

PREFACE

Professor Sarah Foot's choice of 'The Church on its Past' as the theme for the fiftieth Summer Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society clearly struck a chord with the current consciously historiographical interests of many historians. Record numbers of communications and participants were attracted to this anniversary conference, ably conceived and chaired by Professor Foot and held at Christ Church, Oxford, in August 2011. A focus on the historiography of church-state relations made for a similarly excellent Winter Meeting in January 2012. The resulting volume offers the plenary lectures together with a selection of communications. The volume has a threefold structure: one group of essays considers the way that the church in the past has appealed to – and defined – its own past; a second group analyses the historiography of the past fifty years in relation to particular themes; and a third group addresses the historiography of church and state.

The editors wish to express their thanks to all those who chaired sessions at the Summer Meeting and peer-reviewed the communications, to the authors of the essays included in this volume for their prompt responses to requests for revisions, and particularly to Dr Tim Grass for his work as assistant editor. We are grateful to the society for continuing to fund his essential post. On behalf of the society, we would also like to thank our hosts: Christ Church, Oxford, for the Summer Meeting, and Dr Williams's Library, London, for the Winter Meeting. Professor Michael Walsh organized both meetings with his customary efficiency and also led the summer excursion, handling the last-minute changes to its programme with aplomb. We are very grateful to him for his contribution.

As this volume went to press, news was received of the unexpected death of Diana Wood, a former editor for the society. With Bill Sheils she co-edited five volumes (23–27), was sole editor for a further four (28–31), and also edited or co-edited three volumes of the *Subsidia* series. After relinquishing the editorship

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she remained a regular attender at EHS conferences for several years, and had communications accepted for two further volumes.

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