

**Medieval London Houses**, by John Schofield. *Yale University Press*, 1995. 272 pp., 264 illus., bib., index. £40.

THIS authoritative book represents the first comprehensive study of domestic buildings in London from c 1200 to 1666. The study was undertaken as Schofield's doctoral thesis, and draws on a wide range of evidence to provide a detailed description of the London domestic house. The remarkable necessity of this book is best appreciated in regard to the paucity of previous research.

This book is far more than simply an examination of the Stow and Treswell surveys. There are but seventeen surviving fragments of secular buildings of this period in the City of London, and Schofield has produced a work which covers two hundred and one sites or groups of buildings, which, when taken together, provide a comprehensive gazetteer.

The book begins with a brief *Introduction and Survey of Sources*, and continues with an examination of the topographical sources. There is then a twenty-page essay of the topographical setting. This delves deeply into the documentary sources, discusses the development and expansion of the city, and includes a section on the Dissolution and its effects on the city. As Schofield comments: "Such an intensity of prestigious buildings and constructions within a single urban area was not present anywhere else in the country, and there were no towns of remotely comparable grandeur

(continued from p. 81)

brook streams which defined the northern and eastern margins of the eyot could have been navigable at this time.

There is also limited evidence that the lower land surrounding the eyot was utilised. For example, at the junction of Tennis Street and Long Lane (not shown on Fig. 2) pits containing late-1st-century pottery were cut into deposits of alluvial silt<sup>32</sup>, and at 9 Tanner Street [26] an east-west ditch was dug across waterlogged ground<sup>33</sup>.

Since 1984, when excavations began on the Abbey site, much has been learnt about prehistoric and Roman occupation of the Bermondsey eyot. Fig. 2 shows clearly that most of the sites excavated since then have been at the western end of the eyot,

<sup>32</sup>. P R V Marsden 'Archaeological Finds in Southwark, 1962' *Trans London Middlesex Archaeol Soc* 21 pt 2 (1965) 143.

in the vicinity" (p. 26). He does his best to demonstrate this, studiously avoiding discussion of ecclesiastical architecture, yet charting the rapidly changing face of the developing city.

Chapter Three is a discussion of properties and buildings, based upon the research of W. A. Pantin. As in all the chapters, a milieu of intricate elements are discussed of medieval planning policy, from roof tiles to the size of gutters. The following two chapters go on to describe the development of the structures themselves and their fabric and furnishings. The various functions of rooms are explored and there is some detailed consideration of their various juxtapositions. Both chapters make good use of the evidence from archaeological excavations in the city and, on the whole, such material is well integrated with the documentary sources.

The final chapter is primarily a discussion of the materials used to build dwellings in the medieval and Tudor city.

The crowning achievement of the book is the selected gazetteer of sites (p. 153-241). The absence of research preceding the survey makes it all the more remarkable that such a complex and well referenced series of sites should be compiled. From the two hundred and one sites considered, a clear insight can be gained about the evolution of London's medieval and post-medieval housing.

The substantial volume is well illustrated and well produced. The illustrations are clear and well chosen, and the book is furnished with an impressive

(because this is where recent redevelopment has occurred), and that there is a large unexplored area to the east where no archaeological work has taken place, but which may yet provide further evidence. In particular the area of brickearth subsoils on the eastern margin of the eyot is potentially of great interest as this would have been a favoured location for early settlement.

## Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to various colleagues at MOLAS who have assisted in the writing of this report, in particular David Bentley who supplied the topographic information and produced the figures. I am grateful also for the help and encouragement provided by John Dillon, Archaeology Officer for the London Borough of Southwark.

<sup>33</sup>. K Heard 9 Tanner Street (TAN87) MOL archive rep (1988).

bibliography and thorough index. The title is partially misleading, and requires reference to the fact that much post-medieval material is included. Overall discussion and conclusion is missing, much of this being undertaken in individual chapters, and it is this aspect which is the only major point of criticism. In summary, this is a valuable source book for the study of medieval and post-medieval London and will provide subsequent researchers in the subject with their first port of call.

Gabriel Pepper and Andrew Reynolds

**Theoretical Archaeology**, by K. R. Dark. *Duckworth*, 1995. 246 pp., 48 illus., bibliog, index. £40 hardback, £14.99 paperback.

WHERE DO archaeologists come from? this question is not about gooseberry bushes, but about the bundle of assumptions and beliefs that archaeologists bring with them to their work. For a small discipline, archaeology contains a wide variety of theoretical beliefs and positions, perhaps reflecting the imperfections and ambiguities of the archaeological record itself.

Dark attempts to guide us through the main schools of thought in archaeology (although 'school' suggests a greater level of formality and organisation than actually exists). After setting out the main positions in an introductory chapter, he explains their similarities and differences in relation to a series of themes — Classification and the Measurement of Time, Social Archaeology, Economic Archaeology, Cognitive Archaeology and Explaining Cultural Change. He gives valuable insights into the motivation and interests of archaeologists, as well as a useful (though incomplete) bibliography, which enables ideas to be followed up in more detail. The brevity of explanations of positions may upset some proponents, but provided that all are equally upset, a reasonable balance may have been achieved. The book is fascinating reading for those who want to know more about archaeologists, but it may find its main use as a 'mine' for undergraduate essay topics.

Clive Orton

**The Jane Austen Cookbook**, by Maggie Black and Dierdre Le Faye. *British Museum Press*, 1995. 128 pp., 40 pl., £10.99.

YOU'VE READ the books, seen the films and now, thanks to the *Jane Austen Cookbook*, you can eat the dinners!

Following the recent upsurge of interest in Jane Austen's books comes this very attractive volume, offering us a complete guide to late 18th- and early

19th-century dining, based on recipes culled from a variety of contemporary sources. Among them are household books compiled by Martha Lloyd and Mrs Philip Lybbe Powis, who were connected to the Austen family by marriage.

The recipes are divided (except for the *Stillroom Crafts* section, perhaps more for convenience than conviction) into five chapters. The original of each recipe is given, followed by an easy-to-follow version adapted by Maggie Black for modern ingredients, measures and cooking equipment. Eighteenth-century food is, in the main, most acceptable to modern palates, so with few reservations — perhaps the fricassee of turnips is one — a browse through this book should inspire you to rush into the kitchen and get cooking.

The two introductory chapters, the first on food production, preparation and dining etiquette, the second on references to food in Jane Austen's novels and correspondence, are excellent. The gulf of the Victorian and Edwardian ages divides us from the Age of Enlightenment and informs our ideas about "the old days". Deidre Le Faye reminds us how very different social customs and economic conditions were before the industrial revolution, and summons up a vivid picture of the late-18th-century "squirearchy" at board.

The book is very nicely produced with interesting, appropriate and unusual illustrations, and an index of recipes. It also provides a comprehensive list for further reading, about both Jane Austen and food history. My only (minor) grumble is the referencing of the recipes: the source of each is indicated by initials, but to identify these it is necessary to match them to the list of *Sources Cited* at the back of the book. I should have preferred a formal key at the start of the recipe section.

The *Jane Austen Cookbook* is an entertaining and informative read, as well as a practical cookery book which will enable any cook to produce and enjoy a delicious and authentic with the 'Mr. Darcy' (or 'Miss Bennett') of their choice.

Chris Crickmore

**Bronze Age Copper Mining in Britain and Ireland**, by William O'Brien. *Shire Archaeology*, 1996. 64 pp., illus., £3.95.

THIS WELL illustrated book by William O'Brien of University College, Galway, Ireland, presents up-to-date information on archaeological excavation and research work that has been undertaken since the 1980s on mining sites which have been radiocarbon dated to the Bronze Age in Ireland, Wales and England.

## Mysteries of Ancient China

ONE MIGHT assume that the title of this exhibition was chosen because nothing better could be thought up; in fact, it is exactly what it purports to be. The exhibition includes material ranging from the Neolithic period through to the Han dynasty, chronologically arranged, but by far the most interesting items are those which completely baffle the archaeologists. This comment is not intended to reflect adversely upon the knowledge or intuition of the scholars who put the exhibition together. It is simply that this collection includes some of the most inexplicable artifacts that this reviewer has ever seen.

Some of the most intriguing items are found in the room which houses material from The Sacrificial Pits of Guanghan. This collection is billed as "the single most remarkable Chinese archaeological find of the last decade", and its contents are described as being unlike anything else in China. Apart from some spectacular full-sized jade models of weaponry, finds include a great bronze statue, some eight or nine feet high, of a robed man with huge hands and an impassive expression. A grotesque bronze head has crazed bug-eyes and something strange balanced on its nose. A few rooms and centuries further on, a 5th-century BC bronze bird with antlers brings another surreal touch to the exhibition.

Most of the artifacts, however, are more straightforward. There is something in this exhibition for everyone. The textual descriptions are generally clear and do not assume prior expertise in the subject. Unlike many British Museum galleries, the display cases are not too cluttered. Artifacts range from the beautiful to the informative. Jade, silks, ceramics and bronzes are well represented. Han dynasty ceramic models of a grain silo

and a fortified manor are astonishing in their detail and preservation, and Prince Lui Sheng's full-body jade suit makes this exhibition a must.

Rob Carter

## Ground Penetrating Radar services

THE CLARK Laboratory at the Museum of London Archaeological Service, established in 1995 to provide archaeomagnetic dating services (see *LA* 7, no. 16, p. 448), is now offering ground penetrating radar as a second service. The technique can provide a fast prospection service to a depth of up to 10m, and is particularly good at detecting utilities and voids, as well as buried drums, tanks, etc. For further details contact Dr Bill McCann or Paul Mackie at the Clark Laboratory, Museum of London Archaeological Service, Walker House, 87 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4V 4AB, tel. (0171) 410 2250/2237, fax (0171) 410 2201, email [ajclark@molas.demon.co.uk](mailto:ajclark@molas.demon.co.uk).

## Tebbutt Research Fund

THIS FUND was established as a tribute to the life and work of the late C. F. Tebbutt, OBE, FSA, and applications are invited, from individuals and groups, for grants towards research, including associated expenses, into any aspect of the Wealden Iron Industry.

It is anticipated that approximately £100 will be available from the fund and any interested person should write a suitable letter of application giving details of themselves together with relevant information concerning the research envisaged. Applications should be sent to Mrs Shiela Bromfield, Hon. Sec. WIRG, 8 Woodview Crescent, Hildenborough, Tonbridge, Kent TN11 9HD, not later than 31 March 1997.

*(continued from p. 83)*

A general outline of the book is as follows. The distribution of the Bronze Age mining sites is discussed and listed, a brief history (18th and 19th century) of earlier writings, excavation and research efforts is presented, the technology (ore vein geology/location), mining process; access to the ore's veins, fire setting techniques involved, types of tools used in the actual mining process (stone, bone antler, wood and basketry) are presented and discussed, ore concentration techniques and the smelting process of the concentrated ores (including lack of slag) at the Early Bronze Age mining sites is examined.

The main Bronze Age mining sites dealt with in the book are in south western Ireland; Mount Gabriel and Ross Island (both excavated by William O'Brien), in mid Wales; Cwmstwyth (excavated by Simon Timberlake (Early Mines Research Group)) and Natyeira, in north Wales; Parys Mountain (Timberlake and Early Mines Research Group) and Great Orme (excavated by Andy Lewis (Great Orme Exploration Society)) and in mid England, Cheshire; Alderley Edge.

In the final chapter William O'Brien presents a very brief discussion of the archaeometallurgical problems, both social and technological, which have emerged following the Bronze Age mine excavations and research work. He attempts to list some ways that future archaeological research work on these problems might be approached.

The publication is generally well illustrated, with excellent black-and-white photographs, excavated section drawings, artefact and reconstructed mining scene drawings and a chronological table.

As an introduction to current Bronze Age archaeological mine work it is a useful starting point. It is a pity that the shortness of the book does not allow an more in-depth discussion of some of the problems presented, there could have been longer sections on the problems of understanding fire setting (which seems to require a lot of logistic work and time for very little reward) and the general lack of excavated smelting remains (to date) near any of the Bronze Age mine sites.

Craig Meredith