

As these first two chapters were written independently of each other, Maurice Beresford then contributes a short appraisal of the archaeological research from the viewpoint of a "pure" historian to draw the various threads together. For one wild moment one searches ahead to see if John Hurst has contributed an archaeologists' appraisal of "pure" medieval historians. However, all is well as a county by county gazetteer of 2,263 known English sites and a bibliography completes the first part. This part of the book also provides a valuable background history to the development of medieval archaeology in this country and a rare insight into the problems of scholars, for the lack of a Cornish section in the *Lost Villages* gazetteer resulted from it falling behind Maurice Beresford's piano. It leads one to wonder if the time lag between 1968, as the closing date for research included in this book, and 1971 results from the publisher having a similarly placed piano.

The other national contributions, while shorter as they represent an earlier stage of research, are equally valuable and certain gazetteers and biblio-

graphies. H. Fairhurst and John Dunbar discuss rural settlement and the peasant house in Scotland in a summary which emphasises the great divide from England and the need for research. For Wales Lawrence Butler, with rather more material to discuss, provides a sharp commentary on the current views on Welsh depopulation and rural change, and Robin Glasscock attempts a similar task for Ireland, which like Scotland, has to ask more questions than can be answered at this stage.

An appendix contains the D.M.V.R.G. memoranda on the preservation of village sites and the group's fieldwork questionnaire. The 31 plates are a fresh series and include new air views and the 42 figures, if not all new, have the advantages of being presented together in a convenient form. This is the keynote of this series of studies, the bringing together of appraisal, summary of results and research, gazetteers and bibliography in one place. While the spacious format ensures a high price, it will be an essential book for the many archaeologists and historians with an interest in the post-Roman period.

JOHN ASHDOWN

## Letters

### ILL-TREATMENT OF LECTURERS

TONY ROOK'S ESSAY "First Slide Please," was a relief to read. It was wonderful to be reminded that these things happen to others too.

Neither my wife nor I have been invited to lecture to "the other lot" but my wife's recent experiences of lecturing to the Young Conservatives have been even more dire than were Tony Rook's. The never-empty tankards were also present as was the reluctance to pay expenses. In addition there was a complete lack of interest in keeping to the time-table the speaker had been booked for (ten minutes delay is one thing, a full fifty minutes quite another).

One puts up with quite a lot "for the good of the cause" when lecturing to fellow enthusiasts but when one is invited to address non-archaeological clubs whose programme secretary seems only interested in completing her booking sheet, one wonders whether it is worth it and concludes, reluctantly, that usually it is not.

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### PRACTICAL COURSES: RESCUE

MAY I ENLARGE on two points raised in an article and a letter in your last issue.

In Mr. Bloice's account of "Beginning in Archaeology in London: 6," he felt that practice and instruction on excavation techniques was not given sufficient coverage in University Extra-Mural courses. It is, of course, not

easy to acquire excavation skills through lectures or otherwise than on excavations, but the Certificate in Field Archaeology which he mentions has half the lectures in each of the three winter courses devoted to field problems and publishing techniques. In addition, work on the processing of finds, as well as work on excavations, is compulsory. Residential and non-residential courses in archaeological surveying, field prospecting, environmental archaeology, and the study of Romano-British pottery are also currently available. For those interested in the wider aspects of the subject, the three-year courses on World Prehistory and the current series on "Recent Development and Research in Asiatic Archaeology" might also be mentioned.

In Mr. Farant's letter, the comments on the Trust for British Archaeology (RESCUE) might be expanded. To undertake a national campaign to increase awareness in the destruction of our archaeological heritage and to raise the funds necessary to arrest that destruction, require the organisation and co-operation of many people. It presses very heavily on those whose conscience insists that they take part in it. The Crisis is the crisis of a generation, and when the report of the first year of the now-established Trust is presented, I am sure he will not feel that the time has been wasted.

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