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A Rural Society after the Black Death: Essex 1350-1525

By L. R. Poos

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A Rural Society after the Black Death is a study of rural social structure in the English county of Essex between 1350 and 1500. It seeks to understand how, in the population collapse after the Black Death (1348-1349), a particular economic environment affected ordinary people's lives in the areas of migration, marriage and employment, and also contributed to patterns of religious nonconformity, agrarian riots and unrest, and even rural housing. The period under scrutiny is often seen as a transitional era between medieval and early-modern England, but in the light of recent advances in English historical demography, this study suggests that there was more continuity than change in some critically important aspects of social structure in the region in question. Among the most important contributions of the book are its use of an unprecedentedly wide range of original manuscript records (estate and manorial records, taxation and criminal-court records, royal tenurial records, and the records of church courts, wills etc.) and its application of current quantitative and comparative demographic methods.



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