methods, links, source choices, omissions, and conclusions between the topics. The generative conclusion is testimony to what Skuse can do with this reflective space.

Emily Cock   
 Cardiff University  
[cocke@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:cocke@cardiff.ac.uk)

MICHAEL SPENCE. *The Late Medieval Cistercian Monastery of Fountains Abbey, Yorkshire: Monastic Administration, Economy, and Archival Memory*. Medieval Monastic Studies 5. Turnhout: Brepols, 2020. Pp. 250. \$91.00 (cloth).  
 doi: 10.1017/jbr.2022.192

Fountains Abbey is an important presence in medieval studies: one of the earliest Cistercian houses in Britain, its turbulent history is as familiar as its extensive and magnificent ruins. Yet Fountains, like many other Cistercian institutions, remains partially hidden from

historiographical view. While much attention has been paid to themes illuminating the history of Fountains, such as the context of Yorkshire monastic institutions and northern politics, and its architectural history, with the notable exceptions of the work of Joan Wardrop (*Fountains Abbey and Its Benefactors: 1132–1300* [1987]) and Derek Baker ('The Genesis of English Cistercian Chronicles: the Foundation History of Fountains Abbey I,' *Analecta Cisterciensia* 25 [1969]: 14–41; 'The Genesis of English Cistercian Chronicles: the Foundation History of Fountains Abbey II,' *Analecta Cisterciensia* 31 [1975]: 179–212), its large archive has persisted as an untapped source. With *The Late Medieval Cistercian Monastery of Fountains Abbey, Yorkshire: Monastic Administration, Economy, and Archival Memory*, Michael Spence seeks to address that lacuna.

Spence engages with an astonishingly complex body of seventeen registers compiled at Fountains in the high and late medieval periods. Indeed, the abbey has the most abundant "business archive," to use Spence's terminology (15), of any British Cistercian house. This archive was repeatedly altered, augmented, expanded and—as Spence stresses—redacted from the twelfth century to the time of the Dissolution. Consequently, the archive can provide a detailed picture of the abbey's history across time. More specifically, it reveals the layering of the abbey's history through the mediation of abbots and monks, for the monastic community was keen not only to preserve titles to possessions but also to provide a narrative of its relationship with the community of donors, to navigate the changing fortunes of the English economy and the Cistercian model of organization, and to provide an acceptable history of its internal politics. Excavating the information hidden within the multiple strata of the abbey's registers requires considerable effort in understanding the relationships between the manuscripts. This is one of Spence's main ambitions, which he pursues through a forensic approach to the abbey's cartularies.

The book is organized to provide the reader with useful grounding in the history and historiography of Fountains before engaging with its records. The area of greatest interest is quickly flagged as the long fifteenth century, which is the provenance of the bulk of the abbey's records and a period that witnessed the profound economic and social change that followed by the Black Death in the previous century. Within Fountains, this was a period marked by disputed abbatial elections, struggles to attain mitred abbatial authority, abbatial poisonings, and other incidents that brought the house into serious disrepute, occasioning the appearance of Abbot John Greenwell before Parliament in 1464. This period is revealed as one of crisis on multiple fronts for Fountains. Greenwell was instrumental in both the evolution of the abbey's archive (in part through the interesting President Book, which Spence examines in detail) and, in tandem, the production of a foundation narrative. Accordingly, Spence is able to assemble detailed and convincing arguments about the abbatial response to sustained pressures. The abbey's registers were integral to its fundamental reorganization of its estate management, each record having its own useful, active life before it was superseded or complemented by a new codex, as Spence demonstrates in detail. These texts reveal how successive abbots created ways of understanding and navigating their new relationship with the external world and its newly manorialized form.

While Spence has provided a meticulous study of the interrelated nature of the abbey's business records, at times the density of the material leaves the reader with a tight focus on abstract cartulary material at the expense of a bigger picture. And such is the focus on the fifteenth century that the genesis of the cartulary stage of the abbey's archival practices is somewhat lost. What, for example, was the impetus for the compilation of the first Fountains cartulary in the late thirteenth century? Spence suggests it was simply an inventory of the deeds contained in the abbey archive, but it would be desirable to set this within a wider comparative context of stimuli for cartulary production. Indeed, at times, Spence might have pulled back from minute analysis simply to allow the reader to draw breath.

These quibbles notwithstanding, Spence succeeds in achieving the daunting goal of drawing together the hugely complex material from Fountains. The rounded picture he

produces of such documents in their whole archival context is a key part of more recent studies of cartularies—for example, one can point to Johanna Tucker's *Reading and Shaping Medieval Cartularies* (2020)—and speaks to a firm awareness of the need to engage with cartularies in the kind of sophisticated way single-sheet charters have long been afforded. While few British abbeys boast a late medieval archive as comprehensive as that originating at Fountains, Spence's methodology, framework, and conclusions point the way for the continued nuancing of current approaches to monastic cartularies.

*Kathryn Dutton*

University of Leeds

[K.Dutton1@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:K.Dutton1@leeds.ac.uk)