

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

ROMAN WAYS IN THE WEALD. By I. D. Margary, M.A., F.S.A. Phoenix House, Ltd. 25s.

This important work, and one upon which the author is to be heartily congratulated, made its appearance just too late to receive mention in our last volume. It is compact, clearly written, well illustrated with maps and plates (and with strip-maps covering the whole length of each road discussed), and embodies a wealth of information—the result of years of study by one who has for long been recognized as a leading authority on the subject of Roman roads, especially those in south-east England.

For Surrey archaeologists the main interest in this work is twofold. Firstly, covered by Chapters 1 to 4, which constitute a concise text-book on Roman roads, their engineering, construction and purpose, and on methods of field-work in discovering, investigating and recording; secondly, Chapter 5, "Stane Street," is a detailed and up-to-date account of the main Roman road in Surrey, and which, thanks largely to the excavations of the late S. E. Winbolt and to his book (*With a Spade on Stane Street*), is especially familiar to members of this Society.

Stane Street is in a somewhat different category from most of the other roads dealt with in this book in that it had no connection with the Wealden iron-working sites and was more in the nature of an "arterial road" in that it formed the most direct link between London and Chichester. Of the road itself, Mr. Margary has little to add as regards its alignment, as this was firmly established by work carried out in recent years. As regards the still unverified portion through Epsom, he favours an alignment slightly more to the north of the Pebble Lane alignment, carrying it close to the south-east corner of the present Epsom Church of St. Martin. The "old hedgerow" which is taken to establish his alteration one hesitates to accept unless supported by evidence of early maps, in view of the present built-up nature of the area and the fact that it has undergone very considerable alterations in the last two centuries. Anyhow the deviation is so slight as to be of little consequence.

As regards the Rowhook—Farley Heath branch off Stane Street, one must admit to some disappointment that Mr. Margary's work has not extended our knowledge as to the course of this route beyond Farley Heath, or in fact beyond Velly's Hollow, some distance from the Temple site with its adjoining clearly defined trackway heading for the North Downs. He does, however, suggest a possible route for this extension, and one that seems to the writer to be most probable (and which is, in fact, supported by certain finds of Roman material at points along its course).

As regards the suggestion (page 76) that the fourth and last posting station may have been situated at Merton, a rather better case can be made out for siting this at Ewell, even though it makes the final stage a few miles longer. At Ewell there was clearly a small town, or settlement, with a considerable number of occupants, as is shown not only by the large quantity of pottery, coins and general occupation debris covering a wide area (mostly beneath the present village), but also by the grid-plan layout of Roman roads, portions of which have been found at various points beneath Ewell and of which an extension, dated *circa* A.D. 200, has recently been found on the Poyles Hill—Purberry Shot estates to the west of the village. (Roman building debris, and some remains of foundations, have been found from time to time at several sites at Ewell, but mostly in situations where no excavations could be undertaken.)

It therefore seems more probable that the fourth posting station was somewhere at or near this point, and a point on the level ground immediately north

of Ewell, where the road makes its first deviation from the London—Chichester alignment (and where, incidentally, much Roman pottery and other material has been found) seems most likely.

The only other Roman way passing through Surrey with which Mr. Margary deals is that from London to Brighton (Chapter 6). This, as is stated (p. 93), "passes through the iron-working district of the Weald and was, no doubt, much used in transporting its products to London and the coast, but primarily it was planned as one of a series of roads to connect the rich corn-growing area of the South Downs with London and the rest of Britain." This may well be so, but there is much reason to suspect that a "pre-Roman" trackway already existed along the line of this road, and was used to transport the products of the Sussex iron-working sites (which excavations have shown to have been in full production during the decade prior to the Roman conquest) to the Belgic settlements in Surrey and north of the Thames (Verulamium and Camulodunum). Also in Roman times it is clear that the North Downs were mainly given up to farming and corn production, and this road, as well as Stane Street, would have served for the transport of this market produce to London.

This book, with its wealth of information and excellent maps and illustrations, is indispensable to all interested in the subject of Roman Britain, and to members of this Society in particular. Its clear presentation of all the known facts makes it of value, and entertaining reading, as much to the expert as to the beginner, and it will form the foundation of all future research into the Roman occupation of south-east England.

A. W. G. L.

A PEEP AT CHIPSTEAD'S PAST. By F. J. Randell Creasy. The Hillside Press, Whyteleafe, Surrey.

This little booklet of sixteen pages, the author modestly declares in an introductory note, "has no pretensions to being a parish history of the orthodox kind." That may be so, but nevertheless by diligent delving in the mines of information at the Public Record Office, the British Museum and Croydon Reference Library, by searching such publications as the Surrey volumes of the Victoria County Histories, and those of our Surrey Archæological Society and the Surrey Record Society, to mention only a few of the many books examined, and by consulting almost everyone who had some knowledge of Chipstead's past, he has produced a most interesting and pleasantly written story of the village and its setting, from far-off prehistoric times until 1947, when this little volume was first published.

The price is half a crown, and the author generously gives all the proceeds towards the maintenance of the parish church of St. Margaret's.

A. T. S.

PUBLICATIONS OF THE SURREY ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

BLECHINGLY. No. 1 of the Local History Series. A Short History by Uvedale H. H. Lambert.

Size 8vo (uniform with Surrey Archæological Collections). Bound in stiff paper. 48 pages, 9 illustrations, geological section, church plan, and a folding map. Indexed. Price to Members of the Society, 3s. 6d.; to non-members, 5s. net, post free. Obtainable from Surrey Archæological Society, Castle Arch, Guildford.

RESEARCH PAPER No. 1: A STUDY OF PATTERNS ON ROMAN FLUE-TILES
AND THEIR DISTRIBUTION. By A. W. G. Lowther, F.S.A.

Size crown quarto. 35 pages. Frontispiece, 19 illustrations. Obtainable from Surrey Archaeological Society, Castle Arch, Guildford. Price to Members, 2s. 6d. ; to non-members, 5s. Postage 3d.

RESEARCH PAPER No. 2: A MESOLITHIC SURVEY OF THE WEST SURREY
GREENSAND. By W. F. Rankine, F.S.A.Scot.

Size crown quarto. 52 pages, frontispiece, 17 illustrations. Indexed. Synopsis: I. Introductory; II. Occupation of the Greensand; III. The Mesolithic Flint Industry; IV. West Surrey Mesolithic Sites; V. Transect Digging; VI. Appendices. Price to Members, 2s. 6d. ; to non-members, 5s. Postage 3d. Obtainable from Surrey Archaeological Society, Castle Arch, Guildford.