

# Books

**Archaeology Under Water: An atlas of the world's submerged sites**, edited by Keith Muckelroy. *McGraw-Hill Book Company*, 1980. 192 pages, many unnumbered illustrations. No price.

THIS BOOK is a useful guide to some recent researches in archaeology underwater, and although it has fourteen authors, all experts in their various fields, somehow this publication does not achieve its aims and claims. Its title is misleading, not only because some of the sites described do not lie underwater (e.g. the Saxon vessels from Graveney and Sutton Hoo, the Viking ships from Oseberg and Gotstad, and the surviving ships HMS *Victory* and HMS *Unicorn* are all included), but also because many important sites are not included (e.g., most of the Roman, medieval and post-medieval wrecks in Europe, and most of the post-medieval wrecks in America are omitted). Since the chosen sites are so selective the claim that the book "surveys the whole field of achievement" in underwater archaeology since 1960 is simply untrue (e.g., on p. 91 the discoveries of British warships of the 17th and 18th centuries are dismissed in one short paragraph, with the exception of the *Dartmouth* which is described on p. 100-101).

There is a lack of cohesion, probably because the book comprises a series of mostly disconnected essays by its authors, and these essays have been scattered about under a series of loosely headed sections. The subjects tackled are vast in scope, the publisher and editor trying to embrace too much; and therein may lie the problem, since, wisely, none of the authors have tried to cover "the whole field".

Section I, which follows a quaint Prologue, is by Keith Muckelroy and deals with the problems of diving, excavation and interpretation on underwater archaeological sites. In Section II Professor George Bass deals with a number of Bronze Age, Greek, Roman, Byzantine and medieval wrecks; and Dr. Anthony Parker describes some aspects of Roman trade in the Mediterranean and gives some staggering statistics (p. 50): by the late 1970's about 630 wrecks dating before AD 1500 had been found, of which 538 have been discovered in the western Mediterranean, and of those 407 date from the period 300 BC-AD 300.

Section III deals with European shipwrecks over a period of 3000 years, and Keith Muckelroy, the author, of the prehistoric and Roman sections

states that apart from the Pudding Pan Sand wreck off Whitstable "no other Roman wrecks are known in British waters" (p. 67). This is incorrect, of course, since three Roman vessels, one discovered underwater, have been found in London! Angela Evans, the Saxon ship specialist at the British Museum, describes vessels of that and the Viking periods. Carl Olof Cederlund, one of Europe's leading diving archaeologists gives a most interesting summary of medieval and later shipping in the Baltic, and includes the Swedish warship *Wasa* which sank in 1628. Colin Martin briefly tackles the English warships *Mary Rose* (1545) and *Dartmouth* (1690), and launches off into his speciality — wrecks of the Spanish Armada sunk in 1588.

Section IV is concerned with non-European shipwrecks, and begins with a description by J. Barto Arnold III of some 16th century Spanish wrecks found in central America. Robert Mark also describes a number of 16-18th century wrecks, mostly of Spanish ships, and illustrates them with the inevitable treasure. Finally, Jeremy Green, of the Western Australian Museum, gives a most useful summary of twenty-four discovered East India-men wrecks of the 17th and 18th centuries.

Section V by Ian Morrison, Robert Marx, Ulrich Ruoff and Nicholas Flemming describes some habitation and harbour sites in America, Switzerland, Scotland and in the Mediterranean.

Finally, in Section VI Keith Muckelroy writes about the preservation, display and publication of sites and finds, and also considers the need for the legal protection of sites.

This is an interesting and useful book, though it contains little that is directly relevant to London. It is attractively produced and well illustrated, and, with the reservations expressed above, I would gladly recommend it as an introduction to nautical archaeology.

PETER MARSDEN

**Estuary — Land and water in the lower Thames Basin** by A. K. Astbury. 326 pp with 41 plates and 3 maps. *Cornforth Press* 1980. £8.75.

THE PARTS OF KENT and Essex bordering the lower reaches of the Thames below London are not of great scenic beauty, but they possess a wealth of geological, archaeological and historic interest. This is well demonstrated by Mr. Astbury who has written in considerable detail about certain features

of the area which have engaged his attention. Such selective treatment is bound to cause disappointment to those readers who fail to find reference to topics they regard as important. For example, although a great deal of space is devoted to describing the geological development of the Lower Thames valley, there is omission of any adequate reference to the unique archaeological and palaeontological evidence from the terrace gravels, particularly on the Kentish side. The high-level terrace between Dartford and Bexley is briefly mentioned but the internationally famous outlier at Swanscombe, which has yielded the oldest human remains in the country, is ignored.

Roads and trackways receive considerable attention and there is ample discussion of the probable location of river crossings by fords or ferries. Two chapters are devoted to listing the Roman remains near the river in Kent and Essex and there are sections on the Saxon and Danish invasions, churches and other buildings, as well as literary references. Deneholes at Hangman's Wood in Essex and Joyden's Wood in Kent receive sensible and well documented treatment.

The author is uncertain whether 'Mr. Thorpe of Bexley' had any connection with Dr. John Thorpe who produced *Registrum Roffense*. They were, in fact, father and son, the latter being responsible for the publication in 1769 of his father's notes forming the basis of the *Registrum*.

Illustrations are almost entirely in the form of good photographs covering a wide range of subjects. Two of the maps show the boundaries of what the author believes to be Roman land settlements at Orsett and Asheldham laid out in accordance with the principles of centuriation. A large clearly-drawn folding map at the back of the book shows the places mentioned in the text.

The general character of the book indicates wide and usually careful reading on the part of the author. There is very full acknowledgement of the published sources from which he has derived his information, but these are incorporated in the text in a manner detracting in places from its smooth flow, and they would have been better consigned to separate bibliographical notes. Mr. Astbury confesses in the Forward that he has had difficulty in finding a publisher for his book. Perhaps it was considered that it falls rather awkwardly between a work of scientific interest and a popular topographical survey.

P. J. TESTER

**The story of Carshalton House** A. E. Jones 1980 *London Borough of Sutton Libraries and Arts Services*, 137pp, illustrated, £2.95.

**THIS USEFUL BOOK** sets out the results of recent research undertaken by the author and by Sister Pauline Stevens, once of St Philomena's School housed within Carshalton House. It incorporates published and unpublished work by Mr C. R. B. Barrett, Dr A. V. Peatling and Sister Savio (Marjorie Scofield).

After a slightly confusing start, the volume deals with the history of the building and its owners — surely few buildings of similar size can have had so many owners. Possibly the most important pages in the book are those in which the author convincingly argues that the house was built by Edward Carleton at a date not far removed from 1700 and not by John Fellowes or by Dr John Radcliffe who succeeded Carleton at the property. But the book contains detailed and interesting information on almost every page. Inventories are reproduced, the history of alterations to the house explored if not always perfectly resolved, the intricacies of the fascinating 'waterworks' explained. The only curious omission seems to be that of a really detailed architectural description of the house. The London Borough of Sutton is greatly to be praised for making Mr Jones' work so readily available.

The opening confusion arises from an unsatisfactory treatment of the various undated burials that have been found in the vicinity and an attempt to deal with the pre-1700 topography and history of the site without referring the reader to the author's appendix. This appendix, in fact, greatly clarifies the topographical issues. Presumably in an attempt to avoid confusing the 'lay' reader, the book contains few references of a conventional kind although there is a bibliography. Any future scholar wishing to plough the same field may find many of Mr Jones' statements difficult to check.

Perhaps no one will want to. The book is written in Mr Jones' very personal style (readers of his earlier books on Carshalton will already be familiar with this) but does give the impression that here is a painstaking author who has checked and checked again. Mr Jones may have said the last word on this topic for many a long year.

DENNIS TURNER

**The Search for Alexander**, by Robin Lane Fox. *Allen Lane*. 1980. 439 pp., 220 photographs, 135 in colour. £12.95.

**THE SEARCH FOR ALEXANDER** differs quite radically in its approach from Mr Lane Fox's previous work on this subject. Its emphasis lies with the motivation and personality of Alexander and gives the reader a feel for both the man and his

historical setting. It is richly illustrated with over 200 photographs, many of which are of exceptional interest to the reader, especially those of the finds from the Royal Tombs at Vergina, which are the the best colour photographs of these items I have seen to date. Having travelled over much of the land about which he talks, the author is able to write with some authority about climate and conditions, which further adds to one's enjoyment. The interested may take advantage of the extensive bibliography provided to dig deeper.

My only criticism of this book is that I feel that some major episodes, such as the murders of Philip, Parmenion and Cleitus, the trial of Philotas and the influence of Olympias possibly deserve a more detailed examination. Mr Lane Fox seems, in the final analysis, not to have made up his mind about the real Alexander, which is possibly beneficial, since he presents the evidence and then allows the reader to draw his own conclusions.

However, this work is a highly readable and enjoyable biography which seems to be aimed at the informed public, and as such is, in my opinion, well worth the price.

JOHN PADDOCK

**A Guide to the Roman Remains in Britain**, by Roger J. A. Wilson. *Constable*, London. 1980. 416 pp., 120 pl. and figs. £4.95.

A MAJOR PROBLEM when visiting our ancient monuments is not so much finding them, as getting the best out of them after arrival. I have, on occasion, found the information available at the sites lacking or imprecise — as though no one has bothered to try to discover what the public needs to know so as to get the most value out of their tour. Even if detailed guides or reports are available on site, it is often helpful to have some idea of when a site is open, what is known about it, and what to look for, before you arrive. This has been made much easier, for the Roman period at least, by the publication of Roger Wilson's book.

It begins with a useful chapter showing the reader how to use the guide, and contains a simplified introduction to the main types of settlements and structures that might be encountered, followed by an historical outline and glossary. For the purposes of detailing the sites, Great Britain has been divided into ten regions with the remains grouped and discussed usually by type rather than by geographic proximity. These area guides are, however, no mere list of sites: they also contain information which assist in setting the individual examples in their historical and local contexts. The guide ends with a gazetteer of previously undescribed sites, a list of museums with relevant displays and an extensive bibliography.

The author states that the guide is intended "primarily for the ordinary individual" and perhaps because of this he has allowed it to be rather simplified in its acceptance and presentation of archaeological evidence. Yet many of its users will obviously turn to it for guidance and a slightly more critical approach towards the standards and reliability of certain interpretations and displays would not be out of place in future editions. Neither would more general site plans, on the lines of that produced for Richborough. In the case of Fishbourne, for example, one showing the positions and relationships of the supply base, proto-palace and palace would accompany the text well. They might be considered more useful than black and white photographs of part of a polychrome mosaic and a half double page spread of the garden and southern frontage of of the museum hall. Mention should also have been made of the illuminated exhibition on aspects of the Saxon Shore staged in the keep of Porchester Castle. This is quite imaginatively designed, even if it does appear to take the D.O.E. a long time to replace the light-bulb!

The holidaymaker, student or teacher, accompanied by the relevant O.S. maps, will find this compact and readable volume a very useful companion both before and after his arrival at any number of Romano-British sites.

HARVEY SHELDON

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## Also received

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**The Archaeology of Roman Pannonia** Lengyel, A., & Radan, G.T.B., Eds., *University Press of Kentucky, and Akadémia Kiadó (Budapest)*: 1980. 506 pp., 167 Pls., 94 figs., fold-out Map. \$45. Lengyel, A., & Radan, G.T.B., Eds., 1980

A VERY USABLE WORK, with generous index, references and notes for the individual sections by the sixteen contributors, and a large number of detailed photographs of material, much of it new. The book deals with every aspect of the Roman archaeology of the area between the Alps, the Sava river, and the right bank of the Danube in western Hungary. There is even a welcome chapter by Otto Trogmayer setting out the prehistoric sequence of the area, and the treatment extends up to the ninth century AD, when many people might need to be reminded that Pannonia was for a time an eastern Mark of the Carolingian Empire. There are anthropological, ceramic and other analyses, and the whole is an admirable complement and extension to other published work, such as Mocsy's *Pannonia and Upper Moesia*.

JOHN NANDRIS