

# Selden Society

We are pleased to announce the publication of Volume 128 for 2011:

## **Case Notes of Sir Soulden Lawrence 1787–1800**

edited by

James Oldham

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Lawrence, a Common Pleas and King's Bench judge 1794-1812, left extensive manuscript notes of his cases. These were for his own use, necessary because of the non-reporting or very-delayed reporting of cases in the central courts during most of the 18th century. Even after the beginning of regular reporting by Durnford and East in the KB from 1785, there continued to be serious gaps. In the introduction the editor chronicles this lack of regular and timely reporting, especially in the courts of Exchequer and Common Pleas. Hence the importance of materials such as these, drawn from the extensive collection of Lawrence manuscripts in the Middle Temple and Lincoln's Inn libraries.

The first part has notes of cases by Lawrence when still at the bar. But the main content is his notes as a judge, from 1794. These not only contain many unreported cases, but also supplement the printed reports with much fuller detail and include unreported intermediate stages of litigation. The editor has matched Lawrence's case-notes with contemporaneous reports in *The Times* to produce a picture of legal London in the period, its dominant personalities, and the judges' frustrations with abuses and delays for which professional practice was largely responsible.

In the last section of the volume, the editor has selected examples from seven out of the many Paper Books among Lawrence's manuscripts. The very broad issues dealt with include: restrictions on the property rights of married women; principles of executory bilateral contracts; the permissible scope of a covenant not to compete; the disposition of property by an illiterate testator; and questions of international trade during wartime.

The volume has 512 pages with a coloured portrait frontispiece. It is case-bound uniform with Society's annual series. It is sent free to members of the Society as part of their annual entitlement. Non-members may buy copies for £60 (\$100); and this includes all dispatch cost if payment is received with order. Please complete the form on the next page as applicable.

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