Reviews

Vendel Period Studies: Transactions of the Boat-grave Symposium, Stockholm, 1981 (Museum of National Antiquities Studies, 2). Edited by J. P. Lamm and H-A. Nordström. 15 × 21 cm. 160 pp., many figs., pls., maps. Stockholm: Statens Historiska Museum, 1983. Price not stated.

This publication is described in Dr Ambrosiani's Introduction as 'an attempt to assemble old and new aspects of the remarkable material from the boat-graves and set it in the context of its economic, settlement and technological background'. The symposium referred to in the title was occasioned by the historic exhibition of 1980/81 which brought together the marvellous finds from the Vendel boat-graves (housed in Stockholm) and the Valsgärde boat-graves (lent by Uppsala University), with the riches of the Sutton Hoo ship-burial, sent abroad for the first and it is to be hoped the last time by the British Museum. A Swedish-language publication, *Vendeltid*, was issued to coincide with the symposium and exhibition, being the texts of papers submitted in advance. The publication now reviewed is an enhanced version of *Vendeltid* in English which drops eleven old features and substitutes nine new ones, adding substance and importance. The present work contains seventeen papers, by nineteen authors. One cannot begin to do justice to them in a short review, but some may be singled out for special mention.

Dr Ambrosiani's substantial paper 'Background to the boat-graves of the Mälar Valley' relates the boat-grave sites to the settlement pattern, from prehistoric to Viking times, of the area as a whole. The boat-burial sites of the Vendel period are not maritime or central but line the inland margins of the settled areas, and their prosperity is related by the author to the development of trade in iron, opening up foreign contacts. Ambrosiani's work is based on analysis of the mass of data now accumulated in the archives of the Monuments and Antiquities Service (where, for example, over 240,000 graves are recorded); but interpretation of this data, particularly as to the dating of recorded but unexcavated sites and the relationships of settlements to burial sites, is not straightforward. Peter Sawyer's admirably reasoned and lucid 'Settlement and power among the Svear in the Vendel period' provides a necessary critique of Ambrosiani's thesis. He accepts, incidentally, Ambrosiani's claim that the Vendel XII grave was a boy's, based on his impressions of the size of the helmet; this does not accord with the dimensions published by Lindqvist and will need to be established academically.

Dr Catherine Hills's 'Economic and settlement background to Sutton Hoo in Eastern England' provides a similar critical survey of the context of the East Anglian boat-graves, particularly of the ship-burial, and makes clear the limitations of our existing data. Sutton Hoo remains for her something of an isolated and inexplicable phenomenon 'which has little in common with its background and appears without precedent or successor'. Dr Hills's admirable paper will be especially useful for continental students unfamiliar with the English scene.

The most potentially significant contribution is perhaps Dr Arrhenius's wide-ranging paper 'The chronology of the Vendel graves' for she arrives at datings for these (on which her paper is concentrated) which are 50 or 60 years or more earlier than the established chronology adhered to elsewhere in this book. Thus Vendel X, XI, XII and XIV are all dated back into the 6th century, that is, well before Sutton Hoo (*c.* 625) with Vendel X and XIV a good half-century earlier. This wholly novel dating is arrived at by applying to the

Vendel material the recent continental consensus, as worked out by Ament, for the dating of Merovingian grave goods and held by some to be generally applicable throughout the continental mainland including Italy. Dr Arrhenius also applies her exceptional knowledge of Germanic material in E. Europe and recent research there. This region she believes performed a dominant role in the development of the East Scandinavian Vendel Culture. It must however not be overlooked that the date of any burial is always to be fixed from the latest thing in it, and that the contents of the robbed Vendel graves are in almost every case woefully incomplete. This is a radical paper which will be much discussed.

Il Öhman's essay, 'The Merovingian dogs from the boat-graves at Vendel', refreshingly, supplies new data. In 1980 the dog bones from Hjalmar Stolpe's excavations of 1881–83 were discovered in the Statens Historiska Museum still in their original wrappings and unexamined. Sensitive and annotated field plans by Stolpe add evidence on the burial arrangements (for example the dogs were buried in positions of sleep or rest). This excellent study, which discusses Merovingian dogs in general, makes points of sociological and ritual interest and merits full attention.

The paper by Mavis Bimson and Morven Lesse, of the British Museum Research Laboratory, on 'The characterisation of mounted garnets and its value as archaeological evidence' is a model of scientific method and presentation. The need for a new technical approach is set out, the method evolved critically discussed and the limitations of the technique (offering a useful additional dimension of evidence, rather than proof) made clear. The new method uses a form of spectrographic analysis to obtain characteristics from flat-cut garnets relatively quickly and easily without dismounting them from their settings, thus avoiding damage. It is now clear that there is no future in attempting to pin down the geological source from which the garnets in any piece of jewellery are derived, but this method allows significant distinctions to be drawn. Preliminary studies indicated that garnets found in South Russian and Gotlandic jewellery, while not localisable as to sources, have different characteristics from those found in western European jewellery. Analyses of garnets in the Sutton Hoo jewellery and comparative pieces are given and comments made. Results are promising but more extensive work is called for.

A runologist, an osteologist and an archaeologist (its excavator, Lars Sjövard) describe the cremation-burial of a Vendel warrior found in 1980 at Rickeby (Uppland). This is chiefly remarkable for the results obtained from the minute recording of the bed of burnt material representing the pyre. Analysis of 32 litres of burnt bone and over 2,000 fragments of grave goods has made it possible to reconstruct the burial in great detail; for example, twelve birds, of nine different species, can be identified and their positions on the funeral pyre demonstrated. This is a *tour de force* of excavation technique.

One might have hoped, from this of all symposia, for some new light on the supposed 'Swedish connection' at Sutton Hoo. Unfortunately one can only describe the treatment of the subject, by all three authors who refer to it (Ambrosiani, Lundström and Wilson), as superficial. They contribute nothing new. Their common viewpoint is summarised at the beginning of Ambrosiani's second paper, 'Regalia and symbols in the boat-graves': 'Research has changed the interpretation of Anglo-Swedish contacts first indicated by the Sutton Hoo finds. Many of these have been seen as a legacy from East Sweden, but are now rather seen as common Germanic products'. (The shield, explained as a diplomatic gift, is excepted). It seems to me, on the contrary, a remarkable fact that developments since the case was first seriously deployed in 1950, and subsequently reviewed in 1974,[1] leave it almost wholly intact, if not strengthened. There seem to have been only two significant developments relating to the issue in this period. One is Dr Arrhenius's extensive work in the field of cloisonné jewellery, the other the Coppergate helmet. It may be said of Arrhenius's deductions from her analyses of the varying backing pastes used in the bulk of the cloisonné jewellery (but not in Sutton Hoo, where the master-jeweller, perversely, elected not to use any) that they are in danger, like the Sutton Hoo 'coffin', of being taken as established fact. The inferences, however, about the localisation of jewellers' workshops from the type of paste employed seem wide open to argument, not least since four of her different classes of backing

pastes have been shown to occur together on a single object (the Sutton Hoo shield). It might give pause also to reflect that the new Bimson/Lesse study not only shows that the Sutton Hoo gold pommel, uniquely among the Sutton Hoo jewellery, contains two garnets (the quatrefoils) of South Russian/Gotlandic type, but also, as I suggested many years ago on other grounds, indicates that the Hög Edsten Swedish gold pommel was made in the same workshop, at about the same time, as the Sutton Hoo shoulder clasps. It would not be surprising if the pommel had contained, in the engraved circle of its topmost garnet, blue glass instead of a gold ring.[2]

Vendel Period Studies also includes an authoritative commentary on the Valsgärde gravefield by Professor Arwidsson; Muller-Wille's survey of royal and aristocratic burials in central and western Europe: Schönbäck's valuable conspectus of the concept and custom of burial in boats, in all its variations: Phyllis Anderson on the siting of boat-graves and on the boats themselves; Erä-Esko (in German) on the Finnish grave-field at Kirmukarmu, which produced a well-known zoomorphic pommel on which he sheds new light; Agneta Lundström's 'Vendel and the Vendel period', an attempt to distill the distinctive characteristics of the Vendel culture, summarised in a happy phrase, 'A pattern with a warp of traditional elements and a weft of innovation can be clearly seen'; Professor Almgren on the late Roman and oriental (Persian) origins of the Vendel helmets and of the costumes depicted in their figural decoration, on the lines of his early paper in TOR; Lena Thålin-Bergman on 'Techniques and craftsmanship in the Vendel period' — not a technological paper but a study in the social status of the crafts and craftsmen; and David Wilson, 'Sweden — England', claiming 'not to solve any of the problems but in the hope of stimulating further discussion'. There is a concluding pictorial section showing all the boat-grave sites from the air. This book of essays fills a yawning gap and will be an indispensible reference work for all interested in the Vendel culture of Sweden and in Merovingian archaeology.

RUPERT BRUCE-MITFORD

NOTES

[1] R. Bruce-Mitford, *Aspects of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology* (London, 1974), 35–60.

[2] Although the pommel uses backing paste, this occurs in other pieces not in the ship-burial that have been attributed to the Sutton Hoo workshop, although absent in the 'regalia' gold pieces.

Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture in England. Volume I. *County Durham and Northumberland.* By Rosemary Cramp. 23 × 29 cm. Part 1, text, li + 337 pp., Part 2, 267 pls., containing 1,439 ills. Oxford: O.U.P. for The British Academy, 1984. Price £95.

Soon after the completion of one fundamental project in Anglo-Saxon archaeology, *Sutton Hoo III*, a second begins fruition, in more manageable format, with this two-part volume by Professor Cramp. Along with her team at Durham University, who promise a volume on Cumbria and another on York and East Yorkshire, she has master-minded the whole project. Next a more southerly volume is intended. The 45 pages of General Introduction for the series provide a handbook explaining with many diagrams the uniform classification of forms and ornament largely coded for compactness, also the epigraphic and other conventions. It will be available separately for purchasers of later individual volumes. Thirty-four double-column pages of introduction are specific to these first two counties. The catalogue (sites alphabetical by county) is followed by tables of form and motif, bibliography and the index to the introduction and cross-references.

One should turn first to the catalogue and illustrations, the Corpus proper, a tremendous accumulation of facts thoroughly and clearly presented, each item starting with location, history, measurements, material and condition, and ending with suggested date and full references. As a sample, the principal incomplete crosses of Hexham, Auckland St Andrew, Rothbury and, more than a century later, Aycliffe are succinctly and vividly

described detail by detail as never before, and then equally stimulatingly discussed. The generally very good photographs can be consulted continuously, being bound separately, and not being half-tones they can be enlarged for oneself. Unfortunately several of those of 'the most delicate and innovative of the Northumbrian scrolls', on Acca's cross, are less well lit than usual; mysteriously too it is described as unweathered, despite the loss of so much of its detail and inscription. The longest discussion is of the difficult iconography of the Auckland shaft and base. An interpretation confining this to St Andrew with angels, other apostles and saints (and incidentally an archer in both vine-scrolls) has been argued by Judith Calvert (*Art Bulletin* (1984), 243–55). Most of the Rothbury cross is missing as a reconstruction drawing shows. Originally it must indeed have been 'surpassed only by the cross at Ruthwell in the complexity of its theological scheme', and one might add magnificence. An item in Aycliffe's 'wide ornamental and iconographical repertoire . . . the distinctive split-plait' of the Durham school, has been recognised on a Shetland carved fragment too recently for mention. The photograph of the Aycliffe crucifixion allows one to suggest that Christ does have a halo, but sunk and leaving the profile clear.

The lesser sculpture is described no less carefully, and each item discussed as far as appropriate. There are all the early inscribed and uninscribed grave-markers, of Hartlepool, Billingham and Lindisfarne, and those so different of Monkwearmouth and Jarrow. Several of the latter are excavated finds now first fully published, as are the two sites' old and new array of architectural pieces. An absence, however, of sections throughout the volume, except for the Monkwearmouth balusters, might be criticised. Notable is part of a single-faced cross which Cramp suggests may represent a stage between the grave-slabs with a raised cross and the free-standing crosses. A very early octagonal shaft carved with interlace and foliage is reinterpreted as possibly from a reading-desk. Sculpture at Hexham assigned to the 7th century includes the frith-stool, animal frieze, Rood panel and, if by a foreign carver, the vine-scroll panel with putto archer, for which the alternative Roman date is still preferred. The index guides one to other portions of stone furniture, and other grave-markers such as the varied hog-backs at Sockburn, but not to the sundials grouped in plate 155 and Appendix D.

As a major innovation the Corpus uses, as explained in the General Introduction, for interlace designs the classification, terminology and descriptions, and the grouping into schools, worked out by Gwenda Adcock in a 1974 thesis, which is richer in range and interest than the published bare bones suggest. Though insular interlace is structured diagonally she disagrees with Romilly Allen that it was drawn out along diagonals, for, as she demonstrates, there is consistent evidence in manuscripts and sculpture for square grids, especially dots joined up by fugitive lines against which curves were sometimes flattened. In sculpture certain measurements were widely used, for example a 35 mm grid for every second void between the strands. Supplementing rather than discarding Allen's theory of 'breaks', Adcock regards mirror-image pairs of loops with their threaded and joining diagonals as the basic patterns, whose variations help to identify design relationships. Partly from distortions she envisages templates for tracing them or their elements, made sometimes of leather. This is less convincing than the template-curves for some figure sculpture which Richard Bailey has discovered. One might rather see the grid as the means of enlarging (or in the case of manuscripts reducing) from design-cartoons not necessarily made by the sculptor or new, and quite possibly worked up on a more elaborate system of fixed points.

The classification and coding of cross-heads by the ends of their arms is ingenious but occasionally needs to be treated with caution. Thus a small cross-of-arcs as found in other early contexts is classified without comment as if it were a late disc cross when in the centre of the inscribed cross on an early grave-maker. The similarly-placed 'negative cross' between triquetras has, like all such crosses, still to be accepted. Also though F 1 is noted as common on Lindisfarne markers, two of them are mistakenly catalogued as G 1.

Incorporating the groundwork of past local and wider publications, the volumes of the Corpus as they materialise will allow studies of 400 years of change to be much more securely based for each early kingdom or cultural region, and then for Saxon, Anglo-Celtic and

Anglo-Scandinavian England as a whole. Local styles and their social and economic circumstances can be identified, reflections of widespread ideas. Rosemary Cramp's innovative, full though compact introduction leads the way, making detailed use of the material, as well as of the historical and archaeological background with which she begins. In the next chapter she discusses the sequence of forms at length, grave-markers and grave-covers, cross-heads, furniture or fittings. A short chapter on the circumstances of production, with a geological map and summary, is followed by that on the sequence of ornament, within the categories of vine-scrolls, interlace, fauna and figural scenes. Drawings of the often damaged animal interlace would have been helpful. Then she draws the whole together, into chronology and schools of carving — the early flowering, renewed classicism, Scandinavian impact and late Bernician schools.

A Corpus is an international tool aiming at the highest standards including completeness, so it is curious that the not very numerous pieces in that part of Bernicia that became Scottish are omitted (except for photographs of four). It is not adequate to refer to Romilly Allen's 80-year-old work, of a different standard and now very incomplete; and this volume gladly includes drawings of lost Tyneside sculpture from Stuart's *Sculptured Stones of Scotland.* But worse is to come. To scholars and libraries abroad it will be incredible that the most complete gem-stone of Northumbria's golden age is only to be glimpsed because Ruthwell is 28 miles from Bewcastle across an invisible administrative boundary, while the *Sylloge* of the same British Academy includes Anglo-Saxon coins from across the seas. However inconvenient, these omissions (including Hoddom) must be catalogued in the next Northumbrian volume.

R. B. K. STEVENSON

Anglo-Saxon Art. From the seventh century to the Norman Conquest. By D. M. Wilson. 21 × 27 cm. 224 pp., 73 colour pls., 212 figs. London: Thames & Hudson, 1984. Price £25.00.

The Golden Age of Anglo-Saxon Art, 966–1066. Edited by Janet Backhouse, D. H. Turner and Leslie Webster. 21 × 27 cm. 216 pp., 16 colour pls., 275 figs. London: British Museum Publications Ltd, 1984. Price £10.00.

The first reaction to David Wilson's book must be one of congratulation that he found time to write it. No doubt he could say with Adomnán, another head of a great institution who managed to get his book, *De Locis Sanctis*, written, that he had worked under great difficulties 'occupied throughout the whole day with . . . laborious cares and responsibilities . . . almost too heavy to be borne, accumulating on every side'.

Wilson's book claims to be an up-date of Kendrick and in so far as it contains new finds and new assessments it is just that. But Kendrick's volumes were at once more ambitious, scholarly and literary. Wilson's more modest intention is to provide 'for the layman and student alike an introduction to the present state of study . . . of Anglo-Saxon art' and it is as this that it must be judged.

Until a few years ago the student was dependent on library copies of Zimmermann and the *de luxe* facsimiles for adequate reproductions of Insular manuscripts. Now he can own the books by Backhouse, Nordenfalk and Brown, and he may even invest in Alexander's and Temple's descriptive catalogues. Wilson's book fills the remaining gap for it covers metalwork and sculpture as well as manuscripts, and the stunning quality and generous number of the plates is going to ease the task of both teacher and student. The text, as one would expect, is lively and informed and the frequent detailed descriptions of ornamental forms are just what the beginner needs to get his eye in. The select bibliographies and reference system give the student plenty to follow up although it is symptomatic of Wilson's approach that there is no reference to Stenton's *Anglo-Saxon England* or to the works of Hunter Blair and Mayr-Harting.

My chief criticism of the book is its failure to provide basic methodological guidelines for the study of the pre-900 material. Students are attracted to the brilliance of the art but become disheartened when they encounter the widely differing dates and interpretations found in the critical literature. Unfortunately a fully developed methodology for the stylistic, aesthetic and iconographic study of Insular art has yet to be attempted let alone established, but the issues have not been wholly neglected and Wilson could usefully have taken this opportunity to develop them further. A feature of the book, which one must applaud, is his determination not to draw conclusions beyond the limits of the evidence. Fortunately as a specialist in metalwork he knows what style-history can and cannot do. On the other hand it is disconcerting to move from the optimism of the first chapter where he writes that 'a true sequence of Anglo-Saxon art can, despite all the losses, be built up on the evidence of what survives' to the pessimism of a later chapter where he sees the history of ornament in the 8th and 9th centuries as presenting a 'chronological morass'. At one point he declares that 'what is badly needed is to attack the problem of the chronology of the 8th- and 9th-century manuscripts from all sides, from the point of view of the palaeographers, historians, textual critics and style historians, in order to hammer out a chronology agreeable to all parties and not just based on the special pleading of one discipline'. I myself do not think that this is the way forward. The opposite view has been lucidly expressed by Christopher Verey in his contribution to the facsimile edition of the *Durham Gospels*. Faced with conflicting hypothetical evolutions for various elements in the manuscript he concludes that 'it is probably false to seek to reconcile too finely the evidence from disparate elements of a book . . . the specialist academic disciplines involved in assessing the various elements of *Durham* vary in their development and the range of comparative material on which they depend, and at no point are their approaches necessarily wholly compatible'. This seems to me a realistic view and one which allows the student to live with, and respect, differences in interpretation, and allows the specialist to remain true to the demands of his discipline.

Wilson's account of pre-900 sculpture is a curious tirade of warnings to scholars about their simplistic approach to the evidence. I do not accept that the work of Cramp, Bailey or Lang strays into the pitfalls signposted by Wilson. His account of the early sculpture is confusing and negative. The student should certainly have been given the benefit of Cramp's coherent interpretation of the evolution of sculpture in Northumbria, and Bailey's *Viking-Age Sculpture* provides the controlled methodological guidelines so conspicuously absent from Wilson's analyses.

My other general criticism of the book is the way in which the pre-900 works of art are treated as though they were capsules of stylistic problems rather than as manifestations of a total monastic culture. We should have had more about the roles of patronage and pilgrimage, about function, intention and content. The implications of iconography are studiously avoided. Aesthetic judgements are limited to such business-like labels as 'competent' or 'loose' and the irrelevant standard of naturalism is frequently implied.

An ingenious chapter on influences bridges the earlier and later periods. The section on Anglo-Saxon art on the Continent is clear and particularly well illustrated, but the treatment of sculpture in the Celtic west and north is perfunctory. (Incidentally, Henderson does not derive the Pictish cross-slab from the miniature pillow-stones but from the heavy relief memorial slabs best represented by the Herebericht slab at Monkwearmouth.)

Predictably, Wilson's surveys of the Viking period and of the later ivories and metalwork are authoritative and fluent, and they are unmarred by the admonitory tone of the earlier chapters. The final chapter, when taken with the more detailed entries in the exhibition catalogue, provides up-to-date coverage of the post-900 period.

The exhibition catalogue, a work of research in many areas, has the benefit of a masterly introduction by Simon Keynes. Anglo-Saxon art, he tells us in his opening paragraph, flourished from 966 to 1066 because of patronage, and the motives of the patrons were part of complex political, religious and social developments. This is equally true of the earlier period. It may be some time yet before the state of the study of Anglo-Saxon art is such to allow a fully realised history of the art to be written — one which expounds the relationship of

art to society. Meanwhile we can be grateful for the energetic way in which David Wilson has promoted public interest in Anglo-Saxon art by his book and through the recent London exhibition.

ISABEL HENDERSON

The Architecture of the Anglo-Saxons. By Eric Fernie. 19 × 25 cm. 192 pp., 100 figs. London: Batsford, 1983. Price £20.

The all-embracing title of this book — rather slim for the price — raises the reader's hopes of a more fulsome treatment of the subject than is given; although Professor Fernie attempts to explore the entire range of architecture attributable to the Anglo-Saxon era, from the early 5th to the close of the 11th century, the bulk of the discussion concerns stone-built churches.

In the introduction Fernie admits that he is not closely familiar with pre-Christian secular archaeology and architecture, and thus the book gets off to a predictably weak start. The first chapter, on 'Halls, Houses and Palaces', is both brief and superficial: it would have been better omitted. To a lesser extent the same is true of chapter 2, 'Towns and Fortifications'. There are glaring omissions, such as the Anglo-Saxon water mill at Tamworth, and over-simplifications abound, as in the example of a 'typical' Roman town; and just as the reader is prepared for a vigorous discussion of Saxon town-planning the subject is abandoned. All this is very disappointing.

Then the book changes gear, and Fernie reaches more familiar territory as he launches into church buildings in Kent, Essex and Wessex; Northumbria is dealt with next, in chapter 4, followed by 'Mercia and the Anglo-Saxon Basilica' in chapter 5. The succinct analysis of early churches in the south-east incorporates a convincing reinterpretation of the plan of SS Peter and Paul, Canterbury, but unfortunately reiterates the myth of the triple arch between the nave and chancel at Bradwell-on-Sea (there is now little doubt that there were only two arches here), and the earliest phase of the old Minster at Winchester is given a square east end (fig. 20) instead of an apse. It is good to see the apsidal building at Much Wenlock and the basilica at Lydd rejected as Anglo-Saxon and, instead, attributed to the Roman period, where their plans are more easily accepted.

Most of the discussion of Northumbria is devoted to an analysis of plan-types and their origins, and the eminently plausible thesis is advanced that narrow, rectangular churches such as those at Escomb and Jarrow derive their form from secular timber halls of the type seen at Yeavering. It is a pity that Fernie did not develop a discussion of the influences of timber architecture on stone buildings. This has long been one of the yawning gaps in the study of Anglo-Saxon architecture; and little space is devoted in the book to the consideration of wooden churches.

As all too often seen in studies based upon art history, the acceptance or rejection of recorded dates is deemed a matter for personal choice, plainly demonstrated here in the cases of Deerhurst and Brixworth. The former is recorded as being in existence by 804, and Fernie accepts the present building as probably 'original' (albeit we have no idea when Deerhurst was actually founded). Conversely, he finds the date of 675 associated with Brixworth unacceptable; in this instance he is probably correct and his argument for an early 9th-century date for the extant church at Brixworth is powerful. It is however difficult to see the relevance of the curious building at Cirencester to a discussion of the Mercian basilica, and the 9th-century date assigned to it has merely been plucked out of the air. A plausible case for a late Roman origin could be advanced.

Anglo-Saxon England is then abandoned in chapter 6, in favour of a brief but useful survey of the Early Romanesque in Northern Europe. The more prolific record of dates associated with continental churches lends greater precision to architectural chronology; but the certainty with which precise dates can be attributed to specific architectural detailing is

not as impressive as it might at first seem. Thus the church of St Pierre at Jumièges, with its building records and its close and important similarities to much Anglo-Saxon work, is in fact no more authentically dated than most English churches of similar style.

Skipping quickly over the Viking era, we return to England in chapter 7 for a discussion of church building in the late 9th and 10th centuries; and here Fernie advocates the abandonment of the A,B,C system of classification in favour of a return to the simple labels 'early' and 'late', with the Vikings as separator. A good deal of the material germane to this chapter has only been gained through archaeological investigation. More might have been said about the New Minster at Gloucester (the evidence was becoming available while Fernie was writing), and less reliance should have been placed on Glastonbury: the implausibly irregular plan of the abbey is a reconstruction from disconnected fragments of foundation which lack substantial dating evidence. Fernie's reinterpretations of Abingdon Abbey and the plan of Peterborough are good, but his reconsideration of the plan of the westwork at Winchester Old Minster is more provocative; this will merit serious consideration in the light of the fully published evidence from the excavations. In discussing the incorporation of martyria in major churches, such as Winchester, Fernie entirely overlooks the crucial evidence from Wells, found and published in 1980.

Fernie's attempt to demolish H. M. Taylor's argument for the existence of substantial western galleries in some Anglo-Saxon naves is not convincing, especially at Deerhurst and Tredington. While it is reasonable to accept the unlikelihood of solid-floored galleries extending across half the area of a nave, relatively narrow galleries attached to the north, west and south walls are feasible and archaeologically supportable. A recent study at Barton-upon-Humber has confirmed their existence in the turriform nave there.

Chapter 8 begins controversially by coining the phrase 'Anglo-Saxon Romanesque', for which there is some justification if one takes a continental rather than an indigenous view of the development of 11th-century architecture in England. Fernie's discussion of the development of the cruciform church — a quest for perfect typology — is bedevilled by the introduction of Deerhurst (which occupies several pivotal positions in the book). It is an undated building, of many phases, with a substantially incomplete plan. Fundamentally, we do not know whether to class it as a simple box-like church with a more or less random collection of appendages, a full-scale basilica from which deletions have been made, or a cruciform building achieved by tortuous conversion. Direct comparison of Deerhurst with the major, single-period church at Breamore is not strictly valid; and in discussing features at the western ends of cruciform churches Fernie appears to be unaware of the substantial chamber which has been deleted from Breamore.

Fernie's book is packed with reinterpretations, and none is perhaps as far-reaching as his proposed redating of the mausoleum-crypt sequence at Repton. While H. M. Taylor's suggested dating of the complex series of structural alterations to the crypt is closely argued, it may not be incontrovertible; but, *a priori*, it is more plausible than Fernie's thesis. He tries to compress most of the structural phases into the 10th and 11th centuries, and his argument relies in part on an irrelevant comparison between the spirally-ribbed columns at Repton and spirally-fluted ones of the mid 11th century at Utrecht. If there is a case for redating the sequence at Repton it needs much closer definition and proper handling of the mass of archaeological data now available.

Throughout the book there is an overwhelming tendency to advance dating, so that a large number of churches which have often in the past been assigned to the early and mid 11th century are now assigned to the half century following the Norman Conquest (including all the Lincolnshire towers): in Fernie's own words 'the present volume is in effect an attempt to clear the ground' (p. 171). In sum, this is an evocative and controversial book which will certainly engender much heated debate. The text is well written, clear and stimulating; printers' errors are few. The illustrations, drawn from a variety of sources, have been thoughtfully chosen, but the scrappy nature of some of the line drawings is a blemish that could have been avoided.

WARWICK RODWELL

Warlords and Holy Men. Scotland A.D. 80–1000 (New History of Scotland Series, 1). By Alfred P. Smyth. 12 × 20 cm. 279 pp., 4 maps, 4 tables. London: Edward Arnold, 1984. Price £6.95.

Warlords and Holy Men, the latest volume in Jenny Wormald's highly acclaimed new History of Scotland, covers the period A.D. 80–1000. It is therefore of interest and relevance to everyone working on the earlier medieval archaeology of northern Britain. It should be stated at the outset, however, that the relevance is oblique rather than direct.

Given the great, and ever increasing, quantity of archaeological evidence that is available, it is perhaps surprising that Dr Smyth has made so little use of it. On deeper reflection, however, it may be a matter more for gratitude than surprise, because his rare archaeological statements and judgements are all too often flawed. For example: few informed archaeologists would accept that 'the difference between brochs and vitrified forts is culturally not at all great' (p. 53); that the Bewcastle cross can be dated 'to about 700' (p. 26) without further comment; that western Scotland and Ireland were effectively isolated from Gaul and the Mediterranean in the 6th and 7th centuries (p. 119 *et passim*); or that 'Columban craftsmen in stone' were exhibiting any marked ability before about 750 (p. 125). There is a brief account of Pictish forts and houses, but none of Viking house- and settlement-forms, nor of their burials; nor of hoards of coins and hack-silver, with their economic implications.

Apart from this scanty and questionable use of material evidence, the archaeologist may find a deeper cause of dissatisfaction in the character of Dr Smyth's historiography. Essentially he is writing old-style kings and battles, saints and abbots history, derived from extremely meticulous and detailed source analysis: not at all the social and economic history which chimes so well with the preoccupations of the archaeologist. The reader will find here no discussions of the relevance of the custumals of the Bishop of Durham to the customary services of 5th- and 6th-century Britons; of the *Senchus fer nAlban* as a guide to the military organization of Dál Riata; nor of the *Leges inter Brettos et Scotos* as a guide to rank in 10th-century Strathclyde.

The first word in the book's title is significant here. It is not at all helpful to use the term 'warlords' about men whose literate contemporaries called them *reges*, who built, and fought over, and ruled from places called *civitas* or *urbs regis* or *villa regia*, the places which constitute the early historic fortifications or the royal halls of the archaeologist. The prehistoric archaeologist, no less than the medieval, has much to learn from the documentary evidence for circuits among the royal centres of Northumbria; but he will not learn it from Dr Smyth.

It will be said, of course, that it is wrong to criticize an author for not doing the things which he never set out to do. At the same time, the reviewer has a duty to warn those readers who have special interests that they will not find them catered for here. When, however, we look at the book in Dr Smyth's own terms, then we must praise it as provocative, stimulating, and full of valuable new interpretations. True, it is also tendentious, densely written, over-argued, tediously repetitive, muddled in its narrative and confused in its geography. All this is well worth wrestling with, however, for the rewards of the struggle are great.

Significant reinterpretations include an insistence on the essential Brythonicness of the Picts, at the expense of pre-Indo-Germanic elements and royal matriliny. Columba is set in the aristocratic and secular framework from which no Irish abbot was ever completely free. Adomnán, and the Iona of his day, are given due appreciation: and we should note the demonstration that Bede himself nods over Adomnán's later career and *obit* (p. 131). It is scarcely news that Irish monks, including some from Scotland, pioneered the exploration of the N. Atlantic; but the emphasis here is novel, as is the claim that Hebridean Gaels played a major role, along with Hebridean Norsemen, in the colonization of Iceland.

Dr Smyth's well-known views on the role of Scotland in linking York and Dublin are here given a firm exposition. The creation out of adversity of the Kingdom of the Scots, and its assimilation first of the Picts, and then of the Britons of Strathclyde and the Anglo-Britons of Bernicia, are particularly well presented. The key here is a reappraisal of the misleading biases of the Anglo-Norman documents which provide much of the evidence.

To summarize: the archaeologist working on 1st millennium Scotland must still turn to A. A. M. Duncan's *The Making of the Kingdom* (1975) for a straightforward narrative, and for a discussion of social and economic developments. But for new insights into both political and religious history, he must now also grapple boldly with Dr Smyth's exposition.

LESLIE ALCOCK

The Viking Age In The Isle of Man. Select papers from The Ninth Viking Congress, Isle of Man, 4–14 July 1981. Edited by Christine Fell, Peter Foote, James Graham-Campbell and Robert Thomson. 17 × 25 cm. 187 pp., 67 figs. London: Viking Society for Northern Research, University College London, 1983. Price £18.00.

This volume commits to print versions of the twelve papers delivered at the Congress which dealt with the immediate antecedents, *floruit* and legacy of the Viking presence on Man. It can be said at once that this is not a comprehensive manual of the Manx Viking Age — there is, for example, no critical survey of historical sources. Relatively little newly discovered material is published here; the emphasis is rather on the re-examination of well-known *corpora*.

The pattern is set in an introduction by Cubbon which highlights the many and often basic gaps in knowledge of the island at this time, and the problem of dating many of the excavated sites. Users of the Society's Monograph no. 1, *Three Viking Graves in the Isle of Man*, may note the identification of the primary male burial at Ballateare as that of an individual aged 20–25 (p. 16). There follow two essays on runic inscriptions, two on art history, three on the problems of place-names and language, two on artefact types and one on survey and excavation. The remaining paper, by Killip, entitled 'Two aspects of Manx traditional life', discusses farming and fishing and provides a brief and partial draft manifesto for later medieval and post-medieval archaeology on Man.

With his review of the four Hiberno-Norse pins from Man known in 1981, Fanning augments his earlier studies of Irish and Scottish ringed pins. Having catalogued them, he discusses how they were worn and identifies the distribution of the polyhedral-headed plain ringed pin as coincident with the northern and western sea-routes travelled by 10th-century Norse settlers and traders following their adoption of this Irish jewellery form.

Likewise Graham-Campbell complements his earlier publications of Viking silver finds from Ireland and Scotland with a discussion of the nineteen relevant hoards from Man. They fall into two main chronological groups; with six from the 960s–990s, and eleven from the 1030s–1070s. The absence of Hiberno-Norse armrings and the contemporary bossed penannular brooches supports the numismatic evidence which points to a policy of non-involvement overseas by the first generations of Viking settlers, but the hoards' contents do suggest that silver was reaching Man by the 940s (when decorated sculpture commences), and that there was contact with the Hebrides in the 970s and with 'Norse Scotland' in the 11th century. Other noteworthy points in the analysis include the suggestion that the Chester hoard was of Manx origin and the attribution of the Skaill (Orkney) ball-type brooches to a Manx-trained atelier.

Morris reports his excavation and survey at Keeill Vale, Druidale, in summary and interim form. The earliest, as yet undated, phase is identified as a domestic structure, but the two later but undated 'keeill' phases are seen as ecclesiastical, principally because of the presence of what is interpreted as an altar base (briefly described in a previous interim report) and also of six cross-inscribed stones, built upside-down into the keeill's walls. There were no traces of associated graves. Brief appendices by C. E. Lowe and R. Trench-Jellicoe discuss respectively 'The problem of keeills and treens' and 'The cross-slabs from Keeill Vale'. Morris is surely correct in commenting that the site's importance may ultimately be seen against the wider context of upland settlement.

The runic papers include a study of an Iona stone, which Liestøl uses, speculatively, to bridge the world of Man and the Isles, and Page's general survey of the 31+ Manx rune stones. He suggests that there was a runic tradition on the island pre-dating the erection of ornamented

crosses, and sees a mixture of tradition and innovation in the island's rune-stones; among the planks in this argument is the Kirk Michael III inscription which, he suggests, shows the progressive development of demotic Norse, a distinctively Manx speech. In all, the runes may indicate close contact with Norway at an early stage of Norse settlement followed by an accommodation with Celtic elements, with some new external stimulus *c.* 1000 which did not strongly influence a tradition which continued in some isolation through the 12th century. Appendices provide provisional transcripts of the inscriptions, a catalogue of Manx futharks with significant variants, and a note on the grammar of the rune stones.

Manx Viking-Age sculpture is surveyed by Wilson, modifying some of his earlier views, for example on their dating, which he now places *c.* 930–1010/20. He points out that the stones are not so homogeneous as is usually thought, and highlights problems in each of the four main topics he discusses — identification, origin, cultural and stylistic influences, and identification of iconography. The 'influences' section can now be usefully compared with R. N. Bailey's 'Irish Sea Contacts in the Viking Period — The Sculptural Evidence' in *Tredie tværaglige Vikingesymposium* (ed. G. Fellows-Jensen and N. Lund, Copenhagen University 1984, 6–36). The problems of iconographic identification are tackled by Margeson in a valuable paper which advocates interpretative caution while demonstrating that a number of new interpretations are possible. The crosses include the earliest surviving records of several episodes in the Volsung legend, which are listed; in interpreting crosses which incorporated mythological scenes or scenes with human figures and animals, she is wary of seeing the portrayal of a conflict between paganism and Christianity.

Language and place-name studies are often at the kernel of debate over Celtic-Norse relations. Fellows-Jensen summarizes recent work and advances the place-name study with a number of useful comments and suggestions. She believes that the number, distribution and 'low-class archaeology' associated with (some) Scandinavian names shows a considerable Norse element at all levels of society, but the validity of the archaeological criteria quoted is surely questionable here — Doarlish Cashen, the site exemplified, is neither well-dated nor certainly Norse in anything except, perhaps, constructional type (cf. *Medieval Archaeol.*, 14 (1970), 74–82 at p. 81). She also uses the names to postulate contacts with NW. and/or NE. England, contacts also touched upon by Graham-Campbell and Wilson (and Bailey, *supra*). For Fellows-Jensen the Gaelic treen names with the *balla* element are pre-Viking in origin, later 'updated', whereas for Andersen, who considers this name-group in some detail, their occurrence as treen-farm names results from their replacement of earlier Norse names after *c.* 1150. Thomson's paper 'The Continuity of Manx' adduces reasons to believe that Gaelic was spoken on Man before the arrival of the Vikings, who became extensively bilingual in the 10th–13th centuries, while the contemporary lower class remained Gaelic speakers.

We must be indebted to the editors for producing this volume so relatively rapidly and to a generally high standard, and to the contributors both for clearing away much dead wood and, in some cases, for allowing a preview of *magna opera* which will eventually put Manx Viking studies on a firmer footing. The exciting preliminary results of excavations at Peel Castle have recently demonstrated again both the tangible and academic wealth of Manx Viking-Age archaeology: the volume demonstrates that further survey and excavation of settlement sites and their landscape is a prerequisite for future advances in understanding the impact and consequences of Viking settlement of Man.

R. A. HALL

An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the County of Northampton, 5: Archaeological Sites and Churches in Northampton. Royal Commission on Historical Monuments England. 22 × 28 cm. 80 pp., 39 figs., 36 pls., 7 maps, 3 microfiche. London: H.M.S.O., 1985. Price £12.50.

This, nominally the final archaeological volume — though not the last to appear in print — of the Royal Commission's *Inventory* of Northamptonshire, presents features of both form

and content that are new to the Commission's *Inventories*. Very welcome is the reduction in price, achieved in part by the production of the volume in high-quality paperback form. Less welcome to many will be the other more radical step towards reduced costs: the publication of the Inventory itself — which is, after all, the stated objective of the Royal Commission — as microfiche. For £12.50 one gets only some 116 printed pages, containing prefatory matter, bibliography, what is modestly described as an 'introductory essay', index, plates, and some of the detailed plans; a pocket at the back contains seven geological and period maps — how much more useful if they were printed as transparent overlays to an O.S. base — and the microfiche. Three microfiche sheets contain 236 'pages' of text and the remaining figures — which would, if printed, though reduced to a little more than 70 double-column pages, have increased the size and the cost of the volume considerably.

The usual practical problems of using fiche arise. Interested in St John's Hospital, one finds in the printed volume a passing reference to its fate after the Dissolution, two fine plans, and its site marked on a map; a slightly different location is marked on a map in the back pocket; and a full description and discussion appear in the microfiche. Only the last are referred to in the index. The poor quality of reproduction of those outline plans which are included in the fiche shows why the detailed period-shaded plans with which we are familiar are in the printed volume; the separation of the latter from the descriptions in the fiche is inconvenient.

The volume deals with the area of the modern borough of Northampton, centred on the late Saxon and medieval town. It includes much evidence that is new, for the area is that of the Northampton Development Corporation, and of the Archaeological Unit which it established in 1970. The product of close collaboration between the Royal Commission and the Archaeological Unit, the Inventory entries draw upon a decade and a half of concerted archaeological research, as well as the continuing work of the Commission's own staff. The field work needs no further commendation than to say that it is largely the work of Christopher Taylor; among the churches are those extraordinary structures St Peter's and Holy Sepulchre, so expressive of the wealth and importance of 12th-century Northampton, which are here neatly dissected by Hugh Richmond; among archaeological sites the most notable is the 'Saxon palace complex' — though for full discussion of its status as a 'palace' one must turn to the definitive publication by John Williams and Michael Shaw. More essential to the purpose of the Inventory, however, is the bringing together of information on so many minor sites and finds whose publication is scattered or non-existent, to provide in accessible published form a version of Northampton's local Sites and Monuments Record.

The publication of the Inventory as fiche throws emphasis on the 'introductory essay' — 'The Development of Northampton' — which forms the bulk of the printed volume. An excellent and useful summary of the physical history of the area up to 1540, with a brief survey of later developments, it is written anonymously — though its authors, chiefly John Williams and other staff of the Unit, are credited in the book's preface. It provides the authors with an opportunity to draw conclusions from the Unit's work, and since both the Unit and the Development Corporation that sponsored it were already reaching the end of their lives when this book appeared, there is a very real temptation to regard it as a definitive statement. That would be unfortunate, and premature. A major revision of the dating of the 'Saxon palace' came too late to be included except as a brief addendum, while too many references in the Bibliography for comfort are to 'forthcoming' works. Archaeology will continue, the responsibility now of the County Unit. There may be new evidence on the status and function of middle Saxon Northampton and its palace, while one hopes that the 'late Saxon defences', so convincing on paper, may yet become archaeological reality rather than topographical hypothesis. The 'essay' presents a summary of current knowledge and ideas. In itself it makes no major contribution to the study of, for example, medieval urban origins and development; that is not its purpose. For discussion of the wider significance of the 'palace' or of Northampton in the Danelaw one must look elsewhere. It is nonetheless welcome. The book will be bought for this essay as well as for the Inventory.

Collaboration between the Royal Commission and other archaeological bodies is to be encouraged. Whether such collaboration can produce another volume like this remains to be seen, as do the implications for future publications of the decision to use microfiche here.

JOHN CLARK

The Archaeology of Medieval England By Helen Clarke. 17 × 24 cm. 224 pp., 50 figs., 48 pls. London: British Museum Publications Ltd, 1984. Price £12.95.

In this book Helen Clarke, Lecturer in medieval archaeology at University College, London and Honorary Secretary of the Society for Medieval Archaeology, attempts the daunting task of presenting a logical synthesis of the medieval archaeology of England in under 200 pages of text. That she succeeds so well is a tribute both to her powers of compression and to her competent elucidation of the significance of the major medieval archaeological excavations that have taken place in England in the recent past, and especially since the foundation of the Society for Medieval Archaeology in 1956. She is also, however, well aware of the sacrifices that she was compelled to make in order to produce a reasonably priced and readable book when she states (p. 13): 'At this stage in the history of medieval archaeology one must be selective, and it is a personal selection that is offered here.'

Thus in order to give archaeological evidence its true prominence in this study of the medieval past Clarke deliberately seems to play down the contribution made by historians based on the incomparable collection of manorial and central government medieval documents that survive for England. This is in direct contrast to the approach followed by Platt in 1978[1] in which he tried to combine equally archaeological and historical evidence. And despite the inclusion of a chapter entitled 'Craft and Industry' the whole emphasis of Clarke's book is on settlement archaeology with only a short discussion of the major collections of medieval artefacts that are to be found in many English museums. Indeed this latter chapter reveals the limitations of archaeological evidence when she remarks that medieval cloth-making, arguably the most important industry of England in the middle ages, 'has been almost totally neglected by archaeologists' (p. 130).

This is essentially a pragmatic study in the honourable tradition of most British archaeologists and historians in that the author deliberately seems to eschew becoming embroiled in the major controversies at present surrounding the theoretical framework of the study of archaeology. Therefore she dismisses the impact of the 'New Archaeology' on any study of past societies to one paragraph in her introduction, and she also gives short shrift to any assessment of the application of sampling techniques and scientific dating methods to medieval excavations. Indeed throughout her thematic approach to medieval archaeology she strives to follow the *via media* in her attempt to reach a broad consensus of opinion over much-debated topics such as the origins of the motte and bailey castle in England (pp. 105–12).

The main body of the book proceeds in a logical way from an examination of the archaeological evidence for villages and moated sites in her first chapter on the countryside, through chapters on parish churches, monasteries, castles, craft and industry, and she finishes off with an examination of towns and trade. In this first chapter Clarke makes a heartfelt plea (p. 62) for a more integrated approach to the study of medieval man's impact on the landscape in place of the fragmentation which has often taken place as a result of the setting up of various research groups. While this is a very laudable long-term objective for medieval archaeology in England, which she attempts to emulate in her book, it is important to acknowledge the really significant contributions to our knowledge made by research groups such as the Medieval Village Research Group and the Moated Sites Research Group, to name only two. These have built up a considerable data-base on medieval settlement types, without which any work of synthesis would be much more difficult to complete.

Obviously she has separated all the main settlement elements of medieval England into distinct chapters both for ease of reference and to ensure that her arguments on their historical development are easier for the lay reader to follow. But she also attempts to show how they did not operate in geographical or chronological isolation from each other, and nowhere is this more emphatically stated than at the start of her final chapter on 'Towns and Trade' in which she stresses that town and countryside were 'inextricably bound together' (p. 166). Up until the present day medieval towns have, almost without exception, been examined by archaeologists in total isolation from their surrounding hinterlands to the detriment of our understanding of this interaction. It is in her discussion on urban archaeology that the author's commitment to improving the direction of future research really becomes apparent. She compares the situation in England unfavourably with the rest of Europe, and especially with Scandinavia, as there is still no co-ordinated national policy for urban archaeology, despite the publication of a classic report such as *The Erosion of History* in 1972. The lack of such a policy has led, she argues, to an unbalanced concentration on excavations of only a few towns of 'international' importance with the almost total exclusion of the smaller provincial towns 'which are of intrinsic significance for our knowledge of life over most of medieval England' (p. 173). Furthermore, she correctly emphasises that the absence of any forward planning has meant that the overwhelming majority of urban excavations are of the re-active or 'rescue' type rather than more considered projects designed to answer particular problems about the growth and development of the medieval urban environment.

In conclusion, this is a well-balanced over-view of English medieval archaeology in the 1980s and so it is a little disappointing that the author does not give herself more space to point the way forward for the discipline over the next generation or so, especially as she set out the aims of her book so clearly and precisely in her introduction. Other reservations are also of a minor nature such as my lack of conviction about the academic desirability of utilising data on archaeological excavations as reported to the 'Medieval Britain' section of *Medieval Archaeology* for charts and distribution maps throughout the work. In so doing she focuses the attention of the reader on the post-1956 period, thus virtually ignoring the important contribution of an earlier generation of medieval archaeologists. Also I think she should have stressed more forcibly that the accuracy of this source is totally dependent upon the *voluntary* co-operation of excavators in sending in short reports to the journal. The illustrations are generally pertinent to the discussion in hand and are of an acceptable quality but the present reviewer would have preferred a listing of all the illustrations at the front of the book for ease of reference. More specifically, the illustrations of medieval ceramics (nos. 73–75) seem to lack any scales. But these are very small criticisms of a well-produced and modestly priced work of synthesis for which generations of students will, no doubt, be eternally grateful.

TERRY BARRY

NOTE

[1] C. Platt, *Medieval England. A social history and archaeology from the Conquest to A.D. 1600* (London, 1978).

Excavations on the Site of the Dominican Friary at Guildford in 1974 and 1978 (Research Volume of the Surrey Archaeological Society, 9). By Rob Poulton and Humphrey Woods. 21 × 29 cm. 83 pp., 48 figs., 25 pls., 4 tables + 3 microfiche containing 4 chapters, 27 pls. and 25 tables. Guildford: Surrey Archaeological Society, 1984. Price £5.00 plus £1.20 postage from S.A.S., Castle Arch, Guildford, GU1 3SX.

The Dominican Friary at Guildford was a relatively small establishment. It was founded in 1275 by Eleanor of Provence in memory of her grandson, Prince Henry, Edward I's son. Written sources attest in 1260 an earlier foundation of the friars *de ordine Martyrum*; the

earliest structural features found on the site, pre-dating the 1275 friary, are plausibly equated with this earlier foundation.

The excavations were on a large scale and were in advance of redevelopment. The principal results were the definition of one of the most complete friary plans known in this country, and the recovery of important groups of burials in areas both inside the church and to its south. The site was well-excavated and recorded, and has been welded together from diverse sources with skill.

The monograph represents an ultimate stage in the use of microfiche; there are only 83 pages of print, over half of which are figures or plates. The majority of the excavation reports are in fiche, leaving only syntheses, and important evidence. This reviewer would agree with the author's choice about what *they* thought should be in print: the historical references, the synthesis of the structural and stratigraphical evidence, illustrations of the finds, a summary of burial evidence and human remains. All this is lavishly and clearly cross-referenced to other parts of the text and to the fiche, by annotation in the margin rather than cluttering up the text.

The sections on the conventual buildings are entirely satisfactory. That on the burials is less so. The areas of the various parts of the cemetery are difficult to disentangle. No attempt is made to separate graves of different dates (all being assigned only to 1275–1538), even though fig. 28 shows a clear stratigraphic succession of four graves. Orientation is described as 'east-facing' (confusingly meaning head to west, with faces pointing upwards!) with no comment on the important fact that orientation extends over an arc of at least 45°. More seriously, three arm positions A–C are noted in the text (p. 49), while in table 3, there is also a D, which is not mentioned anywhere else. It should be noted that category A, hands crossed over the chest, is *not* as one might suppose the elsewhere significant 'praying' position, but turns out to be crossed over the *waist*, which is a very different matter. In an interesting discussion on *who* was buried, one difference between lay and friar burials may be that the 'religious' were not buried with arms extended down the sides. An interesting find was an incised inscription on a lead coffin (incised with what?) naming the occupant as one 'Margareta Daubeney'. The coffin had a green painted border and cross. The skeleton was of a young woman in a shroud, with probably foetal bones. There was also a possible leper, and a single grave with five gracile individuals who may have been wearing doublets. More could have been made of the burial evidence, which is a valuable addition to the still rather sparse number of medieval cemetery reports excavated and reported on in modern scientific terms.

The finds include a rich collection from the dirt under the choir stall floors, a context which was also very productive at Bordesley Abbey.

The volume is well produced, with excellent half-tones, and is a notable addition to the neglected subject of urban friaries.

PHILIP RAHTZ

Archaeological Papers from York Presented to M. W. Barley. Edited by P. V. Addyman and V. E. Black. 21 × 30 cm. xiv + 208 pp., many figs., 3 loose, transparent overlay maps. York: York Archaeological Trust, 1984. Price £15.00 plus £2.00 postage from the Trust, 3 King's Court, King's Square, York YO1 2LE.

This well-deserved presentation celebrates Maurice Barley's decade or so as Chairman of the Council of the York Archaeological Trust. It contains 22 contributions (five on the Roman period) on various aspects of the archaeology of York and its region, and on other subjects, together with an appreciation of Barley and a bibliography of his printed works. Not the least interesting aspect of the book is the light it throws on the social context in which this great archaeological enterprise is conducted. We learn of the 'Stewards of the York Archaeological Trust', and the coy biographies printed at the beginning of each paper give

this handsome volume a distinct resemblance to the bead-roll of a medieval guild. Its papers legitimize the corporate activity out of which they have arisen and may aid the authors on their earthly progress, if not assisting their delivery from Purgatory. One aim of the book, epitomised in Peter Addyman's opening essay, is to provide a serious general introduction to the archaeology of York, and as such it can be recommended, in spite of its very miscellaneous character.

Addyman, in the optative mood, looks mainly to the future, emphasising York's setting in its region and the way in which the city can be used as a mirror which reflects a wide range of non-urban activity. The most substantial and useful piece in the book is a survey of archaeology in York prepared for the Ancient Monuments Inspectorate. This contains a descriptive gazetteer of excavated sites (unfortunately, permission to publish information on the Minster excavations was refused); period maps, with overlays showing areas destroyed, to be 'developed', and protected by statute; and a summary introduction. The recommendations for future work, however, are somewhat mechanical, and the prospects for combining documentary with archaeological work are inadequately assessed. For this reviewer, the most interesting paper is S. A. J. Bradley's interpretation of the ironwork on the Norman church door at Stillingfleet as a symbolic affirmation of God's purpose, a fine integration of material, literary, and iconographic evidence with important implications for our understanding of the didactic purpose of 12th-century Christianity and its reception at parochial level.

Three papers arise from a conference on friaries. Lawrence Butler surveys recent archaeological work in Britain. Barrie Dobson raises a wider range of questions (some of them perhaps answerable through archaeology) in his discussion of the York friars: he does not tell us much of the churches and precincts, but there are valuable observations on the continuing intellectual vitality of the York Mendicant community and its contribution to pastoral care. D. A. Stocker reinterprets the remains of the Lincoln Franciscan friary as part of the infirmary rather than the church.

York straddles the Ouse, and D. M. Palliser in a paper on the west bank convincingly argues that we should see the medieval settlement as polyfocal in origin. But his case for the special importance of York beyond the Ouse in the Anglian and early medieval period is confused and unconvincing: as yet it receives no particular support from the material remains, and the topographical arguments provide dressing rather than substance. There may have been complementary settlement areas which could be distinguished as the *wik* and the *ceastre* of York, as he argues, but none of the evidence indicates that the former should be exclusively identified as the west bank.

Among other contributions on early medieval York, P. C. Buckland argues, chiefly on petrological grounds, that the 'Anglian' tower is more likely to have been late Roman in origin; his case shows the value of relating the raw material found in archaeological contexts to wider questions of economic organization, a matter also touched upon in Addyman's paper. D. Tweddle discusses a fragment of 8th-century gilded brass; C. Brooks and A. Mainmann conclude that in most instances the 'Torksey type' pottery found in York can be shown not to have been made in the Torksey kilns. R. A. Hall discusses the sunken-featured buildings of 10th- to 11th-century York and elsewhere, presenting valuable evidence and speculation as to how they might have related to the structures above them. Vernacular architecture is also served by B. Hutton's survey of the evolution in Yorkshire houses from aisled halls to buildings of the 18th century with narrow, single-storey rear rooms.

Environmental archaeology is covered by a survey of ten years' work in the city, underlining the contribution which this science can make to understanding the economic as well as the physical world, and concluding with a plea for a greater orientation towards research and teaching.

Other papers cover the conservation of the timbers from the Coppergate excavation, the destructive capacity of modern techniques for foundation preparation, and the early archaeological activity in York of the Victorian craniologist, John Thurnam. With the aid of a diagram, the professor of archaeology at York explores the interface between archaeologist and architect.

A *festschrift* is perhaps not the most ready vehicle for those analytical and speculative essays on the archaeology of York which are needed to complement the fascicules containing the detailed results. Among the papers published here, it is really only among those dealing with the Roman city, notably R. F. J. Jones on the cemeteries, that the reader gets much sense of the dialectic of the subject. Yet again it is revealed that where archaeology is but one of many potential sources for our knowledge of a town, a correspondingly greater leap of the imagination is required to frame a coherent scheme of archaeological enquiry. In particular, it would have been valuable to have had an assessment of the remarkable evidence for crafts and trading activity in early medieval York. Some broader considerations on these lines would have made this book a more valuable contribution to medieval archaeology, as well as reflecting Barley's particular humane approach to the subject.

DEREK KEENE

Short Reviews

Torsburgen. Tolkning av en gotländsk fornborg (Archaeological Studies, Uppsala University Institute of North European Archaeology, 6). By Johan Engström. 19 × 26 cm. 154 pp., 38 figs., English summary. Uppsala: University Institute of North European Archaeology, 1984. Price not stated.

This doctoral dissertation is based on the excavations in Torsburgen on Gotland, the largest hillfort in Sweden. The fort was defended by a timber-laced (and subsequently vitrified) stone rampart encircling an area of 112 ha, and was in use from A.D. 300–400 until *c.* A.D. 1100. The dating is based on radiocarbon and themoluminescence analyses as the excavations produced very little in the way of finds, certainly insufficient to postulate permanent occupation for the site.

The hillfort is situated in eastern central Gotland, no more than a day's journey on foot from most parts of the island. The author argues that the entire population of early medieval Gotland (calculated as somewhere between *c.* 6,000 and 10,000) and their animals could have taken refuge in the fort at any one time, and goes on from there to suggest that Torsburgen was a communal fortification illustrative of some form of centralized organization or power. Our own burh fortifications may come to mind here, but Torsburgen is their predecessor by many centuries.

By building an experimental length of rampart Engström attempted to calculate the period of time required to build the fortification. There is a continuous stretch of rampart 2 km long in the south, but elsewhere there are only short stretches of wall designed to reinforce the defensive capabilities provided by steep natural slopes. So the entire 112 ha were not encircled. The time arrived at was 11,406 man days; 2.8 months with a work-force of 200 men. Here again, centralized organization is postulated.

A further section of the book is devoted to the question of vitrification (i.e. was it intentional or not) and a comparative review of timber-laced ramparts. This ranges widely, throughout Europe from the Neolithic to the Middle Ages, but concentrates largely on early medieval examples from Scandinavia and the Baltic states. It is a useful survey of fortifications in these areas, otherwise perhaps inacessible to English readers.

HELEN CLARKE

Glas och Handel i Senromersk Tid och Folkvandringstid (Archaeological Studies, Uppsala University Institute of North European Archaeology, 5). By U. Näsman. 21 × 30 cm. 166 pp., 13 maps, English summary. Uppsala: University Institute of North European Archaeology, 1984. Price not stated.

Basically a report on 47 fragments of glass found in the fortified settlement of Eketorp II in S. Öland, this is a doctoral thesis submitted at Uppsala in December 1984. Ten different