

Reviews

The Anglo-Saxon Cremation Cemetery at Sancton, East Yorkshire. By J. N. L. Myres and W. H. Southern. 23 × 17 cm. 119 pp., 43 figs., 2 maps. Hull Museum Publications, no. 218, 1973. Price £1.00.

Sancton is the most northerly of a group of large Anglo-Saxon cremation cemeteries well known from eastern England. The site is strategically placed in relation to the Roman road system and is near Goodmanham, site of a Witan meeting in 627. It appears to be one of several cemeteries known in the area, and has been partly explored. The report gives a brief account of old finds and previous excavations, as well as Southern's of 1954-8. About half the text is a discussion of the pottery and its implications by Myres, each vessel being figured with a description.

The report concentrates on the pottery and this review will do likewise, although the accessory objects are deserving of far greater attention than they are given in the text or the inadequate illustrations. The site is in an area poorly represented by early documentary evidence. Conclusions drawn by Myres on the site's historical position are written largely on the basis of the pottery, which is part of the material culture represented by the grave assemblages, themselves only a sample of the objects available to the population. With the initial hypothesis that the pottery will point to the origins of the Germanic settlers and the date they began settling in the area, Myres draws heavily on continental reports and analyses to show that during the initial settlement "in the opening years of the fifth century" peoples with a knowledge of 4th-century ceramic fashions of Fyn, Schleswig Holstein and Lower Saxony used the Sancton cemetery. Myres thus adopts for the beginning of the site a date intermediate between the Caistor-by-Norwich cemetery and the traditional date of the *adventus* around A.D. 450. The grounds for this conclusion must be that certain elements of design or shape in the Sancton pottery are significantly paralleled in the areas mentioned; that these individual vessels are correctly dated, usually on the basis of metal associations, by the publishing scholar; and that all other similar vessels are of the same date as the individual vessels so associated. There is not the space to figure and argue the merits of each parallel cited, but they should be scrutinized with caution. A problem not discussed is how far and in what respects two vessels must resemble each other to be called parallels, and what implications it is justifiable to draw from such an observation. Since this is never defined, formal comparisons are largely subjective, and criteria for accepting or rejecting them will vary with individual students. Myres senses these difficulties in rejecting some 3rd-century parallels (p. 15) as relevant, but does not explain why. In view of the widespread currency in hand-made pottery of shapes and motifs copied from wheel-turned pottery, glass, metal, leather and wood, the point is crucial. Some of the parallels cited by Myres share some characteristics, for instance in decorative elements, while being unlike in shape. This raises the problem of whether certain attributes of a pot are more significant than others for making valid comparisons. This dilemma is reflected in the recording process, since some drawings may emphasize or schematize characteristics at the expense of others. A comparison of Sancton pot 147 (fig. 31) in this report with fig. 27 in *Anglo-Saxon Pottery and the Settlement of England* shows the difficulties — especially unfortunate since this vessel is one of those claimed to be of S. German type. Connected with these difficulties is the degree to which similarities of form can be interpreted chronologically

and dated in absolute terms. In Denmark and N. Germany the skeleton absolute chronology is based on associations at varying degrees of remove between native products and imported Roman material. (See review by J. Morris in *Medieval Archaeology*, xviii (1974), 225 ff., for an expanded view of how this chronology is established.) Whenever an object is definitely associated with a pot, there arises the question of at which point in the life-span of each they became associated: the relationship between date of manufacture of each and date of deposition of both. A further question is how far individual datings can be representative of the life-span of the type as a group. The statistical validity of the Fyn dating can be judged from Dr Albrechtsen's major works, since most of the material is presented. Dr Genrich presents the associations known from Schleswig Holstein to 1938, after which only published material was included. Later large-scale excavations at Bordesholm, Husby and Süder-Brarup may have changed the emphasis of dating individual types. But anyway, using metal associations inductively only allows a ceramic dating sequence to extend a little beyond the time when metal accessories ceased to be found in urns. For Myres's early datings of English vessels this is a key point. Moreover, on Fyn it seems illogical to take *c.* A.D. 400 as the terminal date for use of the cemeteries in combination with Bede's statement about the desertion of Angeln, when gold hoards, bracteates, pre-Viking place-names, elements of the Kragehul bog find, and evidence from the only part-excavated settlement site of the period show an occupation well into the 6th century continuously. And, although Fyn and Angeln share some ceramic traits, the pottery assemblages do differ in many respects. Absence from Fyn of the common Anglian iron miniature toilet sets, and major differences in brooch types suggest that, whatever is represented by the ceramic connexion, it had little influence on fashions of dress. To state that Angeln and Fyn share a culture (p. 13) is too great a generalization for one aspect of a class of material to support.

The question in principle is whether archaeological material from Germania can be directly used to elucidate calendrically based, historical problems where the span of a generation is crucial. The schematic arrangements into periods of Albrechtsen (relying on the spans of Roman imports for absolute datings) are established by different means and with differing objectives from those of Myres. The Fyn material has been brilliantly studied and ordered into a generalized statement of relationships of cemetery assemblages. The specific historical evidence Myres seeks to derive from individual elements of the English material are of a different order. Moreover, the cultural interpretation of the iron age of Fyn is still open to modification, as volume v of Albrechtsen's publication, and references therein to his own handling of 5th-century problems demonstrate. Nor should the quality of the Fyn material overshadow the significance of Mecklenburg in discussing the extent of continental Angeln.

A basic difficulty in interpreting pot shapes or decoration as evidence of the general ethnic affinity in the users is clearly shown by Myres's identification of groups of pots made by the same individual or workshop. The Sancton pieces are highly decorated and hence easily identifiable. How many other, less distinguished, vessels were also produced by semi-specialists must be investigated before postulating folk-movements to explain the distribution of typologically similar material. And social or political labels such as 'Saxon' applied to pottery clearly pre-judge the issue. Thus hand-made copies of Frankish *biconi* may not indicate "significant contact" between Sancton and S. Germany any more than the ivory from the site, which presumably represents an indirect trade route. In any assemblage of hand-made pottery there will be a range of preferred forms and others much less common. The ascription of pieces to Central or S. German influence is feasible only if the differences between them and the rest of the group are so extreme as to fall outside what might normally be expected, and be capable of explanation by direct influence rather than by development from a common impulse. The reference to previous publication of S. German finds from Yorkshire should be considered with extreme caution. Myres has concentrated largely on the special pottery in the assemblage, and clarification of the relationship with other cemeteries in the area must

await his forthcoming pottery *Corpus*. The range of parallels is not fully explored, nor the material viewed as an assemblage, but as elements explicable by diversity of ethnic composition of the population. This hypothesis may be suggested by documentary sources of a general nature, which may account for the sudden appearance in the conclusion of Frisian folk, who are not adduced from specific ceramic evidence.

The end of the site is suggested to be within a few years of the historical date of the conversion of Deira around 630. Although apostasy is known to have occurred, and the process of Christianization may not have been straightforward as suggested in documentary sources, a mid 7th-century date for abandonment is a reasonable working hypothesis. Not much late pottery is identified, nor its absolute date, and some of the undecorated pottery may belong to this phase rather than to servants, as suggested. Archaeologically, the process of abandonment is obscure.

Myres has shown clearly and repeatedly how the study of early Anglo-Saxon pottery has great potential for the historian. But before the historical conclusions may be drawn, there must be a way to assess the strength of the link between technical, archaeological data and the general historical conclusions derived from it. Unless this is clear, any distillation of primary observation must remain subjective and open to dispute on first principles.

The text is marred by a few minor misprints: page 19 for 27 (Contents), cruiform for cruciform (p. 34), and Segeborg for Segeberg (p. 15); and the binding does not stand up to prolonged use. This production of a full and easily accessible list of material as a whole from one site is a valuable primary contribution. If it prompts other museums to do the same and generates discussion about the meaning of archaeological material to history, it will be doubly valuable.

DAFYDD KIDD

The Building and Trials of the Replica of an Ancient Boat; The Gokstad Færing (National Maritime Museum, Maritime Monographs and Reports, no. XI). 21 × 30.5 cm. Part I, *Building the replica*. By Sean McGrail. viii + 59 pp. Part II, *The sea trials*. By Eric McKee. iv + 38 pp. London: National Maritime Museum, 1974. Price not stated.

The aim of this project in experimental archaeology is stated in the preface by the director of the National Maritime Museum to be twofold: (1) to gain experience in this kind of work before the much larger project of a replica of the Graveney boat is undertaken; (2) to devise methods for boat replica building that may develop into accepted standards for such work.

As regards Part I, I am in a rather special position, since the replica was built to my drawings, and I have discussed the project with McGrail during the planning stage. However, I feel free to offer some comment.

McGrail starts his paper with a short section on experimental boat archaeology, and goes on to describe the original boat and some of her Scottish and Norwegian descendants. This is followed by a brief but well-illustrated description of the building. The rest of the paper is devoted to two important chapters on "the theory and practice of experiments" and "aspects of Viking age boat-building". The plans for building a replica of the Graveney boat are briefly mentioned, and there is an appendix on the properties of ship-building timber, a glossary and a select bibliography.

As she stands, the replica is a lovely vessel. The man chosen to do the job, Harold Kimber, master boat-builder from Somerset, has indeed done a fine job. However, there are differences between the original and the replica. Some of these are due to problems in getting the right materials; some seem to be the results of Kimber being trained in another variation of clinker practice than the one in use in W. Norway today. The latter seems to be closer to Viking age methods.

The use of laminated jelutong instead of oak for the stems, and oregon pine instead of 'scots pine' for the sheer strake are rather serious departures from the original, but were probably inevitable. Like many other replicas, the boat has strakes made from boards sawn 'through and through' where 'quarter-sawn' or split boards would be right. The pictures indicate that all wood is slightly heavier in dimensions than the original, giving a somewhat heavier hull and accordingly less freeboard. This will in all probability influence the test results.

The original garboard has small cleats where the trenails for the midship rib pass through, presumably to give a more secure fastening for the countersunk head of the trenail. The rib rests on the keel and the cleats only, while in the replica the rib rests snugly on the whole garboard (McGrail, fig. 34). The scantlings of all ribs seem too sturdy. These details, and the use of glue in some of the scarves, would probably make the replica less elastic than the original. In his section on the theory and practice of replica building McGrail stresses the importance of choice of replica builder. I have a feeling that Kimber in a way was too good a boat-builder for the job; his deviations from the original seem to be subconscious 'improvements'.

The "aspects of Viking age boat-building" sums up knowledge and theories nicely, but it is evident that the author does not know all the relevant Scandinavian literature on the subject, especially as modern comparative material goes. When discussing what tools the Viking age builder used, and accordingly, what a modern replica builder may use, McGrail includes the plane on the evidence of a few iron-age planes, and possible plane marks on some parts of the Skuldelev ships. But the small planes referred to are special-purpose tools; one of the Vimose planes, for example, has a hollow sole and was in all probability used in arrow-making. The plane was known to some craftsmen before the Reformation, but it was not commonly adopted by woodworkers until the 16th century, and should be very sparingly used by the replica builder. Wood was smoothed by a tool known in Norwegian as 'skavl' or 'skjøve', a forerunner of the spokeshave. This should be included in the replica maker's tool chest rather than the draw-knife and plane. It is also rather improbable that the boat-builder would use metal shears and draw-plate. The shears are for cutting thin sheet metal, and draw-plates from Viking age finds come from tool groups indicating that they were used for drawing gold and silver wire.

McKee's description of the sea trials starts with a short summary of the work carried out. The trials were run under various conditions of wind and tide during one week in August 1973. Then the data of the boat are given in a number of tables, including figures for displacement and stability. Rowing, steering and towing trials are described, and in seven appendixes themes as different as comparative rowing geometry, a list of instruments and equipment, and predicting the boat's movements by computer, are treated. The text is illustrated by a number of photos taken during the trials, and by the author's sketches.

As this is the first experiment of its kind, there are no comparative figures for other boats to refer to. Some of the results are noteworthy. The maximum sprint speed obtained under oars, 7.4 knots is impressive, and above the theoretical maximum efficient speed of 5.66 knots.

Both the færing and most of her descendants in W. and N. Norway are very light craft, so light, in fact, that they cannot be described as true displacement hulls. Of course, they do not plane like a modern speed-boat, but under certain conditions they seem to have a 'planing tendency'. With two 'fembøring' replicas of Åfjord (Trøndelag) type sailed to Iceland in the summer of 1974, speeds of above 15 knots were reached and, in favourable conditions, the boat would ride a wave for a considerable period of time. (Personal communication from the expedition leader, Jon Godal.) Somewhat further S. on the coast, at Nordmøre, old fishermen state that a good færing should "lift one strake out of the sea" when under sail, and half a strake when rowed by two men. This tendency to plane somewhat would explain some of the behaviour

reported both on Viking age replicas and later craft, and it should be investigated further.

The oar given in the drawing, reconstructed from the existing fragments, proved to be uncomfortably long, and oars were made to the traditional rule of length: twice the width of the boat at the rowlock.

The main results, that the boat is fast, skittish but seaworthy, can be deduced by just looking at the hull, so it will be hoped that further trials will give figures for other boats, enabling us to compare the various constructions properly.

When visiting the Viking Ship Museum in Oslo one gets the impression of near-perfect form in ship-building. Visual perfection is not always structural or practical perfection, but as one works with the originals or with replicas, the respect for the old shipwrights keeps on increasing, and I feel tempted to end this review by quoting the two authors: "In March 1972 Harold Kimber visited the færing in the Viking Ship Museum, Oslo, and returned with 'a profound respect, almost reverence' for the boat-builder who had produced such a beautiful craft 1,000 years ago" (McGrail, p. 10).

"This boat is a classic. This might be proved by the time the design has lasted or by the number of other designs that have followed. However, after these trials, one feels one has had an experience, which has given men the same pleasure over the centuries. Not only does she look, row and ride better than she should, but there was the added pleasure of finding a boat that would pass the ultimate test. This was the feeling that the boat could look after herself, when the weather had so tired and perhaps frightened her crew that they were no longer able to do their best for her" (McKee, p. 26).

ARNE EMIL CHRISTENSEN

Excavations in Medieval Southampton, 1953-1969. By Colin Platt and Richard Coleman-Smith with P. A. Faulkner, M. R. Maitland Muller, J. S. Wachter, F. A. Aberg, and others. 2 vols. 29 × 23 cm. Vol. I, 356 pp., 116 figs., 74 pls.; vol. II, 368 pp., 161 figs., 82 pls. Leicester University Press, 1975. Price £29.00.

The first large-scale excavations in medieval English towns began early in the last decade at Winchester, Stamford and King's Lynn, although other towns such as Bristol, Exeter, Ipswich, London, Norwich, Southampton, and York had been excavated to some extent in the post-war years. Today interest and activity in medieval towns has grown immensely, as a glance at the 'Medieval Britain' sections in this *Journal* will show, so much so that urban excavation has probably become the most thoroughly investigated aspect of medieval archaeology. And yet until 1975 there had been no comprehensive publication of medieval sites in any one town, no definitive survey of the information gained from urban excavations or synthesis of the results. *Excavations in Medieval Southampton* has provided us with the first of what we must hope will be a long series of such works.

The publication of *Excavations in Medieval Southampton* may then be the occasion to take stock of urban excavations and to consider what information could be expected from them and how that information might best be presented.

Ideally, excavations in a medieval town should take place on sites selected to answer questions crucial to the history and development of the town. These may be concerned with its origins, topographical development, economic basis, social divisions and so on, particularly during inadequately documented periods (for most towns, therefore, before c. 1300). The emphasis on rescue excavation over the past decade has,

however, limited the sites to those threatened by redevelopment in one form or another, and opportunities for selecting sites are very circumscribed, although vital if a significant picture is to emerge from the excavations.

Inevitably, however, any major report on urban excavations will have gaps and will leave many questions unanswered, but the reader may expect it to supplement and extend the evidence for the town's development during the middle ages, possibly calling in other disciplines, such as architectural studies, to corroborate or expand this. Further, the report may contain a catalogue of stratified and dated objects useful not only in reconstructing the history of the town in question, but for use as comparative evidence in other contexts. These, then, are what we might confidently hope to see in *Excavations in Medieval Southampton*; the value of the publication will rest on such criteria.

Excavations in Southampton since 1953 have been conducted on sites whose availability has been the result of chance: bombing, redevelopment of the town centre and so on. The present publication includes all the excavations on medieval sites from that date until 1969 so that a total archaeological picture of medieval Southampton since the war is recorded. The sites are concentrated largely in the S. and W. of the medieval town, that is, on the castle and within the more prosperous medieval parishes, so that there is a disproportionate emphasis on town defences and, more particularly, on the 'good class burgers', their properties and possessions. Platt is well aware of this and is careful to point it out in his introduction; more excavation is needed (and is taking place) before a balanced picture of medieval Southampton can emerge.

The introductions to volumes I and II embody the main conclusions drawn from the evidence. The development of burgess housing in the town from the 12th to the early 16th century is very thoroughly dealt with, the evidence mainly drawn from the excavations of the Southampton Excavation Committee 1966-9. There is also a skilful application of relevant documentary evidence and the whole produces a convincing picture of a town of great merchant houses and flourishing quaysides.

Faulkner's survey of the medieval buildings (vol. I, pp. 56-124), either extant or recently demolished but previously recorded, adds a further dimension to this work. It is most informative to have archaeological and architectural evidence published together, particularly when the evidence from an excavated site (Norman houses, Cuckoo Lane, vol. I, p. 89) can be fitted so well into the context of standing buildings. Total ground plans from excavation are, however, lacking, to some extent through a deliberate policy of digging behind street frontages at some distance from the street. Often, of course, technical difficulties make it impossible to excavate close to modern streets, but the sites where this is possible are often most rewarding. At the Southampton Excavation Committee's site at High Street it was decided to confine excavation to the back of the tenement, because of potential disturbance beside modern High Street. All that was attempted at the front of the area was a "small test square, never completed" (vol. I, p. 232), although it meant that the street frontage at that particular spot can never be established. One cannot help feeling that we could easily forego some of the innumerable rubbish-pits on the sites dug between 1966 and 1969 (productive though they were of splendid finds) for a little more work, however, abortive, nearer the street.

Trade connexions must of course dominate any discussion of Southampton's medieval life and Platt deals fully with the subject, his evidence drawn largely from the excavated pottery, again with some supplementary information from documentary sources. Of especial interest is the trade with N. France and the Low Countries postulated in the light of 10th to 12th-century pottery from Normandy and Andenne. Here we have an important instance of the value of excavated evidence in a poorly documented period; from the 13th century onwards Southampton is particularly well supplied with documentation, and archaeology has, in Platt's words, "less to offer". But the wealth of material, pottery in particular, which has been recovered from the excavations in Southampton, is nevertheless of the utmost importance, from well-documented periods or not.

The Southampton sites have produced sufficient coin evidence for the authors to attribute tentative dates to much of the pottery although a word of caution is uttered about the "notoriously difficult" problem of dating medieval pottery. Professor Dolley's report on the coins (vol. II, pp. 315-20) is invaluable for this subject, particularly as brief notes on the associations of each coin are added at the end of the discussion. Individual excavators will no doubt question certain aspects of Platt's and Coleman-Smith's interpretation of the dating evidence, but their chronological framework appears on the whole convincing. The pottery and small finds are also most excellently illustrated with a wealth of splendid line drawings and plates, some in colour. There is no doubt that this is one of the best-produced find catalogues that has been published for many years. The standard of production in general is very high; it is largely the arrangement of the work which raises some objections.

This is not an easy work to use to full advantage. Most of the excavation reports are arranged with the interpretative section followed by a descriptive list of layers, pits and features. Dimensions of pits and features are only seldom given and their positions not specified. The reader is required to work hard to correlate description with plan and find catalogue. One might expect the lists of layers, pits and features to include the publication numbers of pottery and small finds which figure in volume II, but this is not so and sometimes an object which is illustrated and described in the catalogue is not mentioned in the excavation reports. For example, two objects chosen at random may illustrate this: the glass goblet published as number 1512, provenance High Street C, Pit 178, dated 1300-50, does not appear in the pit description on p. 264 of vol. I, nor is the 18th-century bone comb, publication number 1949, mentioned in the description of Wachter E5, Pit 18, on p. 174 of vol. I. More often, objects are mentioned in the excavation reports by name but not by publication number, nor is the reader referred to the page where the published drawing and description may be found. The index to published finds (vol. I, pp. 350-6) must then be consulted, but it is in itself of little help in placing the objects in their context.

Finally, there are a number of scientific reports on samples of organic material selected from the excavations, mostly those conducted by the Southampton Excavation Committee 1966-9. Their significance is questionable, not because of inadequacies on the part of the contributing scientists but because of the restricted nature of the material which they were offered. For instance, the bone samples were restricted to a limited number of pit groups "chosen to cover, as far as possible, the main periods of site use" (vol. I, p. 335). This approach may be justified on the grounds of speed and economy but it is bound to produce a distorted view. Miss Noddle states that although "the collection is . . . of considerable interest as a domestic fauna of the period . . . it does not seem likely that the bones represent a fair sample of the meat diet, and certainly they do not cast much light on the local agricultural economy from which they were derived" (vol. I, p. 332). In addition, the bones from Wachter's excavations (vol. I, pp. 342-3) are presented only as a list of species, with some measurements and little comment.

Similarly, examination of botanical specimens is from selected samples only (vol. I, pp. 344-6) and pollen analysis of Pit 101, High Street B (vol. I, p. 348), was conducted on a "grab" sample without indication of top or bottom.

This raises a point of general interest: the archaeologist's understanding of the scientist's requirements. This has shown itself to be less than perfect in the past (it is not only *Excavations in Medieval Southampton* which illustrates this) and obviously not every site can hope to be in a position to employ a scientific specialist on its staff, but the archaeologist should be aware that samples can only be truly representative if selected by the scientist himself, or at least by someone who understands the significance of the sampling system.

Apart from the serious reservations about the layout of the work, few criticisms can be levelled at the production as a whole. Some of the plans are rather too dark and the symbols used on the sections too overwhelming; some of the photographs are slightly

fuzzy and some, surely, unnecessary. Occasional slips of the pen occur, such as the use of "brass alloy" on vol. II, p. 22, and "copper alloy" on p. 30 of the same volume, but such instances are rare and do nothing to detract from the obvious care which has gone into the publication, nor are they of great significance when considering the true worth of these volumes.

As the first publication of its type *Excavations in Medieval Southampton* will inevitably be compared with other urban excavation reports soon to appear. It may set the standard against which later works will be measured, but to do that it must have made a contribution both to general scholarship and, specifically, to the archaeology of the medieval town. To put it bluntly, has the best use been made of the opportunities presented by excavations at Southampton? the answer, regrettably, must be that it has not. Interpretation of the evidence and presentation of the finds are excellent, but until further work can be done on the 'poorer' areas of medieval Southampton, on street frontages to reveal whole ground plans and a more subtle topographical approach, we shall not have the balanced picture of a medieval town from archaeological evidence that we are entitled to expect from such a sumptuous production.

HELEN CLARKE

Château Gaillard, Études de castellogie médiévale, VII (Actes du colloque international tenu à Blois, 2-7 Septembre, 1974). 27 × 20 cm. 224 pp., text figures. Université de Caen: Centre de Recherches Archéologiques Médiévales, 1975. Price not stated.

The volume recording the communications given at the seventh Château Gaillard conference has appeared with surprising rapidity after the event itself. In 1974 proceedings were held at Blois and from the point of view of 'castellogy' there could hardly have been a better venue. M. de Bouard in his preface has taken the unusual step of citing the places visited with a description and sometimes a plan of the castle: Montrichard, Loches, Fréteval, Châteaudyn, Montbazou, Langeais. Our hearts beat faster as the names trip off the tongue. This is a novel departure but I am one of those who believe with the Royal Archaeological Institute that the rich wisdom of the guides should not be lost like smoke in the air. We must hope that this will be the normal practice. De Bouard's preface is followed by a rich meal of fifteen courses, arranged in alphabetical sequence of authors' names which we will rearrange by chronological order of their subjects.

Two of the castles described had been set on an earlier Roman work. The first of these, Andone, Villejoubert, nr. Angoulême, was of particular interest because its owner decided to move the castle to another site early in the 11th century, and consequently the finds, particularly the pottery, which is to be dealt with in another publication, are closely dated. The other case was in S. Wales where J. Lewis found that the motte at Loughor had been thrown up over the corner tower of a Roman camp, which by the 12th century had indeed become a shapeless overgrown lump. Lewis, who found a Roman fort at Caerphilly, has achieved something of a reputation for finding Roman monuments while digging medieval ones!

Mr Trimpe Burger describes a group of circular geometrical earthworks around the mouth of the Rhine. There is no evidence for the familiar boat-shaped houses in the one he dug at Oost-Souburg, but they clearly must be related to the Danish works of the type of Trelleborg. Like the latter the dating evidence is rather thin but if the phrase used in 981 "*castella recens facta*" really refers to the Dutch works then there is a discrepancy of a century between this and the inferred date of the Danish earthworks.

The residence of the dukes of Normandy at Fécamp is well known from written sources of the 10th century onwards. M. Renoux has made excavations on the site since nothing remains above ground. Foundations of formidable size have come to light but interpretation and dating are difficult. We seem to be dealing with a keep and possibly a hall in the same relationship as at Wolvesey, Winchester.

Four papers deal with our old friends, mottes. A. J. Taylor gives a brief note on three castles in Sicily and very wisely urges study of the earliest Norman castles in Sicily and S. Italy to see how they compare with those of the Norman conquest in this country. Dr Glasscock gives a very valuable gazetteer and distribution map of mottes in Ireland. So far as is known these are all later than 1169–70 and represent one of the latest stages of colonization by mottes. A curious feature of Ireland is the conversion of raths (30–40,000 exist in Ireland) into mottes by filling in the centre to produce the characteristic plum-pudding shape. It would be a mistake to think this only occurred in Ireland, for M. Decaens describes exactly the same process happening at Sebecourt, Eure, where an 11th-century ring-work was converted *c.* 1300 in an identical manner into a huge platform. This is indeed but one fine example of the great work of research that is going on in France. Another is described by M. Fixot on mottes and the fortified landscape (*habitat?*) in medieval Provence. He has excavated one example, a natural mound scarped into shape, and he sees mottes as part of the colonization in the early 11th century. He envisages mottes and the castles of the area more as occasional refuges, rather as Celtic *oppida*, than as the seigneur's title deeds. It is a most stimulating paper.

This leaves us with seven reports dealing mainly with post-1200 matters outside France. Three of these are especially noteworthy. In Frisia mounds for keeping above tidal flooding, *terpen*, are distinguished from the high mound or motte (the word is not used) *hege wier*. They have been studied by Dr Halbertsma and although equivalent in date to our moats, that is 13th and 14th centuries up to 1400, they consist of a moated mound with a tall square brick tower in the middle with entry on the second floor. In this isolated area there is an extraordinary survival of the Norman idea into later periods. At the Bümplaz near Berne Dr Meyer has worked out a valuable sequence, and the way the round tower is automatically regarded as Savoyard and dated 1260 makes us think of James of St George and Flint! In 15th-century Rumania King Stephen the Great (Stefan cel Mare) had to contend with Turkish artillery and produced concentric castles, but not as in the 13th century to increase firepower but instead to protect the inner walls from artillery fire. Mr Anghel argues plausibly that the inspiration is Italian not Byzantine (Byzantium had fallen).

The last four articles must not be passed over. The medieval hypocausts described by Dr Hertz in Denmark certainly do not occur in England or Wales but are they unknown in Scotland? Dr Hinz warns against the problems in dendrochronology created by movable houses and reused wood. Mr Renn gives a valuable account of the Skipton gatehouse, which is evidently closely related to the one at Bolingbroke, Lincs. Finally Mr Stiesdal has shown that when later work has been stripped off Tranekaer Castle in the Baltic a multi-storied medieval building has been revealed that is more of a palace than a castle.

As we sit back in our chairs satiated with good things what thoughts come to mind? First is our admiration for M. de Bouard who has been the driving force of this organization, who has wisely centralized the publication and so actively stimulated research in France by precept and example. Second is the sensible idea of recording the excursions which perhaps could be extended in the manner of the Royal Archaeological Institute by issuing the accounts before the conference. Third is the desirability of bringing S. Europe more into the conference than hitherto. Italy abounds with castles, as does Spain, and both have a very special interest because of their juxtaposition to the Islamic world.

M. W. THOMPSON

An Architectural History of Robertsbridge (Hastings Area Archaeological Papers, no. v). By David Martin and Barbara Mastin. 15 × 20 cm. 88 pp., 33 figs. For the Rape of Hastings Archaeological Survey, 1974. Price £1.00.

The Timber-framed Buildings of Steyning. By H. M. and U. E. Lacey. 14 × 22 cm. 174 pp., 84 half-tones, 80 line-drawings. Worthing: published for the authors by Flexiprint Ltd., 1974. Price £2.00.

These are essentially private productions but they deserve a wide circulation. Each describes the entire timber-framed content of a small Sussex market-town, of the kind that, having avoided severe expansion or contraction, forms the richest reserve of such material and is large enough to provide comparisons within itself. Robertsbridge is not a parish but a deliberate secondary settlement of the 13th century, beginning with something very like long burgages, and complete, until the 19th century, with about fifty plots. Steyning is a pre-conquest borough, stabilized (within the town, not the parish) with two to three times that number. In each about two-thirds of those surveyed (thirty-three and fifty-nine respectively) can be called substantially medieval. Each book is, in its own way, a model for others to go and do likewise. *Robertsbridge* is the more succinct and compact, and the more professional, with many small but excellent drawings to each figure, and with an anatomy of the settlement as well as the buildings. *Steyning* is the more spacious and discursive, with many and generally fine photographs, well reproduced, and drawings rather more schematic. It also has a good introduction, of wider applicability but always citing local examples. The differences are but in the full exploitation of available forces, such as can be mastered in other places too. But they must be local forces: the persistent intimacy that is a prerequisite of both books is also that of local history at its best.

S. E. RIGOLD

Recent Archaeological Excavations in Europe. Edited by Rupert Bruce-Mitford. 25 × 20 cm. 335 pp., figs. and plates. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975. Price £12.00.

This book consists of descriptions of ten European excavations, together with a summary chapter about archaeological work carried out in Russia since the war. The excavations cover all periods from the palaeolithic to the late middle ages. It is difficult to review it because of its diversity, and because it is difficult to discern the audience at which it is aimed: inevitably one must wonder at the choice. Is Wolin more interesting than Bergen, Dorestad than Helgö, Hagestad than Mucking, Tetrow than Ostrów Lednicki? Mikulčice, I would have chosen myself; as also I would have chosen the Viking fortresses in Denmark: two out of six post-Roman digs seem quite a good score. Bruce-Mitford has, therefore, made a decent choice as far as the medievalist is concerned, especially as medievalists get a bonus with a summary of the early medieval houses and finds from the Heuneburg and six pages on Russian medieval sites. The pre-historian may feel less happy and, despite a disclaimer from the editor, the Romanists should feel downright dissatisfied that they are completely neglected.

Professor Poulik has written on Mikulčice. Surely nowhere in Europe has archaeology helped so much as in the understanding of the Great Moravian Empire. The historical sources — even Constantine Porphyrogenitus, who was nearer the area than most — have not revealed a clear political history of Great Moravia. Where the historical sources are shadowy, archaeology has brought some light. Mikulčice is but one of many sites of this period excavated and recognized in Moravia: the list is long —

Staré Město, Pohansko near Břeclav, Děvín, Nitra itself, Modrá, Hradiště, Petrova, Louka, Rajhrad, Staré Zámky and Olomouc. These all appear in fig. 2, but only three of them are identified by name on the map (the rest appear by numbers not referred to in the text), and it is perhaps disappointing that no information is given about the finds at some of these sites. However, Mikulčice provides us with material enough: churches, fortification, boats, graves and houses. The material culture is rich; jewellery and tools are present in considerable quantities. The importance of this site in relation to eastern and western Christendom and culture is made very apparent in this paper and the two per cent of the site so far excavated whets our appetite for more.

In 1955 a section of the buildings on the old quay (Bryggen) at Bergen, Norway, burnt down and Asbjørn Herteig was given the opportunity of investigating part of the harbour of one of the most important medieval ports in northern Europe. The site is well known in archaeological literature; but the story bears retelling for now, by means of coin dating, dendrochronology and a series of dated finds, the archaeologist is able to build up a chronological picture of medieval town life in Norway. The most fascinating material to me is the corpus of runic inscriptions, 551 in all, which cast new light on literature and on daily life of a town, paralleled only by the birch bark rolls of Novgorod. Surely no archaeological excavation in Europe has demonstrated literary matters so well. Disappointingly there is no bibliography for the site.

Olaf Olsen's chapter on the Viking fortresses of Denmark suffers from being written a number of years ago, before articles by Klindt-Jensen, Roesdahl and Christiansen were produced (although they are mentioned in the bibliography). With his customary clarity Olsen presents the standard view of the Trelleborg fortresses and it must infuriate him, as it does his reader, that the more aberrant and questioning theories about the sites could not have been discussed, due to the length of time which elapsed before the chapter was printed. He ties the fortresses in to the reign of Sven Forkbeard and interprets their function in relation to the raids on England and its subsequent conquest.

Helgö, an island trading post and manufacturing centre of the Roman iron age to the 9th century, in Lake Mälaren in Sweden, is well known to all specialists in Scandinavian archaeology and (through the work of Professor Holmqvist) has inspired much international comment in recent years. It is an important site and it is pleasant to welcome this English summary of the excavations and follow-up work. The dominant role of Helgö in the trade and polity of the migration period is well documented here.

Mucking makes an appearance in this book — a useful summary. To some it might seem a strange representative of English archaeology, but it is a worthy one. Much more extraordinary is the choice of Ostrów Lednicki as the representative of medieval Poland, although from the point of view of Polish nationalism it is obviously of great importance, for here according to tradition Otto III crowned Boleslaw Chrobry. But apart from this one happening Ostrów Lednicki is of little importance in the history of Poland, compared with Wolin and Gdańsk, Szczecin or Lublin, all of which have been the subject of much archaeological investigation. The chapel, fortress and surrounding settlement of this island provide an interesting — but hardly typical — view of late Slav and early medieval Poland.

Finally an interesting, if summary, chapter deals with recent archaeological discoveries in European Russia. The medieval section by R. L. Rosenfeldt moves from the 4th to the 16th century in six pages, but packs in a useful outline of what has been done.

The book then is welcome as an introduction to some of the problems of European archaeology. It is, perhaps, slightly over elaborate in its production, and it is also, as we have seen, perhaps a little out of date in parts (through no fault of the editor). I wonder what such a choice will be twenty years hence.

DAVID M. WILSON

Nordic Archaeological Abstracts, 1 (1974). Edited by Mette Iversen. 21 × 15 cm. 193 pp., 1 fig. Viborg. Price 75 D.kr.

There can be no doubt of the worth of publications which enable the British archaeologist to keep abreast of activities abroad. *Nordic Archaeological Abstracts* is a valuable addition to these; its language is English and this, together with the fact that it deals not only with the Scandinavian countries, but also with those influenced by Scandinavia, makes it doubly useful to a British audience.

The format is based closely on the Council for British Archaeology's publication *British Archaeological Abstracts* and, like it, *Nordic Archaeological Abstracts* covers all periods. In volume 1, however, about two-thirds of the summaries involve the medieval period, that is, from the so-called Germanic iron age onwards, and roughly half of these concern the period c. A.D. 1000 to 1500. This is indicative of the increased interest in the later periods which has characterized Scandinavian archaeology in recent years and another illustration of the necessity of archaeologists elsewhere to be aware of the work.

One of the difficulties which arise from publishing a work of this kind in English is that archaeological terminology does not always coincide, and it would be useful to have some form of correlation between the terms used, notably those applied to chronological periods. For instance, it would be helpful if the alternative names for the Germanic iron age were given (migration period, Merovingian period) and, if it were pointed out that as far as the Scandinavian countries are concerned, 'prehistoric' is used for any period up to c. A.D. 1000. There are other points which arise mainly from translation difficulties, but nothing detracts from the publication as a whole, and it is to be hoped that British authors will respond to the invitation to send abstracts of relevant articles published in non-Scandinavian journals for inclusion in future volumes of what could prove to be a most valuable contribution to European archaeology of all periods.

HELEN CLARKE

The following publications have also been received:

Anglo-Saxon and Viking Leicestershire, including Rutland. By T. H. McK. Clough, Ann Dornier and R. A. Rutland. 15 × 21 cm. 92 pp., frontisp. + 6 pls., 1 map. Leicester: Leicestershire Museums, Art Galleries and Record Service, 1975. Price £2.00.

Saxon Southampton: The Archaeology and History of the Port called Hamwih. By Southampton Archaeological Research Committee. 20.5 × 25 cm. 22 pp., 4 pls., 8 figs. Southampton: S.A.R.C., 1975. Price 50p + 15p post and packing.

Norman Domestic Architecture (Royal Archaeological Institute Monograph). By Margaret Wood. 14 × 22 cm. 99 pp., 14 pls., 13 figs. London: Royal Archaeological Institute, 1974. Price not stated.

Medieval Ceramics, VI to XIII Centuries. By Jay D. Frierman. 21.3 × 27.4 cm. 72 pp., numerous pls. Los Angeles: Frederick S. Wright Art Gallery, University of California, 1975. Price not stated.

Medieval Floor Tiles. By Jane Wright. 16 × 24 cm. 179 pp., 4 pls., 45 figs. London: A. & C. Black, 1975. Price £6.50.

City of York, vol. IV: *Outside the City Walls, East of the Ouse*. 22 × 27 cm. 111 pp., frontisp. + 132 pls., 82 figs. London: H.M.S.O. for Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England), 1975. Price £16.00.

'The deserted medieval settlement at Lyveden, Northants', *Journal of the Northampton Museum and Art Gallery*, vol. xii. By J. M. Steane. 17.5 × 24.5 cm. 160 pp., 28 pls., 57 figs. Northampton: Museum and Art Gallery, 1975. Price £1.50.

Studies in Medieval Domestic Architecture (Royal Archaeological Institute Monograph). By J. T. Smith, P. A. Faulkner and A. Emery. 19 × 24.5 cm. 154 pp., 20 pls., numerous figs. London: Royal Archaeological Institute, 1975. Price £5.00.

Excavations at the Bishop's Palace, Lincoln, 1968-72 (Occasional Papers in Lincs. History and Archaeology, no. 1). By Hugh Chapman, Glyn Coppack and Peter Drewett. 21 × 30 cm. 62 pp., 8 pls., 20 figs. Grimsby: Society for Lincolnshire History and Archaeology, 1975. Price 80p to society members, £1.25 to non-members.

Grotesques and Gargoyles: Paganism in the Medieval Church. By Ronald Sheridan and Ann Ross. 22 × 28 cm. 127 pp., numerous pls. Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1975. Price £5.95.

Zeitschrift für Archäologie des Mittelalters, vol. 11 (1974). Edited by W. Janssen and H. Steuer. 30 × 21 cm. 222 pp., numerous pls. and figs. Cologne: Rheinland Verlag, 1974. Price, subscription 75 DM, single volumes 90 DM.

Hommage à Geneviève Chevrier et Alain Geslan: Études Médiévales (Chantiers d'Études Médiévales, no. 13). 19 × 28 cm. 146 pp., numerous figs. Colmar, Strasbourg, Paris: Groupe d'archéologie médiévale, Centre de recherches historiques, École des hautes études en sciences sociales, Centre d'archéologie médiévale de Strasbourg, 1975. Price 25 Fr from Groupe d'archéologie médiévale, Musée des arts et traditions populaires, Bureau 901, 6 Route du Mahatma Gandhi, 75116 Paris.

Ireland's Vernacular Architecture. By Kevin Danaher. 18 × 23 cm. 82 pp., numerous pls. Cork: Mercier Press for Cultural Relations Committee of Ireland (Irish Life and Culture Series), 1975. Price £1.50.

Otford in Kent — A History. By Dennis Clarke and Antony Stoyel. 15.5 × 23 cm. 297 pp., 16 pls., 19 figs. Otford: Otford and District Historical Society, 1975. Price £5.00.

Lincoln: The Archaeology of an Historic City. By Christina Colyer. 21 × 29.5 cm. 48 pp., numerous pls. and figs. Lincoln: Lincoln Archaeological Trust, 1975. Price £1.00 + 15p post and packing from Lincoln Archaeological Trust, Old City School, Monks Road, Lincoln LN2 5HG.

'Bedfordshire archaeology: Essays presented to Frederick William Kuhlicke, *Bedfordshire Archaeol. Journal*, ix (1974). Edited by D. Kennett. 18.5 × 24.5 cm. 136 pp., 16 pls., numerous figs. Bedford, 1975. Price £2.80 + postage.

Salt: The Study of an Ancient Industry (Report on the Salt Weekend held at the University of Essex, 20-22 September 1974). Edited by K. W. de Brisay and K. A. Evans. 21 × 29.5 cm. 94 pp., 51 figs. Colchester: Colchester Archaeological Group, 1975. Price £4.00 from K. W. de Brisay, Corner Cottage, Laver de la Haye, Colchester CO2 0LE.

Recent Work in Rural Archaeology. By Peter Fowler. 19 × 25 cm. 160 pp., numerous (non-consecutive) pls. and figs. Bradford-on-Avon: Moonraker Press, 1975. Price £5.25.

Aerial Reconnaissance for Archaeology (C.B.A. Research Report, no. xii). Edited by D. R. Wilson. 21 × 29.5 cm. ix + 158 pp., 90 pls., 43 figs. London: Council for British Archaeology, 1975. Price £8.00.

Practical Archaeology (2nd ed.). By Graham Webster. 25 × 19 cm. 164 pp., 7 pls., 22 figs. London: A. & C. Black, 1975. Price £3.00.

Glevensis: The Gloucester and District Archaeological Research Group Review, no. ix. 21 × 29.5 cm. 29 pp., numerous figs. Gloucester: Gloucester and District Archaeological Research Group, 1975. Price 35p + postage.

National Monuments Record of Scotland, Report 1972-74. 19 × 24.5 cm. 12 pp., 20 pls. Edinburgh: R.C.A.H.M.S., 1975. Price £1.00.