

# Books

**Before Civilization.** The Radiocarbon Revolution and Prehistoric Europe by Colin Renfrew. *Jonathan Cape.* 292pp., 58 figs., 12 plates. £3.95.

THIS BOOK examines the implications for European Prehistory of the developments in radiocarbon dating in recent years. Central to the theme is the significant recalibration due to dendrochronology and in particular the work being done on the bristlecone pine. Professor Renfrew begins by explaining the importance of dating in archaeology and then explains the impact of the first radiocarbon dates. Tree-ring calibration is then shown to produce dates which are incompatible with the traditional framework of European Prehistory.

He reduces these inconsistencies into chronological 'fault line' which conveniently rids Northern Europe of Mycenaean influence. This done, Professor Renfrew proceeds to make a strong case for indigenous development of structures such as megaliths, invoking ethnological analogies en route. Using the 'New Archaeology' he offers explanations for the origins of European metallurgy, and sets Stonehenge in its local context.

He foresees that future developments in archaeology may take place through the analysis of culture change. The appendix gives an excellent description of the radiocarbon dating method and there is a superb bibliography for the benefit of the serious reader.

CHRIS GILES

**Town and Country in Verulamium and the Roman Chilterns** by Keith Brannigan. *Spurbooks.* 151pp., 63 figs., 27 plates. £2.95.

THE AREA which includes the Roman city of Verulamium and its environs is particularly suitable for a study in depth which ranges in time from the Iron Age to the 5th century A.D.

On the one hand we have the farming communities living within easy reach of the Catuvellaunian tribal centres at Weathampstead and later at Prae Wood, and on the other the gradual growth of an urban population. So far as is known at present the Belgic farmers lived in small enclosed farmsteads probably inhabited by single families, although villages do sometimes occur, especially on high ground. By the last decades of the 1st century A.D. a number of villas had appeared around Verulamium, mostly on pre-Roman sites, while in the more remote Chilterns, land clearance in the valley bottoms

was beginning. This was followed by the development in this area of fine 2nd century villas including Latimer, excavated by Dr. Brannigan, which reflect the Romanizing influence of current Verulamium town-houses. Villas elsewhere had also prospered and have produced evidence of painted walls and mosaic floors. Some further villa-building and alteration went on in the 3rd century, but by 270 signs of an economic recession appear with buildings falling into ruin. Prosperity returned in the first half of the 4th century. In 350 the demolition of villas such as Gadebridge Park may represent the confiscation of the property of a supporter of the defeated usurper Magnentius. Other villas may have suffered from the raids of 367. A number, however, seem to have continued into the 5th century.

Verulamium is the first site where the development of a Romano-British town can be studied over the whole Roman period. Dr. Brannigan also studies its relationship with the neighbouring villas which unexpectedly prove to be more substantially built than the town-houses at the end of the 1st century, and provided with baths and even the first traces of mosaics. By the mid-2nd century the town is in the ascendant and from the Antonine period both types of dwelling flourish. The discoveries of tile and pottery kilns suggest that several small settlements and at least two villas took advantage of the demand for building materials to extend their activities, perhaps seasonally when agriculture demanded least labour. A variety of small finds shed light on the life of the period and a few more of these illustrations would benefit from the inclusion of a scale. It is unlikely that the patella of fig. 9 and p. 34 was a saucepan. Probably it was used for pouring libations or even for warming wine at the dinner table.

This is a very clear and attractively presented account, intended for the general reader, of an area rich enough in material for this type of study. The relationship between town and country in Roman Britain are still far from clear, and may vary between different tribes or from other causes. It would be interesting to compare this book with other regional studies of a similar nature.

JOAN LIVERSIDGE

**Shakespeare's Second Globe. The Missing Monument** by C. Walter Hodges. *Oxford University Press.* 100pp., 38 ill. £3.00.

THIS IS a serious look at the historical and architectural problems associated with the interpretation

of the Globe theatre on London's Bankside. The work of reconstruction attempted resulted from a proposal in 1970 to erect a replica theatre in Southwark and the necessity for sound ideas to be put on to paper. The published study also allows a discussion of the credibility of the London work of Wenceslaus Hollar and for the illustration of several of his excellent engravings.

Walter Hodges is here concerned with the second Globe, erected in 1613-14, after the earlier thatched theatre was destroyed by fire. The second globe was included within the scope of Hollar's magnificent Long View of London, sketched in the early sixteen forties, but not engraved and published, in fact, until after the destruction of the theatre. The interpretation presented uses the information from Hollar's drawings to great advantage and is very convincing. To my mind Walter Hodges succeeds until he leaves the engravings and ventures on to the marshy grounds of structure. I cannot personally believe his multi-braced hammer beam roof, based on a backward looking timber technology. Would not a need for economy demanded by the promoters, as keen then no doubt as today, require a simple double A or M framed roof truss. The early 17th century saw the introduction of new large span, flat ceiling, trusses as well as the final fling of the hammer beam. Notwithstanding this, the book is a first rate piece of deduction and an important addition to background Shakesperean studies.

JOHN ASHDOWN

**The Eastern Fringe of the City; a photographic tour of the Bishopsgate area in 1912.** David Webb and Alison Carpenter. *Bishopsgate Institute*. Available from the Institute, at 230 Bishopsgate, London, E.C.2. 30p.

TWENTY PHOTOGRAPHS, apparently all taken on Saturday, 20th April, 1912 by C. A. Mathew, then of Brightlingsea, are reproduced in this excellent booklet. A mere 30 pages, including the limp covers, conceal a wonderful glimpse of a long vanished London, rich in life and detail. The photographs, which are released for a wider appreciation after 60 years, are real historic documents because Mathew was interested in people as well as places.

The physical area concerned is a small one, the Petticoat Lane fringe of the East End, hard against Liverpool Street Station. Destruction of the built fabric in the last 60 years has been considerable but there are tenacious survivals, like the Artillery Lane shop fronts, that make the area memorable still. Detail on buildings, plaques or lettering can, and does survive, but only in the photographs does the paving, bollards, street lighting and transport remain in such a vivid way. It is the people, particularly the

kids, that are the greatest source of interest and pleasure, however. How they loved being photographed! Briefly pausing for Mathew to capture the scene and then off, headlong for the new world to be caught by the Great War.

Each plate is described and interpreted with a wealth of detail by the authors. Maps of then and now are provided. Can Mathew have simply wandered round the area, while waiting for a train, as suggested? The photographs themselves suggest a former Eastender who knew and understood his subject, rather than the casual visitor. A nostalgic special visit perhaps? If you enjoy and love London, this is a must for you. A tour, booklet in hand, is then recommended.

JOHN ASHDOWN

**The Archaeology of the Industrial Revolution.** Edited by Brian Bracegirdle. *Heinemann*. 207pp. £6.50.

THIS IS a lavishly illustrated book containing hundreds of superb colour photographs together with even more monochrome illustrations including photographs, drawings and diagrams.

The editor has contributed all of the photographs and some of the text, the remainder being provided under relevant headings by such experts as Rex Wailes: Natural Sources of Power, and the lamentably now late L. T. C. Rolt: Inland Waterways.

Each chapter of the book deals with a separate portion of our industrial heritage but continual reference is made to other sections where and when applicable. As this is so, this book provides an admirable introduction to the study of this fascinating subject as well as being of great use to those already involved as the relationships become apparent.

The photographs and other illustrations are all exceedingly well captioned and one could dip into a section and obtain much useful information and as such the book makes an excellent guide especially if travelling by car (it is rather heavy otherwise). One drawback is that the 'Ordnance Survey' information refers to the 'old' One-Inch series and does not entirely apply to the 'new' series. However as the only portion that is incorrect is the map number (the first numerals) the remainder may be used in the normal fashion.

Whether one is interested in the foundation of iron and steel making, or electrical power generation or even workers' housing, these together with many other subjects are dealt with very adequately in the text. Each section not only covers the history of the industry concerned but also explains, where necessary, details of the processes or operations undertaken often by reference to the illustrations. Generally the text follows the monochrome illustrations with the colour photographs as extras spread lavishly throughout, with adequate cross references.

In a few places where some technical difficulty may be encountered, very clear annotated diagrams are provided and these in conjunction with the clear concise general explanation make everything comprehensible. To illustrate the point, after reading the book the reader should find it perfectly easy to set a windmill's sails ready for work or to understand the geology of coalmining.

While there is no general bibliography, and how could there be without confusion, each chapter has a list of from six to ten books directly related to it for further reference if required.

Thus here we have a book containing the essentials of Industrial Archaeology, the photographs, drawings and details of recording, which may mean that perhaps more may be saved as at least one of the items photographed has now gone, but many not shown are being protected both *in situ* and in the new industrial museums. So although *The Archaeology of the Industrial Revolution* appears expensive in money terms, it is not so when the contents and use are considered and a word in the right quarter at Christmas may produce results.

DAVID PETCHEY

**The Fulham Pottery; A Preliminary Account** (Occasional Paper No. 1), by V. R. Christophers, D. C. Haselgrove and O. H. J. Pearcey. 50p (post free).

**A Report on Some Archaeological Work in the Borough of Hammersmith** (Occasional Paper No. 2), by G. L. Canvin. 25p (post free). *Fulham and Hammersmith Historical Society Archaeological Section*. (Obtainable from Sandra Spire, 9 Barnes Avenue, SW13 9AA.)

THESE TWO recent publications make useful reference works for all interested in the post-medieval period. Occasional Paper No. 1 is a preliminary account of the historical research into, and the excavations on, the site of John Dwight's stoneware pottery at Fulham. A concise description of the main features is followed by what can only be described as a foretaste of the incredible variety of wares and kiln furniture made at the factory from the late 17th century until the late 1950s. Minor printing errors in the first edition of this interim report cannot detract from the excellence of this report.

Occasional Paper No. 2 is essentially a description of the post-medieval finds recovered during the observation of three building sites in the Borough of Hammersmith between 1971 and 1973, with a brief description of the associated features. This paper by Gale Canvin admirably illustrates and describes a number of dated groups typical of such sites in London. Although the paper is limited in its interpretation and parallels it provides useful information for the dating of the later post-medieval wares especially the coarse earthenwares.

BRIAN J. BLOICE

**Suburbia** by David Thorns. *Paladin paperback*. 1973. 60pp.

A FRESH, if professional orientated, look at the 20th century suburb in Britain and other industrialised countries. Since suburbs of all types are the fastest growing type of residential development, the interpretations presented in this book should be interesting to many. A tough read though.

JOHN ASHDOWN

*Continued from p.204*

Gewissae) and Essex, as Mr. Bird suggests, and I would certainly not disagree with him.

Can it not be that the early settlements in Middlesex, mostly along the Thames bank and in the tributary valleys, are also federate plantations by the Britons to protect the west and north-west flanks of London from attack by Saxons who had circled round the Croydon area to the south, or who came from their early settlements in the Icknield Way-Middle Thames area?

While I agree with Mr. Bird's strictures about the unattractiveness of most of Middlesex for the Saxon pioneer farmer, we must not overlook the fact that Harrow — the shrine of the *Gumeningas* — must pre-date the year 625 or thereabouts, and that the Saxons were firmly established in the central Brent valley at Wembley before 825, and had reached places such as Yeading and Ealing even earlier, before 700 in many cases. As in the eastern parts of the Netherlands they no doubt found suitable sites in an essentially forested and wet landscape.

My "suggestion" about south-west Surrey is, like those who have gone before, mere conjecture, based on a reasonable interpretation of the "non-evidence". The Saxons who

had settled in the Mole and Wey valleys prior to 675 must have come from somewhere, and there seem to be four likely contenders: 1) that they came from the Kent/Surrey borders during the expansion of Saxon settlements after 550, which assumes that all the riverside sites between Battersea and Walton had already been taken; 2) that they were "west" Saxons, either from the Middle Thames in Berkshire, or from Hampshire, also arriving c.550; 3) that they were outposts of the federates settled by the Britons to guard the south-west flank; or 4) that they came from north-west Sussex in the manner suggested. By "empty", I meant that had they come from Sussex in the first half of the 6th-century, the area would have been something of a political vacuum. The absence of any place-names associated with the Britons, together with the pure pagan names Peper Harrow, Thursley and *Cusn Weoh* should suggest that there had been considerable Saxon settlement in the area, certainly before 675 when Chertsey abbey appears, and probably long before, in the 6th century. Again, only further archaeological evidence from this area will help us to resolve the semantic problems created by place-name and circumstantial documentary material.