

Books

The Black Prince's Palace at Kennington, Surrey, by Graham J. Dawson. *British Archaeological Reports* 26. 313pp, 20 figs. £3.90 (post free from British Archaeological Reports, 122 Banbury Road, Oxford, OX2 7BP).

THE generally excellent *British Archaeological Reports* are produced by offset-litho direct from typescript, a relatively cheap means of publishing important papers that might not otherwise be printed. However, above a certain size, which the present report may be approaching, the method ceases to have much economic advantage over conventional printing. It has certain disadvantages; the format is hardly ideal for excavation reports, where the inability to differentiate between headings, text, finds lists and footnotes by the use of different typefaces and sizes make the description of a complex site even harder to comprehend. *British Archaeological Reports* form yet another series of publications the archaeologist must bear in mind; one wonders whether this paper was offered first in any form to an established local or national journal, where it would have had a guaranteed circulation, and would have automatically found its way onto many library shelves.

The site of the palace at Kennington, built, or rebuilt, by the Black Prince in the 14th century and demolished with great thoroughness in 1531-2 to provide building materials for Whitehall, was excavated by Graham Dawson in 1965-7 (*L.A.*, 1, No. 1 (1968) 6-8). This report is based on his doctoral thesis and as an attempt, single-handed, to deal with every possible aspect of its subject, and perhaps in its verbosity, it shows traces of its origin. The eagerness with which every strand is followed up leads to what can only be regarded as digressions, such as a long discussion of the possible function of jettons as currency—a conclusion that seems to me unlikely.

The site consisted largely of robbed foundations exposed only for short distances in the narrow excavation trenches. In the publication of such a site the omission of sections is understandable; but there is a shortage of detailed plans, and the site description though full is at times to me at least incomprehensible (and not helped by a misprint, F74 for F73, on p.22) In such cases the reader must depend greatly on the excavator's interpretation of the evidence, and credit must be given to Dr. Dawson for the thoroughness of his reconstruction of the buildings. However, the attempt to reconstruct the domestic economy of the palace, though laudable, was perhaps mistaken, given the scarcity of finds on which this could be based.

The account of the building's history is painstaking, and the identification from documentary sources of the uses of the different structures is valuable. One might find minor faults—there is no reference in the E version of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle to King Harthacnut dying at Lambeth as he stood drinking; the E version indeed refers to Lambeth, but not to the drink, while the C text says he died at his drink, without mentioning Lambeth. But these sections seem thoroughly well documented.

British Archaeological Reports have four editors and eight advisory editors, but the editorial hand seems to have rested lightly on this report. If it had been produced by conventional printing methods—in which it would in any case have occupied only about 100 pages—the need for economy might have been reflected in greater conciseness, of which it stands in great need.

JOHN CLARK

Historic Building in London, an inventory of Historic Buildings owned by the Greater London Council and the Inner London Education Authority. *Academy Editions*. 128pp. Paperback £3.95, hardback £6.95.

THIS book is the first in a new series of *London Architectural Monographs* published in co-operation with the Greater London Council. It takes the form of an illustrated list of nearly a thousand historic buildings and monuments in, or formerly in, the G.L.C.'s care. Some gained by chance, others bought to preserve and others by contrast erected for the performance of public functions by the L.C.C. and the Board of Works.

The inventory is described as a working document; which presumably means it reproduces the list used by the Council to record its ownerships. It is therefore, as suggested above, a rather random sample of London buildings with a leaning to public service and amenities. The majority are included on the statutory lists issued by the Department of the Environment.

Readers of *the London Archaeologist* will turn to the photographic section which forms two-thirds of the book's content. Here are some 250 illustrations, ranging from small Essex countryside cottages to giant pumping stations, river bridges to fire stations, grand mansions to terrace houses and schools to housing estates. Such a collection forstalls any coherent picture of London's buildings emerging. A number of the illustrations show the results of res-

toration or of conservation schemes, with before and after views, which enhance the Council's reputation as an authority. Others illustrate a failure over the years to achieve any improvement in condition of a property, which perhaps reached the Council's ownership as a last resort for survival. A predominant theme is the usefulness of so many of the buildings performing tasks for the community, newly found, or for which they were originally built, or equally usefully decorating parks and landscapes. My own favourite is the 'Arts and Crafts' gatehouse at the south entrance to the Blackwall Tunnel still guarding the north-bound traffic lane and carrying the TV monitor. A useful ornament preserved by "the skin of its teeth" as we say. To those interested in the growth of the L.C.C.'s interest in old buildings the introduction will be of value.

The Living Heritage of Westminster, Westminster City Council, Westminster Chamber of Commerce, Cities of London and Westminster Society of Architects. 108pp. Paperback £1.25.

ISSUED as a contribution to European Architectural Heritage Year this book is an illustrated companion to the situation facing historic buildings of the western City. Its contents include a short chapter on the growth of Westminster; examples of buildings and conservation work; the latter section includes preservation (refusal to grant consent for demolition), restoration (repair and new uses), replica (retention of townscape) and renewal (new buildings). The new developments are no doubt included to give us confidence in the future, but except for the remarkable 52-55 Piccadilly, I was not convinced. Perhaps the amazingly overwrought prose used contributed. An excellent publication for the Londoner interested in Westminster and good value for money.

Both the above books, and many more of a special London interest, may be bought in the West End at the new G.L.C. Bookshop at 54 Charing Cross Road. This shop, opened last year, carries a full range of the G.L.C.'s books and print reproductions together with many other books of interest to the Londoner and visitor. It is well worth a visit.

JOHN ASHDOWN

Prehistoric and Roman Enfield, by Geoffrey R. Gillam: *Enfield Archaeological Society*—Research Report No. 3 (1973). 32pp, 8 plates, 1 map. 50p.

WITHIN its 32 pages this small booklet contains a wealth of information about the archaeology of the Borough of Enfield and is of importance not only to those interested in Enfield's past but to the wider field of Greater London archaeologists as a whole. As the author states, it is often difficult to assess the archaeology of an area when it falls between arbitrary boundaries. However, the London Borough of Enfield occupies the larger part of a wide expanse

of brickearth and gravel on the western side of the River Lea which renders it particularly suitable for this type of assessment.

After an introduction the first section is devoted to a chronological appraisal of the Prehistoric and Roman periods, then follows a gazeteer of Roman sites and finds with detailed information on the circumstances and contents of the discoveries. Especially useful is the recording of details of chance finds, some now lost, and information from local residents.

The Enfield Archaeological Society should be congratulated in its achievement, firstly for coping with development threats within the Borough and secondly, for Mr. Gillam's efforts at bringing together the known discoveries. It is inevitable that since its publication in 1973 further sites have come to light, the most notable one being in Lincoln Road where excavations conducted in the summer of 1975 by the Enfield Archaeological Society and the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society have substantially increased our knowledge of the Roman settlement.

It is hoped that all active local groups will be encouraged by this publication to produce similar surveys for their own areas. This is already being achieved by the Inner London Unit for the seven inner London boroughs north of the Thames, the first of these *The Archaeology of Kensington and Chelsea* by David Whipp has recently appeared and is conveniently of similar size and format to the Enfield publication. Although not yet published, the South West London team's reports are expected soon on the Boroughs of Wandsworth and Richmond, these will be more detailed than those already mentioned. In 1973 the Kingston-upon-Thames Archaeological Society produced *Archaeology and Development in the Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames*, reviewed in the *L.A.*, Vol. 2, No. 7.

These Borough Surveys are to be encouraged since it is surely only when we have assessed the implications of the knowledge we already have that policies for future investigation can be formulated. They also emphasise the need for the full publication of all excavations.

ALISON LAWS

The Trees of Wimbledon, by Norman Plastow. *John Evelyn Society*, 26 Lingfield Road, Wimbledon, About 30p.

THIS is quite the funniest serious broadsheet I have seen for a long time, written and illustrated with graphs by a recent contributor to the *L.A.*

It cannot be described but must be read. It had my family in fits. Alas the destruction it highlights is far from funny and the John Evelyn Society is to be congratulated in attempting to make tree owners think. Essential for all Civic Societies.

JOHN ASHDOWN

Current Journals

The London Journal, Editor - in - Chief: Valerie Pearl. Vol I. No. 1, May 1975, £3. Vol. I. No. 2, November 1975, £3.

The Longman Group Ltd., Journals Division, 43/45 Annandale St., Edinburgh EH7 4AT.

Extensively illustrated in photograph and line.

The London Journal is subtitled "A Review of Metropolitan Society Past and Present" and its wide scope is indicated by its stated aim to provide a much needed focus for the work of "historians, sociologists, geographers, archaeologists, political scientists, civic designers and administrators on metropolitan affairs at many levels." The first two volumes certainly live up to this catholic and comprehensive claim.

They are models of interdisciplinary collaboration although the very phrase has in it a hint of the academic which is bound to make those of us who have been concerned in *the London Archaeologist* from its beginning pause to wonder whether there has been sufficient regard for the "many levels." Some may at once feel that its price is likely to confine demand to University Departmental Libraries and learned societies.

If its promoters hope to make it viable in these days of severe financial stringency they may welcome the suggestion from our experience that in order to keep it alive as the unique Journal it richly deserves to be they must strenuously seek to cater for a much wider public by including rather more material of general interest. This is surely possible without any lowering of standards either of scholarship or precision.

What happened in London in the "Forty-Five," the Slums of Victorian Kensington, Greater London Housing Strategy, Social Structure in Nineteenth Century Poplar, Early Elizabethan Discontents in London, the Story of London Transport, and certainly the Mysterious Disappearance of Edwardian London Fog are matters of profound interest to all Londoners regardless of their academic background.

Michael Robbin's "Viewpoint" in No. 2 on London Railway Stations evinces best of all the contributions in these two volumes the kind of approach and treatment one has in mind. Professor Dyos of Leicester, a most influential member of the Editorial Committee gave us not long ago a brilliant pioneer book in the field of Urban History with his study of Victorian Campberwell. It was "academic" and "popular" but in the best sense of both adjectives. Yet the Review Article "A Castle for Everyman" in No. 1., despite four pages of effective photographs, deals with the significance of suburban housing development generally in a far less

memorable manner, being disparate and lacking a clear theme. If one is to be fair to *The London Journal* it must be admitted that it came to birth with an accumulation of purposeful and effective material over several years. Two important articles which were intended at first for inclusion in No. 1 had to be held over to No. 2. The Book Reviews stress this dilemma for many of them deal with works published two years or more before No. 1 was launched. For example there is a well balanced appraisal of Felix Barker and Peter Jackson's *London: 2000 Years of a City and its People* which was on sale in fact in 1973. I have since then spent happy hours with my copy and though I would not wish the Review away one prefers to read about a book *before* buying it.

However, I find myself in a comparable dilemma as doubtless by the time this review appears No. 3. of *The London Journal* will have been on sale. The only foreshadowing of its major contents which has come my way are six titles of papers: "The Engravers' Battle for Professional Recognition in Early Nineteenth Century London," "The Women's Trade Union Movement in London 1874-1914," "London: A Pilgrimage (Blanchard Jerrold)" "The Archaeological Heritage of the City of London" by Brian Hobley, "Going Comprehensive in Greater London," and "Urban Transport: Orthodoxy and Change."

Whether these will widen the appeal of the *Journal* by arousing the interest of we ordinary folk is not clear. Certainly Brian Hobley's contribution should create something of a stir among readers of *the London Archaeologist*. I have no hesitation in advising all to try a single copy of *The London Journal* and decide for themselves on its relevance to their studies. Indeed I should like to hear from any of you who do so.

E. LIONEL FEREDAY

Post-Medieval Archaeology, Vol. 9 (1975). Editor: J. G. Coad. (Issued to members but also available at £3 from 53 Bainton Road, Oxford.)

THE NINTH volume of this national journal contains several excavation reports relevant to London. In Part 2 of Excavations at the Royal Dockyard, Woolwich, 1972/3, T. W. Courtney describes the excavation of a group of industrial structures and the associated finds. Philip Dixon describes a small excavation at the site of Richmond Palace in 1972. The excavation of a 17th century pottery site at Cove, east Hants, by Jeremy Haslam, fully describes one group from the Surrey-Hants white-ware ceramics centres that supplied London and elsewhere.

JOHN ASHDOWN