

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

**The History of Compton in Surrey.**—By Cecilia Lady Boston. The European Art Publishing Co., London, 1933; 7s. 6d.

This well-printed and very attractively illustrated volume is, the preface tells us, intended to afford to the parishioners of Compton, and to the younger members in particular, an opportunity of learning something of the past history of the village and of its beautiful and ancient church in the hope that the value of both may be enhanced thereby and a sense of responsibility concerning them increased. It is not intended, we are told, for students of archaeology except in so far as it may help to elucidate doubtful points in local history or bring to light fresh information about them.

With this purpose a good deal of general information about the setting of English history in which the local events occurred is given, which will no doubt be useful to the parishioner who knows little of such things. As always in such cases however it involves reliance on authorities whose opinions are sometimes open to question, while general statements made without specific authority are sometimes not defensible, *e.g.* that to the number of destitute people already existing on charity the Dissolution of the Monasteries added a large percentage of the inmates who wandered homeless and penniless about the country (p. 33). But the religious were nearly always, in fact, pensioned at the Dissolution (see *Essays in History*, presented to R. Lane Poole, p. 442). Nor did the Dissolution break up what had hitherto been the chief centres of learning in the country (p. 48). Had that been the case, William of Wykeham would hardly have founded a college for secular priests in preference to a monastery, and the monasteries which did exist—the foundation of new monasteries had practically ceased by Wykeham's day—would have produced better chronicles than the poor stuff which was written by the monks of the fifteenth century. There is, in fact, little evidence of any activity by monasteries in Surrey in the matter of schools (see *Victoria County History*, II, Schools).

But it would be ungracious to criticize the general historical setting. We should be grateful for the great mass of interesting

and detailed information given about Compton. This includes a general account of the parish and of the separate manors, of the Church and of the Rectors, and is evidently based on a great deal of research. It is interesting, by the way, to find that Sir William Paynel held land in Compton. This was the man to whom John de Camoys assigned his wife Margaret by deed. After his death Margaret's right to dower was questioned under the second Statute of Westminster (13 Ed. I), under which a woman leaving her husband and living with an adulterer shall lose her dower. William and Margaret produced letters from the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Chichester stating that they had purged themselves of adultery, but Parliament in 1300 decided that notwithstanding the pretended purgation in the Spiritual Court she was not entitled to dower.

A few points of detail may be noted. P. 53. "Eventually some of the more important routes were considerably widened and became the great coaching roads." This may be so, but the contrary was quite common, a wide green lane having a metalled strip put down the middle and the two edges enclosed (hence the double line of trees on some roads).

p. 70. It is very improbable that a plan of the land was attached to a twelfth-century deed. Bush of sillig must mean a bushel of rye (*siligo*).

p. 73, *hosterium*. This must be hatch, and a variant of *ostium* or *hostium*.

p. 81, De Guldeford; p. 170, De Polstede, his family. It is doubtful whether surnames were fixed so early.

p. 84. The right of reversion to the Crown was probably designed to keep the Abbot up to the mark, and as far as the Crown was concerned was a good reason for exacting a fine.

p. 103. The reason for the surrender of the Court by Sir Thomas was no doubt that this was a necessary form to avoid a question of jurisdiction. The lord remised his right to have the case tried in the manor court (*cf.* the recovery printed at p. 52 of *S.A.C.*, XXXII).

p. 108, Manor of Hurtmore. A reference to the manor in 1278-79 is of some weight, but a reference in a Tudor document to profits of Courts in a list of other advantages does not at all prove their existence, any more than a reference to watercourses would prove that there was a watercourse.

p. 114, *tempore aperto* evidently means when there were no growing crops.

p. 116. Brocacre, it may be suggested, is more probably Badger's-acre than Brocas'acre.

p. 134. There seems no ground for supposing that Lucia atte Church was an anchoress. She is not the only woman mentioned without description (see Lucia Petyt, p. 210) and she pays 12*d.*, which is much more than a number of other payments (of 8*d.*, 6*d.* and 4*d.*). Like Robert atte Yerd she was no doubt known by the situation of her dwelling.

p. 174. October of St. Martin should be Octave. This is presumably a misprint, of which there are unfortunately a considerable number in the book.

The excellence of the illustrations has already been referred to. They must be of great interest to those who know the place well and to those readers who do not they are of great assistance in appreciating it. But the book, like all books of local history, ought to have had a map, and a reproduction of the tithe map, or some similar map, would have greatly added to its value. For parishioners this omission may be less important. It is in any case greatly to be hoped that they will appreciate as it deserves this effort to interest them in the history and buildings of Compton.

HENRY LAMBERT.

**Notes on the History of Saint Martha's by Guildford, in Surrey, The Rectory and Advowson of the Church.** By O. M. Heath. Billing and Sons, Ltd., Guildford, 1933; 1*s.* 6*d.*

This is an interesting and well-documented little book, which should finally dispose of the old idea that St. Martha's was a place of pilgrimage in the Middle Ages connected with the Pilgrims' Way and with St. Thomas of Canterbury. Miss Heath points out that the only reference to pilgrims in connection with St. Martha's is in Bishop Waynflete's Indulgence of 1463, the object of which was obviously to obtain funds for repairing the building. The name of the church, which was a parish church and not, as it came to be called later, a chapel, was "Ecclesia de Sancta Martha" (1224 and 1270, and so generally throughout the Middle Ages). But the hill on which it stood is referred to in 1273 as Momartre extra Gildeford, which evidently corresponds to Martirhill (1463) or Martyrhill (1510 and frequently later). There is, however, nothing in the references to the church, with two exceptions, to show that the church itself had any connection with any sort of martyr. These exceptions are in Bishop Waynflete's indulgence which speaks of "Capella . . . Sancte Marthe Virginis ac omnium Sanctorum Martirum vulgariter nuncupatam Martirhill," and in another reference in his register of the following year. It is difficult to resist the suspicion that the draftsman of the indulgence seized on the name of the hill, and being anxious to heighten the sanctity

of the building for which he was trying to raise money let his imagination run away with him. He was clearly imperfectly informed about the church, for he calls it Capella, though the next year the Register silently corrected the error by reverting to Church. Of the origin of the name Martyrhill nothing is known, and the suggestions of Manning and Bray appear to be merely guesses.

It is perhaps worth observing that if it should seem odd that the Episcopal clerk should have drafted the indulgence with little knowledge of the facts, it is even stranger that the very existence of a parish could not very much later be lost, for this is what, it seems, occurred with Preston in Banstead (see *S.A.C.*, XXXVII, 73, 74). Miss Heath gives no institution of a vicar after 1412 until 1637, and says that there must have been many other vicars whose names have not been recorded. This may be so, but it is not necessarily so. There were no vicars appointed to Burgh between 1446 and 1492—perhaps none after 1414 (see Manning and Bray, II, 597). Burgh was ruinous in 1378. If St. Martha was ruinous, as it apparently was in 1463, it is possible that the parish was left without an incumbent for long periods together. Who in this connection was the parson of the church to whom John Gunter left 3s. 4d., in 1510? In law presumably the Prior of Newark. It is one of the attractions of a book like this based on actual documents which are incomplete that it is so easy to ask questions on it and so hard, often impossible, to answer them. In any case Surrey Archæology is indebted to Miss Heath for giving us this interesting little volume.

H. L.

**Oxted, Limpsfield and Neighbourhood.**—Edited by Lewis G. Fry. Oxted. Printed by W. and G. Godwin, 1932.

In his introduction the Editor correctly describes this book as “not a systematic history of the neighbourhood, but a compilation of articles by living writers who have special knowledge of their subject supplemented by a few traditions and personal recollections.” As might be expected the articles are of rather unequal merit, but the general result of a perusal of them is to get a pleasing and satisfying picture of what was, until transformed in these modern days of motor traffic, one of the most remote and rural corners of Surrey. Moreover, in at least one or two cases the contributions embody the result of original research and sound scholarship.

The opening chapter consists of a number of short and very miscellaneous sketches ranging in interest from an explanation (with transcripts and translations) of the Domesday entries relative to Limpsfield, Oxted and Titsey to an account of the village cricket.

The most valuable sections of this chapter are those by Mr. E. R. Pease dealing with the parish records, especially in relation to poor law relief and the maintenance of the roads, and Mr. G. E. Crowter's on the ancient maps of the county. The latter writer, however, is hardly correct in saying that the earliest printed map of Surrey is Norden's of 1607. Recently, by means of the beautiful reproduction of it by the British Museum, we have been able to refer to that of Saxton of 1575. In view too of Dr. Hooper's article in our last volume the traditional date of 1762 for Rocque's map, of which a portion is here reproduced, will have to be revised. In the section on the place-names the reference to the late Mr. Granville Leveson Gower's pamphlet on the *Etymologies of Tandridge Hundred* as published by Weyman (*sic*) & Sons in 1875 is misleading. The writer is no doubt quoting from a reprint of the articles which appeared in Vol. VI of the *Collections* of this Society which were then printed by Wyman & Sons.

Chapter II, which is on the traditions of the neighbourhood, is by several hands and helps to preserve much of the old folk-lore and ancient customs of the countryside. Somewhat artlessly put together, often in the actual words of the more humble inhabitants, the chapter does give a vivid picture of the primitive conditions still surviving in the district almost to the end of the last century.

In the chapter on the Architecture by Mr. Arthur Keen, illustrated by his own drawings, we have more serious matter of interest. Within the compass of some twenty-seven pages Mr. Keen deals very competently with the salient features of the churches of Limpsfield and Oxted and of the ancient houses and cottages of those parishes. But the chapters of outstanding merit in the whole work are those by Lieut.-Col. R. H. Cunnington on the Geology of the district and on the vestiges of Early Man, because in addition to dealing critically with the work of previous authorities they set out the author's own well-informed observations on these subjects and contain the hitherto unpublished results of investigations made by him and by Mr. Graham of Woldingham. The chapter contains a description of all the recorded "finds" from the earliest coliths to the sherds of mediæval pottery. Since the publication of this book we hear from Col. Cunnington that he has found in all five distinct sites of mediæval potteries, probably of the fourteenth century, within a half-mile radius of Limpsfield Chart. Some specimens of the sherds are now in the Museum at Guildford. We hear also that the saucer-like depressions on Limpsfield Common, to which he alludes on p. 122, where he suggests they resemble the prehistoric pit dwellings on Worms Heath, have since been ex-

cavated by him and Mr. Graham, but with entirely negative results, nothing being found in any of them.

Sections dealing with the wild flowers, butterflies and birds of the neighbourhood bring the book to a close. In addition to the illustrations already noted there are several maps and photographs, borrowed from *Country Life*, of villagers taken not long after the middle of the last century, which serve to show the quaint and primitive conditions of life then still existing in south-east Surrey.

M. S. G.

**Ashtead Church: Its Story and Memories.** By the Rev. E. J. Austin, M.A. Birch & Whittington; 2s. 6d.

Many people, visiting some of our country churches for the first time, must have looked round in vain for something, even if only a printed leaflet, that would tell them what is particularly worthy of note and would supply them with a few dates and facts. Until now, the church of St. Giles at Ashtead has numbered among such buildings where nothing of the kind was to be obtained, so that the appearance of this excellent little book, written by the Rector, is particularly welcome.

It is presented in such a manner that one can quickly grasp all the essential information and the nine illustrations include some good photographs and reproductions of early drawings.

One is reluctant to make any criticism of a work of this nature that has been so long overdue, but there are two rather serious omissions, *viz.* (1) a Plan of the church in its present state, showing the work of the different periods and the exact placing of what was removed during the "improvements" of the last century; and (2) an Index. We learn, however, from the author that both of these deficiencies are to be made good in future editions, and can only hope that the demand will be such as to make these soon available. It should be added that the profits are to be devoted to the Church Funds.

A. W. G. L.

**Forgotten Croydon.**—By Ronald Bannerman, F.S.A. (Scot.). *Croydon Times*, Ltd., 1933; 1s. 3d.

This little book is described on the cover as dealing with "Canal, Races, Highwaymen, Fairs, Inns, etc.," and does in fact contain a large amount of miscellaneous information on these subjects as well as on Foxhunting (chiefly quotations from Jorrocks), Coaching and Cricket. The inns receive particular attention. There are some interesting illustrations, the most interesting being those of the Croydon Canal, whose brief existence beginning in 1809 was terminated by the London and Croydon Railway, and a full index.

H. L.