IN MEMORIAM: PRUDENCE TRACY

In April, 1993, REED lost one of our founders. After more than a year’s battle with cancer, Prudence Tracy, a senior editor at the University of Toronto Press, died peacefully at home. Prue was instrumental in REED’s creation. When the idea for REED was born during the winter of 1974, those of us who had been doing extensive records work in York, Chester, Coventry and Norwich and our enthusiastic supporters were in search of two things — financial support to launch the dream of a research project that would allow others to continue archival research and a publisher who would publish what we had already collected and take on a long term commitment to the series. Before the finances had been put in place, Prue had persuaded the University of Toronto Press (where she was then a relatively junior editor) to become our publisher. The support of the Press was a crucial factor in the original five-year grant from the Canadian government that really got REED started in 1976. Prue became one of the key members of the REED Executive Board, at first helping us through the complexities of book production and then acting as liaison with the Press as one collection followed another through the editorial process.

Many in the scholarly world of medieval and renaissance studies have reason to mourn Prue’s passing. She was an enthusiastic colleague in the true sense of the word. She believed in seeking out new scholars whose work might be published by the Press. As she gained experience, she became particularly good at helping many of us to clarify our scholarly projects and to face realistically the possibilities for publication. She was also a convivial companion whose wit and kindness will be sorely missed. I remember with particular delight one long drive back to Toronto from Kalamazoo when she seconded Alan Fletcher from Dublin in a hilarious reading of Winnie-the-Pooh. She loved books, she loved learning and she loved and was loved by her many friends. We have all benefitted from having known her.

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