

Reviews

THE PUBLICATION OF FINDS FROM MEDIEVAL TOWNS: WINCHESTER REVIEWED

Object and Economy in Medieval Winchester. 2 vols. Winchester Studies 7.ii: Artefacts from Medieval Winchester, Part II. By Martin Biddle (with contributions by I. H. Goodall, D. A. Hinton and 81 others). 23 × 28 cm. cx + 1271 pp., 387 figs., 103 tables, 65 pls. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990. ISBN 0-19-813175-5. Price: £200.00 hb.

These two substantial volumes constitute possibly the largest single corpus of stratified early to late medieval artefacts (including some post-medieval) to have been published from any town in Britain, if not in Europe. This, the fourth title to be published in the *Winchester Studies* series, contains over 6,000 finds, mainly non-ceramic, from fifteen sites excavated between 1961 and 1971.

These volumes, in preparation since the mid-1970s, have been long and eagerly awaited. Despite the time-lag, their scope and comprehensiveness would appear to be unparalleled in European medieval archaeology. An inevitable question mark must be placed, however, against the usefulness and usability of such a work in the context of current and future research needs. As a frequent 'user' of finds reports, this reviewer will attempt to examine the question on a number of different levels. Firstly, the general rationale and structure of the book will be considered, followed by a brief overview of its contents. The final and major emphasis of the review will focus on the publication strategy itself in the light of comparable medieval finds volumes published recently. In particular, the decision to separate the ceramics from the functionally related non-ceramic finds will be scrutinized. A primary concern, inevitably with artefactual monographs, is the balance between scholarship and affordability (and hence accessibility). This publication and the comments aired here will almost certainly add fuel to the ongoing debate on how, and how not, to present finds from multi-site urban excavations.

The two volumes constitute a corpus of 'small-finds' or 'special finds' (i.e. non-bulk material) arranged according to function as opposed to material category. Thus in Part III (volume II) personal possessions are followed by devotional objects, domestic equipment and furnishings, and horse equipment, to name but four of the six main groupings. A seventh deals with unidentified items. In all they contain 45 separate functional categories. Numismatic finds, to which a separate volume will be devoted, are excluded. So too are stone sculpture and architectural fragments, which will be published in forthcoming site-based reports. However, crucibles and pottery lamps are included in the industrial evidence and household equipment sections respectively. The ceramics from Winchester will be published separately by Katherine Barclay as Part I of the *Artefacts from Medieval Winchester* volumes. This sequence of publication and, more specifically, the effective compartmentalization of related artefact types in print, will be considered in more detail below.

The decision to structure the catalogue along thematic lines is a commendable one. Recent monographs published by the Museum of London, such as *Knives and Scabbards*¹ or *Dress Accessories*,² have proved how valuable it is to look at objects and their accessories together, regardless of the material they are made from, thus avoiding artificial divisions so often characteristic of finds reporting in this country.³ The approach allows for socio-economic conclusions to be drawn from the material, as Biddle makes clear in his preface. In his general introduction he pays homage to the late John Ward-Perkins (to whom, along with

Gerald Dunning, the volumes are dedicated) and his *London Museum Medieval Catalogue*, first published in 1940.⁴ The groupings of objects in Part III of this report are influenced strongly by Ward-Perkins' functional scheme, which remains eminently sensible today. My only concern is that, in contrast to the Winchester finds, the London material was all unstratified and, almost by necessity, demanded a non-contextual approach.

It was rightly recognized that not all the finds evidence would fit so snugly with the overriding thematic scheme. Part II (volume I) contains a survey of evidence for manufacture from the excavated structures, the objects used in the various processes and from their technology. The contributions constitute important case-studies of particular medieval industries.⁵ Thus the guiding principle has been to place the industrial processes in Part II and the objects derived from them in Part III (volume II). 'Textile manufacture' is found in Part II, therefore, and 'textiles' themselves are located in Part III. The inevitable dangers of overlap and duplication of material have been skilfully avoided. Thus only artefacts associated with the manufacture of textiles have been included in Part II (e.g. spindle-whorls and weaving combs), whereas the textiles themselves appear in Part III of the report. Similarly iron tools associated with the wood-working and building trades are located in Part II; and the remaining iron implements (e.g. horse and riding equipment) are grouped by function in the following section. The study of crafts and industrial processes through their respective implements represents an unusual and stimulating approach to finds research, and one which will no doubt be emulated elsewhere.

The above sections are themselves prefaced in Part I (volume I) by a substantial discussion on the organization of the report which includes chapters on the means used to date the finds (based on a sequence of ceramic phases); the recovery, conservation and processing systems employed; the classification and standardization of the catalogue entries; and a series of subsections on the overall significance of the respective metalwork categories. The final discussion on the chronological and spatial distribution of artefacts within medieval Winchester by Barclay, Biddle and Orton (pp. 42-73) is particularly significant as it stresses once again the importance of studying finds on an intra- and inter-site basis. Treating the town as one large archaeological site, rather like the City of London,⁶ it is possible to explore temporal, spatial and socio-economic variations within finds assemblages. Of value here is the inclusion of tables (e.g. Tables 7 and 8) plotting the ratios of functional artefact types found on particular site-types (urban domestic, Bishop's Palace, Castle and Minster). Several significant trends emerge which can be calibrated by comparison with other medieval towns. For instance, there is a higher incidence of precious metal finds on the Minster sites. This may be fairly predictable in view of the status of the Minster, but at least the report provides statistical evidence for an otherwise subjective argument.

In the absence of detailed contextual information, the first concern of any researcher using a finds monograph is to establish how the material presented has been dated. In this respect the editor has been careful to provide at least a brief account of the phasing strategy adopted for all the artefacts in the report (p. 17). Essentially the finds were assigned to phases based on the aggregate date of the 'ceramic mix' of the assemblages. For convenience these phases represent divisions of one third of a century: thus 'early', 'mid' and 'late' century dates are given in the catalogue entries. Admittedly the scheme does allow for inter-site comparisons to be made between objects of broadly contemporary date.

The reliance on ceramic phasing throws up perhaps one of the most serious problems with a finds report of this size and complexity. Without the pottery volume of the *Winchester Studies* series (vol. 7.i) to hand it is impossible to check the dates given for the non-ceramic finds. Hopefully, it will not be too long before this volume is available for reference and calibration. In an ideal world it would surely have preceded volume 7.ii in the order of publication. Questions of assemblage residuality, contamination, and social curation can only be assessed with regard to the finds assemblage as a whole, using the full range of material evidence.⁷ Furthermore, because of its very fragility and ubiquity, pottery is a far more reliable index of socio-economic trends in an assemblage than, say, the less prevalent metalwork or organic finds. Any discussion of site status or function needs to be calibrated by

the ceramic evidence. Thus it would have been interesting to recast Tables 7 and 8 (see above) inclusive of the pottery forms and functional types represented on the urban domestic or ecclesiastical residence sites. One of the main contributors, Derek Keene, highlights the problem in suggesting that any socio-functional conclusions to be drawn from the proportions of treen vessels found on individual sites need to be viewed in the light of the ratios of ceramic forms present (p. 961). Clearly an integrated ceramic and small-finds publication was not a realistic proposition in view of the sheer mass of material from Winchester. This reviewer's only query is why the ceramic volume, supposedly incorporating a detailed resumé of the phasing of individual sites, did not appear first in the publication programme. This 'small-finds' volume suffers from its continuing absence, and the editor's aims, stated in the preface, of using finds from medieval Winchester to 'investigate the economic, cultural, and social life of the city as it changed over time and varied from one place to another and across the social range' remains largely unconvincing.

The issues of ceramic phasing and material integration aside, the individual finds reports are impressive in terms of their level of detail and comprehensiveness. The catalogue entries are meticulously ordered and easy to use. Without doubt, Parts II and III of the report will become standard works of reference for particular artefact categories for many years to come. Moreover, so many of the contributions not only cast new light on the processes and products of individual medieval industries, but also comprise new approaches to their respective fields of study. For instance, the study of the early and high medieval window glass from Winchester breaks new ground in presenting such a large sample of material of this date and in establishing a typological, as opposed to a strictly chronological, classification. Although over 80 individual specialists are named on the contributors page, the consistently high quality of information and commentary throughout the reports represents a rare editorial achievement.

Looking at the extensive bibliography, however, it is noticeable that a number of the reports are beginning to look their age. Inevitably with a publication of this size some contributions are received earlier than others, and for many there has been a considerable time-lag between original manuscript and final publication. For instance, the vessel-glass report was probably written some ten to fifteen years ago, and it is a pity that it has not been updated to take account of subsequent finds on other British sites. This is particularly unfortunate in the case of the 'Winchester Beaker' of so-called 'Syro-Frankish' type (cat. no. 3273), the parallels for which were boosted during the early 1980s by discoveries in the City of London.⁸

Another fundamental criterion of usefulness for any monograph on artefacts is the degree to which it may be used as a standard for terminology or technical nomenclature. Undoubtedly the two volumes will become basic works of reference for anyone attempting to classify and describe a specific type of strap-end or buckle-plate. That said, they contain a disappointingly limited range of terminological or constructional diagrams. The omission stands in stark contrast to the Museum of London's recent *Dress Accessories* volume,⁹ which includes a wide range of diagrammatic information and the use of contemporary sources (illuminations, memorial sculpture, etc.) showing how, for example, brooches were worn.

In general the finds illustrations are consistent in style, although heavily biased towards the traditional hatched drawing method. On occasion this schematic approach helps to obscure, rather than provide, information. This is especially true of the drawings of the jewellery and fine metalwork, such as the engraved strap-ends (e.g. cat. no. 1082). This reviewer would favour the more naturalistic stippled method of artefact illustration exemplified by the Museum of London medieval finds monographs, which clearly distinguishes between engraved and stamped decoration and the definition of surface relief. The latter publications also benefit from the integration of line drawings and photographs on the same page. With the more traditional format of the Winchester volumes the photographic plates are rather inconveniently placed at the end of the report. This is particularly ironic as, by and large, the line illustrations appear in close proximity to their respective catalogue entry, very often on the same page. Finally, with regard to the plates themselves, it is almost impossible

to identify individual items on a group shot with ease. The 'team-photograph' approach to captions (i.e. 'from left to right') is confusing, particularly with the 32 gaming pieces (pl. XXV) and the 36 textile implements (pl. XV). Numbers placed next to objects before photography are advisable in these cases.

Overall there is no doubt that the two volumes represent a major contribution to the study of medieval artefacts, but nagging questions remain about the format and cost of the publication. Although rigorous in coverage, not to mention a refreshing challenge to the use of microfiche, they remain an unwieldy tool. Moreover, it is unlikely, in view of the substantial retail price, that the volumes will reach their target audience. How many finds specialists, let alone unit directors or museums, are prepared to part with £200.00 for 'one' book? Could not the information available here be published in a cheaper and more user-friendly form?

Martin Biddle, in a lecture to the British Academy in 1983, asserted that the *Winchester Studies* volumes represented far greater value for money page for page than any comparable archaeological fascicule series.¹⁰ Theoretically this may indeed be true, but for many of us this is like paying your poll tax in one go: both painful and economically unsound. *In toto* the volumes may well represent good value, but how many researchers are going to consult the entire database? In this age of increasing subject specialization very few archaeologists are going to draw on the full range of material presented here. This may be sad and even undesirable in view of the now acknowledged need for a multi-media approach to finds assemblages, but an ever more familiar procedural reality. With the benefit of hindsight this reviewer would advocate a more problem-orientated strategy for finds publication in Winchester, which would necessarily involve dividing the corpus into a limited run of 'fascicules' but retaining the thematic framework and material classification of the original scheme.

Consulting two large hardback volumes running to 1,200 pages makes for an unwieldy and uncomfortable experience. The combination of footnotes on each page which refer back to a bibliography sited at the beginning of volume 1 is cumbersome, but inevitable in view of the publication format. Dividing the volumes up into a series of materially related and digestible sections would in part solve this problem, with each 'fascicule' containing its own references.

Clearly a staggered approach to finds publication from one medieval town involves a certain degree of duplication of information, but problem-orientated in the right way this can be kept to a minimum. For instance the fascicule format used for Lincoln or York would be inappropriate for the Winchester situation. These tend to be material- or site-specific publications. As with the City of London, the Winchester material can only be understood on a multi-site basis, with the opportunity for inter-site comparisons between types and proportions of finds. The recently published *Dress Accessories* volume¹¹ achieves this successfully by sticking to a thematic format and presenting related material from a wide range of different sites. Similar approaches to publishing finds from large-scale urban excavations have been followed on the Continent. The thematically organized 'fascicule' series from Schleswig¹² and Hedeby¹³ are two of the better known here, each volume closely following on the heels of the last and dedicated to an individual material category or artefact type. Finds specialists can, at least, be selective about which volumes hold the most interest for them.

Despite the obvious advantages of selectivity and digestibility, the one glaring problem with the latter material-orientated fascicules remains that of the separation of finds from their archaeological context and the bureaucratic compartmentalization of material from one assemblage. This reviewer would, as an alternative, favour the scheme established by monographs currently in progress for medieval London and Norwich. In the former case volume 2 of *Aspects of Saxo-Norman London*¹⁴ contains a series of major sections on the ceramic, numismatic and 'small-find' evidence from a selection of sites discussed in the introductory chapter. Here at least, although on an admittedly smaller scale than Winchester, is an opportunity to explore the relationship between ceramic, glass and metalware consumption in one place at one time.

For a slightly more problem-orientated approach the *Excavations in Norwich 1971–78* volumes (Parts II–III) are to be recommended. Volume II¹⁵ contains three major excavations which incorporate integrated structural and finds sections. The Pottergate report is a model of finds analysis by context, with ceramics and clay-pipe sections preceding the ‘small-finds’, which are in turn ordered by functional use as opposed to material category. Volume III (forthcoming) will be devoted to a more detailed thematic treatment of the finds assemblages with the advantage of a preceding volume which provides information about their contexts and phasing.¹⁶ Perhaps publication of the Winchester finds could have benefited from such a staggered but integrated strategy: namely excavation reports followed by primary dating material (e.g. ceramics) and concluded by a series of problem-orientated finds studies incorporating both bulk and non-bulk finds? Finally, one other option would have been to follow the Lübeck model,¹⁷ and establish an annual journal containing excavation reports and specialist inter-site finds studies (both material and type). Ongoing publication such as this, in contrast to the Winchester approach, suffers perhaps from its very piecemeal nature, but gains a major advantage in its ability to update and calibrate our knowledge as new material comes to light.

The publication of *Object and Economy in Medieval Winchester* has unleashed a wave of interest and debate on the manner in which major urban finds assemblages should be presented. Conceived originally in the 1970s, these volumes, although a great achievement in terms of their individual scholarship, are too unwieldy and too costly for researchers or their institutions operating in the economic climate of the 1990s. This unfortunate result is one which professional bodies and specialist finds groups must address with the utmost urgency.

DAVID R. M. GAIMSTER

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The drafting of this article benefited enormously from discussions with a number of colleagues and friends, namely John Cherry, Leslie Webster, Susan Youngs, Beverley Nenck, Paul Courtney and Märit Gaimster. The views and comments expressed here in their final form remain the responsibility of the reviewer alone.

NOTES

¹ J. Cowgill, M. de Neergaard and N. Griffiths, *Knives and Scabbards*, Medieval Finds from Excavations in London, 1 (London, 1987).

² G. Egan and F. Pritchard, *Dress Accessories c. 1150–c. 1450*, Medieval Finds from Excavations in London, 3 (London, 1991).

³ Finds Research Group 700–1700, *Datasheet 13*, Abstracts from the Group’s meeting at York, 1990 (particularly the contributions by S. Moorhouse and S. Margeson).

⁴ London Museum, *Medieval Catalogue*, London Museum Catalogues 7 (London, 1940).

⁵ Cf. D. Crossley (ed.), *Medieval Industry*, C.B.A. Research Report No. 40 (1981); J. Blair and N. Ramsey (eds), *English Medieval Industries* (London, 1991).

⁶ J. Schofield, ‘Archaeology in the City of London: archive and publication’, *Archaeol. J.*, 144 (1987), 424–33.

⁷ For a recent discussion of assemblage ‘characterization’ using the full range of material evidence, see S. Wrathmell, ‘Observations on artefacts from ditch deposits’, in B. Vyner and S. Wrathmell (eds), *Studies in Medieval and Later Pottery in Wales presented to J. M. Lewis* (University College Cardiff, 1987), pp. 189–97.

⁸ E.g. recent finds from Foster Lane, City of London; see: *The London Archaeologist*, Vol. 4, No. 9 (Winter 1982), 252; J. Clark, ‘Medieval enamelled glass from London’, *Medieval Archaeol.* 27 (1983), 152–56; E. Baumgartner and I. Krueger (eds), *Phoenix aus der Asche. Glas des Mittelalters* (Munich, 1988), cat. nos. 75, 86, 101, 109 (see cat. no. 99 for the ‘Winchester Beaker’).

⁹ Op. cit. in note 2.

¹⁰ M. Biddle, ‘The study of Winchester: archaeology and history in a British town, 1961–1983’, *Proc. British Academy* LXIX (1983), 93–135.

¹¹ Op. cit. in note 2.

¹² E.g. H. Lüdtkke, *Die Mittelalterliche Keramik in Schleswig*, Ausgrabung Schild 1971 bis 1975, Ausgrabungen in Schleswig, Berichte und Studien, 4 (1985).

¹³ E.g. H. G. Resi, *Die Wetz- und Schleifsteine aus Haithabu*, Berichte über die Ausgrabungen in Haithabu, 28 (1990).

¹⁴ A. Vince (ed.), *Aspects of Saxo-Norman London: 2, Finds and Environmental Evidence*, LAMAS Special Paper, 12 (1991).

¹⁵ M. Atkin, A. Carter and D. H. Evans, *Excavations in Norwich 1971-1978, Part II*, East Anglian Archaeology, 26 (1985).

¹⁶ S. Margeson (ed.), *Norwich Households. Medieval and Post-Medieval Finds from Norwich Survey Excavations 1971-1978*, East Anglian Archaeology (forthcoming).

¹⁷ E.g. *Glas- und Keramik funde des Späten Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit aus Lübeck*, Lübecker Schriften zur Archäologie und Kulturgeschichte, 19, Amt für Vor- und Frühgeschichte (Bodendenkmalpflege) der Hansestadt Lübeck (Bonn, 1990).

The First Millennium A.D. in Europe and the Mediterranean. An Archaeological Essay. By Klaus Randsborg. 18 × 25 cm. xvii + 230 pp., 83 figs., 16 tables, 9 pls. Cambridge: C.U.P., 1991. ISBN 0-521-38401-X. Price: £10.95 pb.

This is a wide-ranging and ambitious book, designed to provide an introduction to the archaeology of Europe and the Mediterranean in the first millennium A.D. Randsborg's geographical coverage is exceptional: the whole of modern Europe, including the Balkans, E. Europe and Scandinavia, and the Roman provinces of N. Africa and the Near East, with the occasional foray even further eastwards. It is particularly helpful to have the 'non-Roman' and Roman worlds covered together, since A.D. 1000 this distinction had disappeared in the new cultural division between Christendom (by now including Scandinavia and the Slav East) and Islam. The book is also very impressive for the range of themes covered (from climate to burial habits and political systems), and for the reading it deploys. The bibliography is a mine of useful articles and books in all the major Western languages (and others). Inevitably Randsborg's book will be compared with Hodges and Whitehouse, *Mohammed, Charlemagne and the Origins of Europe* (1983). The most immediate and obvious difference is that Randsborg has read far more widely and based his speculations on a much wider and more secure base of knowledge.

Characteristic of the book and indeed of his general approach to archaeology is a love of the graph and of statistics. Anything that can be quantified (whether pollen, entries per 50-year period in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, or the incidence of Roman portrait sculpture) is presented in statistical form. Some of this is questionable, because it is over-simplified. For instance, in the case of church building and repairs, to form a realistic impression of the amount of activity taking place through time, one would need some consideration of the changing source-material available and some idea of the changing scale of recorded work, and not just a simple graph showing 'frequencies of church building or alteration'. But a great many of the figures are very useful, and will undoubtedly provide lecturers with new visual material on a wide selection of topics.

The individual chapters are of varying quality, and some work much better than others. Those on 'the physical setting' and on 'rural settlement' are the most coherent and successful, because they provide wide and useful surveys of essentially similar and readily comparable data (pollen analysis, animal bones, field survey). Other chapters work less well. That on 'the historical framework', although intended to provide a broad chronological structure for the book as a whole, is too dense to be truly useful, despite Randsborg's ingenious discovery of a recurring historical cycle, with centuries of change alternating with centuries of relative stability. 'Towns and other centres' contains some very useful sections (e.g. on the area of late antique walled circuits in the northern Roman provinces), but consists of a strange selection of disparate elements (mosaics, inscriptions, Roman forts, etc.) that do not add up to a broad overview of settlement history in the first millennium A.D. Randsborg's coverage of themes and evidence in this chapter is decidedly patchy, and often seems determined by his own interest in a topic, rather than by its centrality to his subject. For instance, his five-page discussion of the late Roman state factories is quite out of proportion in a 40-page chapter designed to cover a thousand years of the history of 'towns and other centres', and is anyway based on a *written* source (the *Notitia Dignitatum*), not an archaeological one.

Ironically, the overall problem with the book is that it is *too* wide-ranging and diffuse. No book can satisfactorily encompass climate change, social inequalities and Germanic animal

ornamentation without leaving the reader's head spinning. Because there is so much in this book of such a diverse kind, the presentation of data and a series of 'mini-conclusions' swamps any overall structure or thesis.

This lack of a unifying argument is a pity, because I have recently heard Randsborg lecture on the subject of the First Millennium, with the fascinating and controversial conclusion that the Roman Empire was at best an irrelevance, and at worst a 'bad thing'. This conclusion is formed from the perspective of his native Denmark, where prehistoric 'Iron Age' moves smoothly into 'medieval', without the confusing interruption of Rome, and where the rural site of Vorbasse in central Jutland (discussed to effect in his book, pp. 75-78), reveals an uninterrupted history of rural settlement and rural prosperity throughout the whole millennium. From rural Vorbasse, Rome looks very distant and very irrelevant. Such an approach works beyond the frontier, but would also be very interesting if applied to some at least of the former Roman provinces. For instance, in Britain, after the ephemeral flowering and dramatic collapse of Roman power, it was only in the 8th century A.D. that the economy again approached the complexity and sophistication of the pre-Roman Iron Age. Here, it could be argued, the long-term impact of the Roman occupation was to retard development. However, no such overview is present explicitly in his book, which badly needed some such central theme to hold together his wide range of topics and geographical coverage. History and archaeology presented as a mass of interrelated mini-conclusions and results is obviously true to the confused world of reality, but leaves the reader with a rather empty feeling of uncertainty as to what this book is really about.

BRYAN WARD-PERKINS

A Guide to Ogam (Maynooth Monographs, 4). By Damian McManus. xii + 211 pp., 2 maps, 5 pls. Maynooth, 1991. ISBN 1-870684-17-6. Price: IR£24.00 hb. (all orders from abroad to AIS, 31 Fenian St., Dublin 2).

A phrase such as 'this compact yet profound work of innovative scholarship', or definitive contribution to a misunderstood topic', sounds like a reviewer's cliché or perhaps a puff from a close friend. Neither phrase is either. The present reviewer, who can be relied upon to excoriate those who foist derivative or plagiaristic rubbish upon their fellows, could hardly contain his eagerness to acquire a copy of McManus's *Guide* — rumours of which preceded its appearance by some months. Nicely produced by the Leinster Leader, meticulously proofed and (against the current trend) ridiculously cheap, this is a monograph that anybody concerned with Insular protohistory simply must acquire.

McManus is one of a group of Irish scholars, and/or scholars at present working in Ireland, who during the last decade have been concerned with a network of interconnecting topics: early loans from Latin into Celtic, the refinement of the chronology of developments within the Celtic languages, the appearance and nature of Insular literacy, aspects of epigraphy and the character or significance of early contact between Roman Britain and Ireland. *A Guide to Ogam* follows a run of influential papers by McManus, Anthony Harvey and others, familiar possibly to a few medieval archaeologists if they happen to read such journals as *Ériu*, *Celtica* and *Peritia*. The *Guide* is in fact a compendium. The first three chapters, by themselves a most valuable addition to the history of writing as such, cover very fairly the last century of 'ogamology' (if such a term can be coined) and, though they call for careful reading, set out in a clear and cogent manner the author's reasons for holding certain conclusions. If these seem at all traditionalist, it would be hard indeed to find a better presentation. The conclusions, expanded *passim* in later chapters, are in summary these: the physical model for the basic 20-symbol ogam stroke-'alphabet' or script was some system of incremental tallies; the unidentifiable inventor(s) probably lived in the southern third of Ireland c. A.D. 300 give or take 50 years; he or they were familiar with both the Latin language and the Roman alphabet and scripts; and the principal if not the sole function of ogam was to provide an epigraphic script suitable for use on stone.

Chapters 4 and 5 are directed at, and will be of the most interest and use to, those concerned with purely linguistic matters; Dr McManus does explain, though inevitably in technical language, where he stands (and why) in crucial questions of identifying and dating a series of inferred and probably relatively rapid sound-changes within the Insular Celtic languages. Non-linguists, who will not have grasped all that has gone before across this particular battlefield, need only hang on to a single reinforced idea. Ogam may, superficially, look clumsy and primitive. It was nothing of the kind; and its inventors and adaptors were surprisingly successful in using it to record admittedly mainly names proper to a language about as complex as Classical Greek, or Gothic, with its own very complicated phonology. McManus derives the outline of an internal dating-system from all this, and then gives a fascinating analysis of the personal names themselves, leading into the phase (early 5th century onwards) when memorial stones with ogam and/or Roman-Latin equivalents, the so-called bilinguals, mark the presence of Irish-descended settlers in parts of western Britain. The last two chapters, touching here and there on both the history of ideas and the vagaries of the medieval mind, provide the story of ogam and its odd byways up to the 19th century. (For a 20th-century postscript, look out for *The House of Soldiers*, by Andrew Garve, 1962.)

The remainder of this inadequate appraisal is addressed to medieval archaeologists, who need not know a single word of Primitive Irish, or what is meant by terms like apocope and delabialization. The surviving (or mostly surviving) slabs and pillars bearing names of actual people, inscriptions that are usually intelligible and increasingly near-datable, are of immense importance because they comprise an incontrovertible and unique corpus of evidence. There is a long-standing, loose, but general accord that such memorials belong to the landowning or land-holding, free, or upper grades of society. Surprisingly, very few named individuals can ever be linked to persons known from non-epigraphic sources (though see, e.g., R. B. Warner's paper in *Emania*, 8 (1991), 43-50, for a neat piece of detective work). What can often be linked is the repetition of some aspect of 'tribal' names — and remember that these go back on the stones to at least the 5th century — with corresponding 'tribal' areas; named devotees-by-descent of an inferred tribal goddess **Dovinia(s)* are with one exception in the territory of the later Corcu *Duibne* (same name), anglicized 'Corkaguiney', the Dingle peninsula of Co. Kerry.

The 40-odd instances (seven or so) of ogam-only and bilingual ogam-Latin memorials in south-west and south-central Wales, and south Devon and north-east Cornwall, have in the last few years — thanks largely to McManus and his colleagues — taken on a fresh, and correct, emphasis as a collection of primary field monuments with their own epigraphic, linguistic, sociological and chronological aspects. Whether, as this reviewer supposes, it is possible at last to recast much of the 5th-6th century history of these regions by moving the inscribed memorials to centre-stage must be left to those who appraise the forthcoming *And Shall These Mute Stones Speak?* (University of Wales Press, probably 1993). The matter of the several Irish settlements (primary and secondary) in post-Roman Britain lies outwith McManus's remit. He raises, in part incidentally, several major issues that are becoming separate topics for archaeologists and historians alike. McManus's heading '7.1 The demise of orthodox ogam in the 7th century' does not have to address the fact that this demise roughly coincides with the demise of personal, Roman-only or bilingual, memorials in western Britain, and apparently (soon after this) of the class I Pictish symbol-stones. What profound factors of change in Insular society as a whole underlie this, and what is the connection (which most certainly exists) with Christianity? So far, only Dr Stephen Driscoll has ventured a little way down this dark tunnel (in Driscoll and M. R. Neeke (eds.), *Power and Politics in Early Medieval Britain and Ireland* (Edinburgh, 1988), pp. 162 ff.). Again, McManus — like Anthony Harvey — is implicitly re-opening a debate, last aired in *Proc. Roy. Irish Acad.* 76C (1976), on two matters; what, and from what date, were the causative relationships established between Roman Britain and Ireland, and what sort of definitions can now be shunted towards that innocuous phrase 'the first Christians in Ireland'? Over, largely, to the archaeologists; nobody is going to unearth a fresh counterpart to Prosper of Aquitaine's

interesting writings, and Patrician studies have for the moment been argued into an exhausted heap (with one or two terrifying exceptions).

A Guide to Ogam is full of new ideas. Usefully, it publicizes the discovery — pretty convincingly argued — that the general notion of a system to be read as B L F S N, etc. (itself a medieval version) disguises several quite different original values for certain symbols; F or V started with value /w/, which is why the ogam around the top of King Voteporix's stone, *CIIC* no. 358, should be read out as if 'Wotecorigas', symbol NG was probably /gw/, and symbol Z, long a mystery, either for /st/ or rather less probably for /sw/. Not the least of Dr McManus's services to his devoted topic has been the actual fieldwork; some dubious cases can now be dismissed, a number of corrected readings are proposed, and an equal quantity of difficult or problematic readings are fully discussed. There is a gracious, generous and fair-minded tribute to the work of R. A. S. Macalister. It is easy to poke fun at Macalister and his occasional slips; the more one examines his prodigious, solitary output, the greater must become one's admiration for him as an epigrapher of unrivalled experience. 'Ogamology', like Patriciana, has in the past given rise to far too many disputes and hard words among fellow-travellers. McManus writes throughout with temperance and generosity. His slim green book sits on the shelf, seemingly a modest offering amongst a row of Irish heavy-weights, most of them sharing a well-known stock of colour illustrations. Don't be deceived. This is a profound work of vigorous and innovative scholarship, and medieval archaeologists should buy it now, and read it many times for its many insights. Your reviewer, at the fifth reading, could still uncover fresh inspirations.

CHARLES THOMAS

The British Academy Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture, Volume III: York and Eastern Yorkshire. By James Lang, with contributions by John Higgitt, Raymond I. Page and John R. Senior. 22 × 28 cm. 439 pp., 7 figs., 924 pls. Oxford: O.U.P. for the British Academy, 1991. ISBN 0-19-726079-9. Price: £99.00 hb.

Grammar of Anglo-Saxon Ornament. A General Introduction to the Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture. By Rosemary Cramp. 22 × 28 cm. 51 pp., 28 figs. Oxford: O.U.P. for the British Academy, 1991. ISBN 0-19-726098-5. Price: £7.50 pb.

Despite the new navy and gold livery, there is a reassuring familiarity in the third volume of this magisterial series. Can we hope that the steady pace (1 in 1984, II in 1988) and impeccable standards that we have already come to take for granted will continue to be maintained? This Yorkshire volume certainly comes up to expectation, both because of the detail revealed through the established format, and because it publishes carvings from the excavations of the 1960s and 1970s; much new information, including the recognition of new types of monument, and the resulting reassessment of others, is presented here.

The *Corpus* catalogues the sculptures from some 40 sites in E. Yorkshire, plus those from York itself. Here the list has been doubled by the recent Minster excavations, which revealed 50 new carvings, many in sealed contexts. The catalogue is preceded by discussion of the historical background, geology, inscriptions, and definition of Anglian- and Viking-period forms and ornament. The Roman origins of York are a crucial factor, through the survival of the roads which enabled the transport of stone to the East Riding and affected the siting of Anglian and Scandinavian settlements, the walls which initially helped preserve York during Viking attacks, the local quarries re-opened in Anglo-Saxon times, and the re-use in grave covers of ashlar slabs and recycled sarcophagi lids: one reworked stone has a 10th-century Christian memorial inscription overlying a Roman pagan one. Inscriptions are thoroughly analysed by Higgitt and Page throughout the catalogue.

The cemetery beneath the Minster at last provides firm archaeological proof that these grave covers are really funerary and pre-Conquest. The recognition of the York Metropolitan School as a centre of excellence puts many other carvings into a different context: some once seen as central are now more properly regarded as derivative. More early Anglian work than

previously suspected has been revealed, in particular the curious 'obelisks', which have no parallels; if they are the earliest surviving monuments, here dated late 7th to early 8th century, they must undermine Cramp's Northumbrian sequence of architectural carving preceding free-standing monuments. Those which are ornamented combine Celtic and Saxon with Continental features appropriate to York's status in the Anglian period. The architectural fragments from Lastingham confirm Bede's account of the stone-built monastery there.

One of Lang's main themes is that the sources for Anglo-Scandinavian animal ornament are mainly Anglian and not Viking, and that such Scandinavian elements as are conceded are colonial only and not present in the homelands. Diagnostic features such as double outline, hatched zones and fettering have their closest parallels in pre-Viking slabs such as St Alkmund's, Derby. The characteristic York bipeds are also of Anglian origin, and Mercian sources as well as general Insular parallels are cited for the bird- and beast-chains; the Scandinavian elements are merely 'dense packing and minor decorative detail'. The Ryedale dragons are therefore derived from the York school, but are ultimately Mercian, with prototypes in the Lindisfarne gospels. I would have certain reservations about this. There is a phase when the individuality of animals becomes subordinate to the designs made from their bodies, which has not been reached in the Anglian beast; it is surely the linear reworking into pattern which is the important Anglo-Scandinavian contribution. There is logically some inconsistency in attributing the 'Anglian' animals of the Newgate shaft to the York master who also produced Clifford St 1 and Coppergate 2, in which Jellinge elements are recognized. Lang sensibly stresses the danger in 'making ethnic attributions a dubious act of criticism', and it would help if we were all clearer about the chronological and geographical boundaries of the term 'Mercian'.

As the Vikings had not previously carved in stone, manufacturing methods inevitably remain Anglian, as well as the continuing use of deep relief and degrees of realism and classicism; there is continuity of the secular and of the ecclesiastical portrait with dished halo from the 9th to the 11th century. Anglian ecclesiastical sites remain in use as Anglo-Scandinavian cemeteries.

Another key element is the emphasis on technique and production methods, which in the end may be more important than stylistic criteria in defining workshops and even individual hands. The role of fix-points and templates is significant in determining pattern, and the Newgate shaft is used for a dazzling interpretation of how one individual laid out a design. The Kirby Misperton shaft shows the long survival of the diagonal grid originating in the Lindisfarne gospels. There is considerable evidence from fragments of underlay and pigments that many of these monuments were painted.

A recurrent theme is the Irish connection already demonstrated in the Cumbria volume. The introduction of the ring-headed cross shows the strength of the York-Dublin axis: it is more likely that the Vikings brought their Christianity from Ireland than converted locally. The pagan/Christian interface is highlighted on the Minster 34 grave cover, whose Sigurd is presented as a palatably heroic rather than overtly pagan figure; the slab appears to be by the same hand as the cross head from St Mary Castlegate with Irish-derived Crucifixion, a type with several other examples. The Castledermot cross is frequently cited as a parallel, and the interchange is confirmed by the presence of the distinctively Anglo-Scandinavian hogback at the site, the only example in Ireland. The Irish hart-and-hound scene was probably acquired via Cumbria.

The major monuments of the region benefit from the full publication provided by the format. They include the Hackness 1 shaft, with its five inscriptions and possible reference to and portrait of Ethelburga. The account of Nunburnholme emphasizes its Anglian nature, with Carolingian features; there is a valuable photographic reconstruction of the original arrangement, and the definition of three, if not four hands. The Hovingham shrine panel is also properly illustrated for the first time.

Although the provision of plates is generous, some are so small that it requires the eye of faith to see what is being described in the text: some explanatory drawings would be helpful.

An innovation is the publication of the general introduction, defining descriptive forms and techniques, as a separate paperback: this establishes essential criteria for anyone trying to describe Anglo-Saxon sculpture.

The frontispiece map of England shows that, geographically, a very small area of England has so far been covered by the *Corpus*. Yet there is such a concentration of major sculpture in Northumbria, Cumbria and east Yorkshire that the subsequent regions must present a less daunting prospect than the works so admirably described in these three pioneering volumes.

CAROLA HICKS

Three South Etrurian Churches: Santa Cornelia, Santa Rufina and Santa Liberato (Archaeological Monographs of the British School at Rome, 4). Edited by Neil Christie. 21 × 29.5 cm. xiv + 374 pp., 109 figs., 94 pls. London: British School at Rome, 1991. ISBN 0-904152-17-0. Price: £55.00 pb.

Espace urbain et habitat à Rome du Xe siècle à la fin du XIIIe siècle (Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo, Nuovi Studi Storici 7. Collection de l'École Française de Rome 135). By Étienne Hubert, with preface by Pierre Toubert. 17 × 24 cm. viii + 396 pp., 8 figs., 4 pls., 2 folding plans. Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo, Ecole Française de Rome, 1990. ISSN 0223-5099. ISBN 2-7283-0216-9. Pb, price not stated.

The South Etruria survey of the British School at Rome (1950-75) is among the most significant archaeological projects to have been carried out in Italy since the war. Initiated by the late J. B. Ward-Perkins and involving over the years a succession of specialists, students and volunteers, it undertook the complete mapping of archaeological sites of all periods in the Campagna north of Rome. Not only did it revolutionize the traditional methodology and perspectives of classical archaeologists working in the area, but it also provided a wealth of new material from which to approach an understanding of the topographical and cultural transformations which the region underwent in the post-classical period. Because of the scarcity of surviving structural remains of the period c. 500-1000 and the consequent need to rely on poorly datable pottery scatters for identifying sites, a handful of key early medieval sites were excavated. *Three South Etrurian Churches* represents the final publication of two of these, together with the detailed structural analysis of a third.

Santa Cornelia is identified as the site of the *domusculita Capratorum*, founded by Pope Hadrian I c. 774/76 as one of a number of such estate centres intended to supply food for the populace of Rome. The church, dedicated to St Peter c. 780, contained the bodies of St Cornelius (A.D. 251-53) and three other popes. In 1026x35, the church and surrounding complex were rebuilt as the Benedictine monastery of St Cornelius in *Capratorio*, which continued to function until c. 1300. Excavations were conducted from 1960 to 1964, in the first season by Barri Jones and thereafter by Charles Daniels. The report has been written by Neil Christie, working from the original site records and the structural sequence established by Daniels. Specialist reports cover the human skeletal remains, coins, plaster, metalwork, glass, tiles, pottery and inscriptions; a significant lack, explicable no doubt by the time at which the excavation took place, is any treatment of environmental evidence.

The cult centre of St Rufina, martyred with St Secunda under the emperors Valerian and Gallienus (A.D. 253-59), was rediscovered 9 km. north-west of Rome in 1963. Excavations were carried out in 1965-67 and 1969 by Mgr. Jacquand of the Istituto Pontificio di Archeologia Cristiana and the late Margaret Wheeler for the British School at Rome. The report has been prepared by David Whitehouse from Lady Wheeler's preliminary draft and from finds material organized by the late M. Aylwin Cotton; an introductory chapter by Peter Llewellyn presents the historical record of the site and of its associated bishopric of *Silva Candida*. A catacomb, mausoleum and surface cemetery, established c. 200-c. 400, seems to represent the original burial place of the two martyrs. Between the 5th and 7th centuries the

mausoleum was repaired, possibly to receive relics from the collapsed catacomb, and in or after 750–800 it was demolished and a rectangular room with a mosaic floor was built, associated with an enclosed courtyard. These works are associated with the historical evidence for Pope Hadrian I having renewed the church of Sts Rufina and Secunda in 782/83, at about the time when a *domusculata* was established near by. The yard was resurfaced in the early 10th century, and the site abandoned by the early 12th century. Unfortunately the site was only partly excavated, and it is by no means clear whether the supposed 8th-century structures related to the ecclesiastical complex or to the farm; more seriously, an appendix by Federico Guidobaldi casts doubt on the dating of the mosaic, and suggests a likelier context for it in the 4th century. The report includes detailed analysis of the coins, glass, metalwork, pottery, inscriptions and architectural fragments, but environmental evidence is represented by only seven mollusc shells.

The church of San Liberato, representing the only standing building on the presumed site of the Roman town of *Forum Clodii*, near Bracciano, was surveyed by Sheila Gibson in 1963. The report on the building has been prepared by Christie from an incomplete draft by the late J. B. Ward-Perkins. Although a limited excavation showed it to have been built over the remains of a Roman structure, evidence for continuity of Christian use from the late Roman period is lacking. The church seems to have been founded in the 9th century, either as a cult centre for relics of St Marcellianus or as part of an estate centre; it was enlarged in the early 12th century and provided with an annular crypt probably in the 15th, when it was taken over by the Augustinian friars of S. Maria Novella. Subsequently part of the complex was converted for secular domestic use.

As Christie remarks in his concluding overview, although these sites have been 'published many years after their initial investigation, this has the advantage that their results can now be integrated into a greatly increased and ever-growing body of data for the period c. 700–1400, and it can be argued that they would have far more significance now than they would have had back in the 1960s' (p. 359). True, perhaps, but not an example worthy of emulation. Nevertheless, Christie and all who contributed to this volume have done a signal service to Italian medieval archaeology.

Early medieval Italian domestic buildings have proved to be even less durable than their ecclesiastical counterparts. In his study of urban space and domestic buildings in Rome from the 10th to the 13th century, Étienne Hubert goes a long way to redress the imbalance in the archaeological record by making use of the extensive series of charters and notarial records of the period. The first part of the book deals with the organization of space within the Aurelian walls. Hubert shows how from the later 11th century the centres of the future thirteen *regiones* of the city developed around the principal churches and monasteries established within the bend of the Tiber opposite the Vatican. The dynamic for urban development was provided by the interest of the religious houses in increasing the size of their congregations and the economic values of their patrimonies by parcelling out plots on which to build houses. Rather than expanding, however, the inhabited area became gradually more densely packed: buildings sharing a party wall, unrecorded before the late 12th century, are numerous by the end of the 13th century; similarly it became more common for houses to be built up to the street front, with no more than a portico serving to separate the public from the private space.

Part two deals with the buildings themselves, and documents how from c. 1200 the single-storied *domus terrinea* gradually gave way to the *domus solarata*. Since buildings usually contained only a single household this development had more to do with increasing affluence than rising population, a factor which also explains the increasing durability of the materials employed, such as lime-mortared ashlar or brick, and clay tiles. The third part deals with the housing market and prices. Though based almost entirely on documentary evidence, this book provides a wealth of material of significance for archaeologists working on urban housing in central Italy and elsewhere.

Aspects of Maritime Scandinavia A.D. 200–1200, Proceedings of the Nordic Seminar on Maritime Aspects of Archaeology, Roskilde, 13–15 March 1989. Edited by Ole Crumlin-Pedersen, 20 × 26 cm. 291 pp., 200 figs. Roskilde: The Viking Ship Museum, 1991. Price not stated.

'Maritime' and 'land' archaeology have a well-known tendency to exist apart, concentrating on separate data and research objectives, despite referring to the same past societies. A determined attempt has been made here to break down traditional differences. The intention of the conference and its subsequent publication is to present the results of maritime research so as to reflect on the 'land bound' settlement archaeology of Scandinavia.

There are 23 contributions, all headed by a short abstract, and divided (rather arbitrarily) into seven sections. The earlier chapters are surveys of seafaring, trade and society, after which the coverage becomes more specialized with detailed regional and local studies. The volume ends with six papers dealing with techniques of reconnaissance and survey of archaeological sites.

Klaus Randsborg opens the proceedings with an introduction to the chronology of south Scandinavian prehistory, describing the salient developments in agriculture and technology up to the Middle Ages. Randsborg demonstrates the potential for correspondence between 'land' and 'maritime' technology with a comparison between boats and contemporary wooden carriages. Ulf Näsman's analysis of trade during the Scandinavian Iron Age draws a distinction between the luxury trade of the Roman-Germanic Iron Age and the specialized market exchange of the Viking period. The change towards the latter, Näsman argues, occurred in the 8th century. Ole Crumlin-Pedersen further explores the potential in social archaeology of the Scandinavian older Iron Age (A.D. 200–600) for interpreting maritime sites and finds, bringing particular attention to the location of chiefdom centres in relation to coastal defensive structures and concentrations of imports. Crumlin-Pedersen moves the focus inwards to Denmark, and in particular the island of Fyn (Funen), where much recent research effort has been concentrated. This geographical weighting is continued by Jørgen Christoffersen in his distribution study of Iron Age finds on Fyn.

The second section contains detailed surveys of ship types and sizes by Ole Crumlin-Pedersen and of coastal defence in Denmark by Flemming Rieck, the latter presenting a range of archaeological evidence for coastal blockages, hitherto unavailable in English.

'Routes, Portages and Havens' (the third section) includes an article by Björn Ambrosiani on the waterways and hinterlands around Birka (Sweden) and an interdisciplinary study of settlement and society along the sailing route known as 'Norrlandsleden' along the NE. coast of Sweden, by Christer Westerdahl. Westerdahl is enterprising in his range of sources, including oral testimony. His article lays emphasis on landscape and sea-level changes and is illustrated by detailed maps, some of which are difficult to relate to the regional and national maps provided. Peter Norman's article on 'maritime monuments' in the Kalmarsund area (SE. Sweden) compares the distribution of buildings, labyrinths and graves with fishing settlements. This provides some counterweight to the prevailing reference to trade in the context of coastal settlement; fishing is surely an equally important aspect of many sites.

'Non-urban Ports and Trading Stations' (the fourth section) comprises reports on fieldwork and research at Lundeborg (Fyn) by Per Ole Thomsen, on the harbours of Gotland by Dan Carlsson and a wider study of ports and trade in Norway by Axel Christopherson. Christopherson's article concentrates on S. Norway. It is regrettable that N. Norway, with its powerful chiefdoms, fisheries and trade with Sami and Russian areas to the east, is generally under-represented in this book. The geographical coverage is really south Scandinavian with a few exceptions. Countries with a claim to be part of Scandinavia, such as Finland, the Faroe Islands and Iceland, are little mentioned.

'Other Non-urban Sites' returns to Denmark for a study of the potential for maritime connections at the settlement of Lejre near Roskilde Fjord by Tom Christensen, before a long and detailed article by Jan Skamby Madsen on the 11th-century shipyard at Fribødre on Falster. This is the first comprehensive account of these excavations in English, and leaves

the reader in no doubt that Fribrodre is a site of international importance. Along a dried-up section of a stream, the Fribrodre Å, waterlogged remains of around 1,700 ships' parts, waste wood, tools, pottery and other objects were documented in excavations from 1982 to 1988. A proportion of the strakes, frames and keel fragments are paralleled along the north coast of Germany and Poland, which was Slavic (Wendish) territory in the 11th century. Wendish contacts at the site are also evident in the finds of personal ornaments and tools. It is a fascinating challenge to our present views of the ethnic origins of boat types that ships of the Slavic tradition were apparently being built, repaired or broken up within the Danish kingdom. The results of further excavation and research at Fribrodre are awaited with great interest.

After Henning Nielsen's short study of the medieval port of Gedehavn, Sjaelland, the urban centres of Tønsberg, Norway and Copenhagen are discussed by Jan Lindh and Bi Skaarup, respectively. Both use a topographical approach in determining the location of early medieval harbours. The definition of a 'port' is not seriously addressed, here or elsewhere in the book. This is perhaps an omission since the term carries the connotations of a social model, following the work of Karl Polanyi and Richard Hodges amongst others.

The final section (7) deals with 'tracing maritime sites'. It comprises specialist reports on place-name research by Bente Holmberg, geomorphology by Jens Tyge Møller, geophysical prospection by Niels Abrahamsen and Niels Brøner, geological investigation by Erik Maagaard Jacobsen, phosphate analysis by Inger Østerholm and aerial photography by M. F. Svejgaard. These are written with enough background information as to be technically intelligible to the general reader and illustrate the problems as well as the successes of recent efforts. By leaving the 'technical' papers until last, the book perpetuates the awkward practice of separating scientific reports from excavation summaries. One central area of maritime archaeological fieldwork which is rather neglected by the book's coverage is underwater archaeology. A report written from the perspective of archaeological diving and underwater excavation in Scandinavia would have created even better technical coverage. The book also tails off without a clear conclusion. It would have been most interesting to have the editor's views in the aftermath of the conference.

The illustrations are mostly large and clear, and the photographs (all monochrome except for the cover) are all of a high standard. The text has only a few typographical mistakes, although a knowledge of the Scandinavian languages occasionally helps in understanding the sentence structure. Over all, the editor has done an extremely good job in producing the whole text in English. One of the few irritating features is the lack of chapter numbers with the chapter headings (except on the contents page). Also, the terminology of boat construction could have done with a short glossary.

This book achieves two excellent objectives: it makes a telling point on the relationship between land and maritime archaeology, and it presents the results of a range of important fieldwork in English for the first time.

DAVID GRIFFITHS

Die spätromischen und frühmittelalterlichen Gräberfelder von Gondorf, Gem. Koborn-Gondorf, Kr. Mayen-Koblenz (Germanische Denkmäler der Völkerwanderungszeit. Serie B, Band 14). By Mechthild Schulze-Dörrlamm. 2 vols. 17 × 26 cm. Vol. 1, text, 400 pp.; Vol. 2, catalogue and plates, 279 pp., 126 pls. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1990. ISBN 3-515-04994-0. Price: DM 288 hb.

The finds from two adjacent but separate row cemeteries at Gondorf, on the left bank of the Mosel SW. of Koblenz, have survived an undeniably chequered history to appear at last in this two-volume set in the G.D.V. series. The cemeteries, in continuous use from c. A.D. 300-700, were discovered in the 1870s during the construction of a railway. The landowner, Baroness von Liebieg, allowed further excavations on her estate in order to

recover finds for her collection. The objects were subsequently sold to private collectors and antiquities dealers; although some remain untraced, the majority were gradually acquired by the Rheinische Landesmuseum in Bonn. Cataloguing of the finds was disrupted by the outbreak of the Second World War, and systematic analysis of the finds and archive did not begin until 1974.

Given the paucity of contextual information, the emphasis of the discussion is understandably on the objects. These are given a thorough, but conventional treatment which focuses on chronology, iconography, ethnic affinities and wealth. The themes which dominate the discussion are largely historical, for example whether the presence of Germanic soldiers in the 4th century can be detected; at what date the middle Rhine was incorporated into Frankish territory; and how Gondorf fitted into the network of the historically more significant towns of Trier, Metz and Andernach.

The numerous early Christian inscriptions in both cemeteries reflect a 4th-century population which was essentially Roman provincial, although a small number of finds from Gondorf I (for example, a bone comb and a silver arrowhead of the Leuna-Haßleben type) suggest the presence of a small elbe-germanic or alamannic population. A more substantial group of finds from the Rhine–Weser region, which includes military gear, is interpreted as representing a group of Franks serving in the Roman army in the second half of the 4th century. A small group of high-ranking Alamanni in Gondorf I in the later 5th century is indicated by, for example, radiate-headed and bird brooches. Burial rites, such as the use of stone sarcophagi, lead the author to suggest that this group was quickly assimilated into a largely intact Roman provincial milieu. The Frankish presence becomes more marked in the first half of the 6th century, as indicated by no fewer than 22 swords, 73 sceaxes and eleven franciscas. Gondorf I nevertheless continued to display Roman provincial characteristics which distinguish it from other row cemeteries such as Krefeld-Gellep. It contained, for example, a large number of ear, finger, and arm rings, but no bow brooches, wooden buckets, claw beakers, drinking horns or biconical bowls. This, the author argues, indicates that the Frankish settlers came not from the Rhineland, but from N.W. France, suggesting that the lower Mosel first came under Frankish rule after Clovis gained control over Francia Rinensis in 510, and that a group of Salian Franks was settled at Gondorf as a means of asserting Clovis's domination. The 7th-century burials reflect a Roman–West Frankish *Mischkultur* with the prevalence of Mediterranean fashions, such as the wearing of monogrammed finger rings, reflecting close ties with the royal courts in Paris, Reims, Soissons and Metz.

Schulze-Dörrlamm equates (perhaps too readily) the cemetery of Gondorf II, where the earliest Germanic presence appears in the early 6th century, with the burial ground of Vicus Cubrunum, where St Lubentius was active in the second half of the 4th century. She associates the larger cemetery of Gondorf I, from which an ethnically diverse Germanic presence is already apparent in the 4th century, with the neighbouring settlement of Contraa.

The unfortunate history of the site prevents any evaluation of the layout and spatial development of the cemeteries or of grave assemblages. Nevertheless, the author attempts to give some account of the social structure and demographic composition of the populations buried in Gondorf I (which consisted of c. 1,400 graves c. A.D. 400) and Gondorf II, from which the collection of finds and recording of graves was still more erratic. That exceptional numbers of burials were richly provided with grave goods throughout the history of the cemeteries is clear. Little more can profitably be said, however, and the observations regarding social structure, which appear to be informed exclusively by Christlein's 'Quality Groups', inevitably amount to little more than grasping at straws.

The question of whether there is continuity from late Roman Christianity is also addressed, though the results are inconclusive. The earliest signs of Christian burial are the late 4th- to early 5th-century grave inscriptions depicting crosses and doves. There follows, however, a gap in the evidence until the late 6th century, during which grave goods were extremely scarce. The most striking finds come from the late 6th and 7th centuries, for example the bronze reliquary buckle with the inscription 'SIGGIRICUS FECIT', identified

by Werner as belonging to a Burgundian cleric, and a late 7th-century disc brooch which carries the earliest known depiction in Frankish art of Christ on the cross. The appearance of crosses on every-day items such as shoe buckles and strap ends is interpreted as a sign of widespread Christian belief amongst the population of Contrua by the late 7th century. The Gondorf cemeteries appear to have gone out of use c. A.D. 700, after which burial presumably took place around the parish church. The church, however, was already in existence by A.D. 600, as indicated by two decorated stone panels depicting Christ and a cross found in the vicinity of the cemeteries.

In A.D. 588, Venantius Fortunatus wrote a poem entitled 'De navigio suo', which contains the following lines:

Hinc quoque ducor aquis, qua se rate Contrua complet
quo fuit antiquum nobilitate caput.

The only other settlements mentioned in the poem are the towns of Metz, Andernach and Trier, implying by association that Contrua was a regional centre of exceptional economic importance. The Gondorf cemeteries are indeed the largest and richest of this period known from the Mosel valley, and the area must have been a nodal point for goods on their way to and from Trier. The numismatic record, too, reflects a thriving economy, with at least two moneys at work in the early 7th century at 'Controra Castra'. The exceptional resources needed to found and build a stone church at this period further suggests that 7th-century Contrua was home to a leading noble family with the status of *optimates*.

The volumes are handsomely laid out and generously illustrated with drawings and photographs, as reflected in the price. We can be grateful to the author for cataloguing this intractable material some 100 years after the 'excavations', and for producing a coherent account of a site which can at last take its rightful place as an important source for the history of the Rhineland in the early Middle Ages.

HELENA HAMEROW

Early Medieval Surrey: Landowning, Church and Settlement before 1300. By John Blair. 18 × 24.5 cm. x + 226 pp., 47 figs. Stroud: Alan Sutton and Surrey Archaeological Society, 1991. ISBN 0-86299-780-1. Price: £25.00 pb.

John Blair's long-awaited book on Surrey is a fascinating study of social and institutional change in the Middle Ages. His equally firm grasp of local evidence and wider issues makes for an analysis which is appositely detailed yet concise. It will not disappoint those interested primarily in early Surrey, but is also of importance for anyone concerned with local churches, settlement patterns, and agrarian economies in other districts.

Blair starts in Chapter 1 with the administrative framework within which economic and social structures grew and changed. His long perspective is of a shift from medium-sized 'provincial territories' (or *regiones*) in the pagan period to middle Saxon 'multiple estates' and then to 'classic manors' from c. 900. He is right to keep all three concepts at arm's length by putting them in inverted commas. He sees *regiones* throughout the south-east as 'organic' and 'tribal', older than the kingdoms of the 7th and 8th centuries which combined them in fluctuating permutations. His 'multiple estates' are smaller, later, and more artificial; he shows that they had a 'cellular' structure, based on the economic integrity of individual territorial hides, which permitted fission into 'classic manors' between the 10th century and the 12th. He might have additionally questioned whether the cellular structure also allowed the boundaries and composition of multiple estates to change over time.

Chapter 2 explores population growth, land clearance, and settlement form in five landscape regions within the county, circumventing the unevenness of the evidence by sampling from the better documented places within each region. Surrey was diverse geographically, and the five regions had different chronologies in assarting and ended up

with varying settlement patterns. The Surrey Weald was significantly different from that of Sussex and Kent. There is interesting evidence in Chertsey Abbey's row-plan villages for the influence of lordship on settlement types, a subject full of possibilities in other counties.

Agrarian arrangements in Surrey (Chapter 3) were in general like those of East Anglia rather than the Midlands. Blair supports the view which sees the Midland pattern (regular two- or three-field systems accompanied by symmetrically distributed peasant strips) as a later development, overlain on earlier arrangements such as those in Surrey. He defines the *virgate* (in all its manifestations in different parts of the county) as essentially 'a unit . . . of seigneurial assessment'. Open-field parishes in Surrey had a core of such units of uniform size, though by the 13th century the land market had already disrupted the pattern.

With 'The Anglo-Saxon Minster Churches and Their Fate' (Chapter 4), Blair moves to a topic where he has made pioneering contributions elsewhere. He confidently restates the view that by the early 8th century minsters in Surrey formed a coherent system of church provision, with an element of deliberate planning related to the 'multiple estates'.

Chapter 5 takes on local churches, those founded between the 10th and 12th centuries by the emerging class of manorial lords, either for their own worship or that of their tenants. Before 1066 most church founders in Surrey were greater lords; afterwards the social range widened among laymen, then spread to religious houses after 1140. After 1180 new foundations slackened off. Blair could have gone further in relating changing concepts of manorial ownership (which were not the same in 1000 as in 1150) to the ability of different social groups to found proprietary churches.

Chapter 6 is about the institutional aspects of church provision. It shows very clearly that it was only in the 12th century (and later in the century rather than earlier) that an orderly parochial system, with defined rights for patrons, rectors, and tithe owners, was imposed by the bishops on the anarchy of private churches. The distinction between new churches and new parishes is very important and has been overlooked by some historians.

The wider significance of the book is not that Surrey was England in miniature but that it reflects certain aspects of historical development present throughout lowland England, mediated through its own particular geographical and economic circumstances. Time and again what Blair has to say about Surrey will have resonances for those working on other areas. On occasions he uses phrases like 'arrested development' in comparing Surrey with the Midlands. It is important that this is not taken to imply a Whig interpretation of settlement history (with Midland villages taking the place of parliamentary democracy), since above all he shows the variety of change within an overall pattern determined essentially by the complex interplay of population growth, seigneurial demands, and differences between 'champion' and 'wood-pasture' districts.

John Blair's *Surrey* is a model study of economy and society before 1300. Its many new methods and insights will surely make it widely influential.

C. P. LEWIS

English Heritage Book of Abbeys and Priors. By Glyn Coppack. 19 × 25 cm. 159 pp., 104 figs. and pls. London: B. T. Batsford/English Heritage, 1990. ISBN 0-7134-6309-0. Price: £14.95 pb.

English Heritage Book of Church Archaeology. By Warwick Rodwell. 19 × 25 cm. 208 pp., 90 figs. and pls. London: B. T. Batsford/English Heritage, revised edition 1989. ISBN 0-7134-2590-3. Price: £14.95 pb.

These volumes are two in a series which English Heritage claims will 'bring the past to life, by interpreting the great historic monuments in which Britain is so rich'. Both take aspects of ecclesiastical archaeology as their subject, but differ in aims, potential audience and in the authors' definitions of archaeological priorities.

Church Archaeology is an updated edition of Rodwell's *The Archaeology of the English Church* (1981). The aim of the volume is not to describe or interpret churches comprehensively, but

rather to introduce the subject and methods of the archaeological analysis of churches. Rodwell details the history of church archaeology, emphasizing its pertinence at a time when the conservation of church buildings is under threat. The means of studying churches are outlined from varying degrees of survey to the full recording and excavation of churches, churchyards and burial vaults. This study is predominantly methodological, although interpretative text is scattered throughout the book, including useful summaries of plan type evolution and the evidence which the author has amassed on the construction of churches. Although changes in plan and elevation are described, the motivations for change are seldom discussed adequately. For example, Rodwell explains the addition or enlargement of aisles as a means of increasing accommodation, neglecting the additional factors of changing patterns of worship and liturgy. The volume's chronological range extends from Roman to post-medieval, the latter including comments on post-Reformation alterations, new churches, and the archaeology of nonconformist chapels — a new topic since the first edition of the book.

The subtext of the volume may be to carve an identity as much for the church archaeologist as for church archaeology, a theme which may render the book more appealing to a professional than a popular audience. Rodwell stresses that the subject involves the study of a multitude of materials and disciplines, dealing with the church building and its site, the furnishings, fittings and monuments, the graveyard and its boundaries and ancillary structures. Here archaeology is given a broad definition of 'the total study of the material past' and the archaeologist is 'a person who undertakes or co-ordinates an investigation into the history of ecclesiastical buildings, sites and monuments'. An archaeologist, therefore, is not necessarily an excavator, and archaeology's purpose is more vital than the description of material remains. Indeed, Rodwell uses the term 'conceptual archaeology' to denote the study of religion, ceremony and superstition that were the moving forces in human lives.

Rodwell has done much to expound the application of archaeological techniques to standing buildings. The great success of this book is its clear and accessible introduction to reading and recording the fabric of buildings. On this and other aspects of archaeological methods it should be considered the best undergraduate guide to the subject. The message behind the original book was that church fabric must be recorded before its erosion or destruction. Surely an updated message should consider why we record fabric in advance of destruction? What research priorities should the more mature discipline of church archaeology hope to address?

In *Abbeys and Priors* Coppack provides a much-needed summary of the archaeology — as opposed to architecture — of monasteries. A basic premise of the book is that all categories of monasteries shared a single purpose: they were self-sufficient communities which enabled the prayer of religious men and women. This unity of function is assumed throughout the book, which is structured into chapters on the church, the cloister, sanitation, the precinct, and the suppression. Here monastic plans are characterized more for their overall similarity than for patterns of difference which might comment on variance in purpose or in the nature of monasticism practised. For example, the results of excavations are described for the alien priory of Grove, the preceptory of Temple Bruer and the charterhouse of Mount Grace, with little or no insight into the different monastic roles and vocations represented by each category of monastery. Nor is the nature of early medieval monasticism (pre-11th century) defined, but rather it is subsumed within the broad definition of unity. Monastic ideals are not discussed, but rather monasteries 'are at last seen for what they were: major economic corporations'. The author reminds us that they were seen by their builders 'as self-sustaining oratories to God and workshops of prayer'. But what further social insights can archaeology offer to the study of medieval monasticism? Little, according to Coppack, who maintains that 'archaeology can provide the how, but it cannot provide the why'. This statement underlies the descriptive approach of the volume, which seldom explores the reasons behind the development of monastic settlement.

Coppack reports on the most important findings of the last decades: evidence for outer court industry, storage and frequent renewal of buildings; timber precursor phases; gardens; and the long-term development of monastic cloisters. Insight is offered from the author's own

excavations at Mount Grace, Thornholme and Fountains, all supported by excellent illustrations and reconstruction drawings. Coppack sheds light on activities carried out within the monastery, for instance in the refectory alley which was 'commonly used by the religious as a laundry, fitted up with wooden tubs and strung with washinglines'. The changing use of the cloister is chronicled, from the adoption of glazed windows, the partitioning of dormitories and infirmaries, to the more extreme example of Byland, where the old infirmary was demolished to be replaced by individual two-room cells with wall-fireplaces. But no comment is offered on the changing nature of monasticism or reference made to debates on privacy in the later Middle Ages. The chapter on sanitation amounts to an industrial archaeology of monasteries, in which data from extant medieval plans and excavations are drawn together to discuss the development of taps, pipes, and fittings. 'Clean water and good drains were central to the monastic ideal', but why did the emphasis on hygiene vary between categories of monastic sites? If this is a reflection of the status or wealth of individual foundations, how do these sites compare with provision at secular sites of comparable status?

The chapter on the precinct neglects early medieval monasteries, but outlines the industry of the outer court and the more residential nature of the inner court of the later medieval precinct. Here Coppack throws caution to the wind and offers a subjective interpretation of why priests' houses sometimes occur at the entrance to nunnery outer courts. 'Placing his house directly outside the court gate effectively gave him control over who had access to the cloister'. The author implies that the priest was positioned in order to control a buffer zone between the nuns and the secular world outside, thus protecting the celibacy of the enclosed women. This interpretation is quite contentious, offering an implicit statement on the control of female sexuality by an officiating priest. Only the prioress would have had control over ingress and egress from the nunnery cloister, and she would have determined the position of the priest's accommodation. The situation of the priests' quarters could equally be the result of distancing between male and female religious; this provision was carefully regulated in double monasteries.

Both books provide useful historiographies of their subjects and are invaluable introductions. Both naturally emphasize projects undertaken by their authors, and while this sometimes results in regional bias the volumes undoubtedly benefit from the direct experience of their authors. Rodwell's book provides a good bibliography on church archaeology; the omission of an equivalent bibliography from Coppack's book is a weakness. Do these volumes 'bring the past to life'? The emphasis on description and methodology over explanation or interpretation precludes the fulfilment of this brief. It seems that medieval archaeology still lacks the courage to set its own agenda, and to make a contribution to the social history of medieval religion.

ROBERTA GILCHRIST

North-East Perth: An Archaeological Landscape. By the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland. 21 × 30 cm. 179 pp., 143 figs., 33 pls. London: H.M.S.O., 1990. ISBN 0-11-493446-0. Price: £35.00 pb.

This handsomely produced volume is a welcome addition to the slowly developing series of regional publications on Scotland by the Royal Commission. Hitherto, county or regional volumes have been heavily concentrated in what early medievalists might describe as northern Northumbria, Strathclyde and Dal Riata, with outliers covering the prehistory-rich islands and Caithness. This volume is a valuable reminder of the substantial potential for settlement and landscape studies in the upland centre of Scotland and the authors should be congratulated on the massive input of survey work which has enabled them to publish plans and descriptions of surface remains which sometimes cover an area of a square kilometre or more (as at Ranageig, Sherriffmuir: 310.7, pp. 160-62). Such surveys clearly depend heavily

on aerial photographs, excellent examples of which have been incorporated to illustrate the text and enhance the line illustrations.

This volume does highlight one of the central problems of medieval Scotland (or, for that matter, of much of upland England). In a concise and balanced introduction (pp. 1–13), the authors discuss the impact of successive periods of later land use on prehistoric, then on medieval and later landscapes. It is unclear when they envisage the interface between these two broad periods to have occurred (and one suspects that the matter is intentionally left open), but the inference seems to be that the 'medieval' which they have in mind is a late medieval period, certainly after the 11th century and most probably starting in the 13th to 15th centuries. This problem is not merely one of definition, since those of us who take a relatively catholic view of 'medieval' would prefer to open that period in the 5th century and close it c. 1500.

The thinking behind this division for NE Perthshire is influenced by the scarcity of literary or documentary sources relevant to settlement and landscape archaeology prior to about c. 1700 and the authors have clearly adopted the few 16th-century sources available to them as valid indicators of the nature of activity in the earlier parts of their 'medieval and later' category. It is necessary to accept, therefore, that, with few exceptions (as in the evidence of 13th-century shielings, e.g. pp. 122–23), the entirety of the medieval period in this region has to be considered as prehistoric. This throws the onus of evidence and interpretation squarely onto the archaeologist, for whom this volume provides an extremely valuable and meticulously compiled resource. It also requires that we return once more to the problems of the interface between prehistory and the medieval period in Scotland (and N. England), seeking a better definition of the chronology and causes of the gulf which separates the surviving remains of prehistoric landscapes and the settlements and landscapes of the late medieval to modern period. The inference must be that we, as medieval archaeologists, are concerned not with a single period of landscape and settlement development but with a period which centres on an interface between two comparatively well-defined periods, which focus respectively earlier and later than the medieval period.

That said, those familiar with Royal Commission publications will find little novel in the presentation, apart from the abandonment of the traditional Royal Commission use of the late medieval shire and parish as the units of publication and organization — changes which many will applaud. Drawings of excellent quality are liberally interspersed in the text. The sites are published in eighteen monument-type categories (including Miscellaneous). Of more obvious relevance to (particularly late) medievalists are Ecclesiastical Monuments (pp. 86–88), Castles and Associated Monuments (88–92), Medieval Earthworks (a paltry three, p. 99), Deer Parks (only two, pp. 93–94); Medieval Burghs (pp. 94–95) and Medieval and Later Settlements (in 333 entries on pages 95–171, so taking up a substantial proportion of the total volume).

At £35.00, even the paperback seems expensive and it does look like a work of reference, for which even committed researchers will turn to a library copy.

NICHOLAS HIGHAM

Farm Abandonment in Medieval and Post-Medieval Iceland: An Interdisciplinary Study (Oxbow Monograph 17). By Gudrun Sveinbjarndóttir. 21 × 29 cm. 192 pp., 74 figs., 18 pls. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1992. ISBN 0-946897-28-X. Price: £24.00 pb.

Studies of abandoned farmsteads in England tend to concentrate more upon the nature of the deserted buildings than upon the causes of their abandonment; in Iceland the bias is reversed. And with good reason, for abandonment has been a continuing process from, at the latest, the end of the 11th century. The present volume attempts to determine how widespread it has been, how far it has differed from region to region and its causes. To do this it examines three small areas: a coastal parish (Eyjafallasveit) in the south, a fiord

(Berufjordur) in the east, and two upland valleys (Austerdalur and Westerdalur above Skagafjordur) in the north.

In a land still in its birth-throes calamities have been commonplace and the population, which may have reached a peak of about 80,000 at the end of the Age of Settlement, declined after that and was never more than 50,000 until well into the 19th century. The fall-out from the eruption of 1783 and the consequent poisoning of the grass killed off three-quarters of all the livestock; a run-off from the great ice-cap on Vatnajokull can produce, with devastating effect, a flow equal to that of the Amazon; and fast-flowing streams everywhere are simultaneously eroding farmland and covering it with unwelcome deposits. There were times when it must have seemed possible that the Icelandic settlements would go the way of those in Greenland. It is therefore not surprising that early scholars tended to put the blame for abandonment on Nature, on geological forces, on climatic change and on pestilence.

Recently, and in line with the now-widespread concern with ecology, other factors have been brought into the equation. Vegetation in Iceland is fragile and once destroyed takes a very long time to regenerate. A thousand years ago about half the land surface had plant cover and in the coastal areas about a third to a sixth of that was timber or scrub; the present proportions are, respectively, about a fifth and a hundredth. Volcanic ash, lava flows, advancing glaciers, floods and erosion by the sea and by rivers have all played a part in this, but so, too, have human beings and their animals. The effect of natural disasters is often short-lived; twelve years after the 1783 eruption livestock was more plentiful than before; farms abandoned immediately after a disaster were often reoccupied after a few years, in some cases more than once. Human activities, however, tend to have a long-term effect, destroying the natural cover by grazing and timber felling and increasing the amount and severity. As might be expected, this destruction has been most evident in the upland and inland areas — where vegetation is at the limit of its natural range, where grazing, even in the absence of climatic deterioration, and timber-felling have the most destructive and long-lasting results. As these areas are not within easy reach of the sea inhabitants were unable to supplement farming with fishing. In all three regions studied there is evidence of abandonment of farmland in upland parts by the end of the 11th century, long before climatic deterioration had set in. Along the coasts and in the lowlands abandonment was more drawn out, reflecting temporary retreats and later advances, with natural forces and diseases playing a greater part. In Iceland, unlike Greenland, there was always a 'reserve' to weather the worst conditions and then take advantage of favourable changes.

The author's conclusions are often more tentative than a summary suggests; and necessarily so, for the difficulties of the study have been formidable. Many of the sites are remote and locating them is a task in itself. The buildings are all of turf upon a stone base, whether farmhouses, shielings, byres, stables or sheep-houses. As in N. England some shielings became farmsteads, but whereas here there is usually little difficulty in telling a well-built farmhouse from a roughly built shieling there is in Iceland no difference in material and often not much in plan-form. And to complicate matters further many farmsteads later reverted to shielings. And again, it is not always clear whether a near-by farmstead was a neighbour or a successor and whether some farmhouse desertion was no more than a result of the consolidation of farms. Dating is equally difficult. Very few of the sites produced datable elements or artefacts and although some were covered by the fall-out from known eruptions tephrochronology, even when available, can provide no more than a *terminus ante quem*. And what dates have been established are slightly doubtful, for they seem to show that the widespread abandonment of the 15th and early 16th centuries surmised from documents was more localized than previously supposed. To have obtained significant results from such refractory material is a major success, and one which tends to inhibit criticism.

Nevertheless, there are some criticisms to be made. The editing is occasionally slack; the textual reference on p. 100 to the site-plan of Tunga is wrong and the maps on pages 69 and 70 purporting to show dates of occupation and abandonment in Fossardalur lack the necessary date-keys. More important, as the author recognizes, is the lack of a comparable study of a western area. The southern shore of the Snaefellnes peninsula, where there have been no

recent eruptions, where the sea is not encroaching, where the rivers are perhaps better-behaved, where fishing harbours are within reasonable reach and where the prevailing winds keep at bay much of the fall-out from the active volcanoes to the east, might have provided a 'control' on the other regions. Apart from a tantalizing reference to social conditions in Greenland, and by implication in Iceland, and to a stress upon the vulnerability of small farms in Eyjafallasveit, there is no discussion of the influence of the social structure, of the land-holding system and of the centuries-long exploitation of the island by Norway and Denmark. In an 'interdisciplinary study' that is a disappointment. These, however, are minor blemishes upon a very valuable book and it is to be expected that the author's promised forthcoming publications will set the crown upon a very considerable achievement.

ERIC MERCER

The Early Castles, from the Norman Conquest to 1217 (An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments in Glamorgan, Vol. III, Part 1a). By the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales. 22 x 29 cm. xvi + 391 pp., 250 figs. and pls. London: H.M.S.O., 1991. ISBN 0-11-300035-9. Price: £75.00 hb.

This fine volume describes the 'earthwork castles' of the pre-1974 county of Glamorgan, together with descriptions of stone castles built before 1217. Later castles are to be dealt with in Volume III, Part 1b. As with all Commission volumes, the authorship is multiple, a work of close co-operation between investigators, surveyors, illustrators, photographers and historians, but throughout one can see the guiding hand of Jack Spurgeon, who has devoted a great part of his life to the field survey of castles and particularly castle earthworks, and for whom the completion of this volume must be a particular satisfaction.

A great deal of speculation has been expended on the reasons for the siting of earthwork castles, and especially on the relationship between those which have mottes and those which do not. As the section on the geographical background demonstrates clearly, castles with mottes are all sited north of the southern limit of glaciation. In other words, mottes are dug where glacial drift makes digging a good deal easier than south of the line, where only a thin soil covers limestone or other rocks and where ringworks were therefore understandably the option. Clearly mottes, though desirable, were not considered essential in spite of the obvious advantages of a high viewpoint and a greater field of fire. On the other hand, not all castle earthworks on tractable soils have mottes, so other factors must also have been at work. The debate will certainly continue.

The historical background survey demonstrates the expansion of Norman settlement, first under Robert Fitzhamon (1093-1107) and subsequently under Earl Robert of Gloucester (c. 1113-1147) and relates the early castles both to the pre-Norman Welsh commotes and to topographical features such as the prehistoric portway and the Roman roads and forts in the region.

The inventory proper describes castles built before 1217, all illustrated at least by a ground plan and surface profiles and most with a photograph, or where photography was not possible, detailed pencil drawings. For the stone castles there are comprehensive plans and sections and sometimes reconstruction drawings. The photography, both from the ground and from the air, is superb. The plans, innovatively, are printed against a grey background, which gives a greater range of tones, enabling ancient features to be printed in black, natural features in grey and modern features in white. The overall effect is somewhat gloomy, though the obvious advantages outweigh this admittedly subjective reaction.

While the provision of a group of comparative surveys such as these is an outstanding achievement the method of surveying and draughtsmanship inevitably leads to somewhat stylized plans, in which unevennesses are smoothed out and detail which might be significant is lost. Where sites are overgrown such losses are inevitable but it does seem to this reviewer

that there is a strong case for the next step in the study of these sites to be detailed surveying by aerial photogrammetry or electronic ground survey linked to computerized recording and display, not least because all earthworks are subject to constant erosion and damage and the record needs therefore to be as comprehensive as possible.

To illustrate the point, in this volume it is interesting to compare the aerial photographs on figs. 14 and 31 with their corresponding plans on figs. 25 and 28. In the case of Stormy Castle there are subtle traces between the motte and the rectangular building complex to the south which may not be modern or ephemeral, and there appears to be a large, square, though very slight, earthwork on top of the motte itself. None of these are suggested on the plan. In the case of Talybont Castle the aerial photograph shows the bailey ditch (as opposed to the rampart) very clearly as a cropmark, with square ends at the presumed entrance. The evidence from the aerial photograph is very different from that of the ground survey, though both are no doubt correct records. It would be illuminating to see them superimposed. Beyond the bailey there is also a variety of cropmarks, some of which may be natural, though they would be worth investigating. Which brings us to the next logical step in the investigation of these sites — a programme of comprehensive geophysical survey. Such a programme is a matter of some urgency, for the reasons mentioned above, the constant erosion and attrition of these sites, and also the possibility that baileys do, in fact, exist where they can no longer be seen, since quite a large proportion of the mottes here appear to stand alone.

There is a somewhat enigmatic category of site called 'Unclassified, Probably Welsh, Castles'. They are categorized as castles because 'of their compactness and the strength of their natural or artificial defences'. However, there seems to be no reason at present to assume their medieval date, and they may well date from the centuries between the Roman occupation and the Norman conquest just as many Irish 'ringworks' do. The same observation may be made of North Hill Tor (figs. 76–79), which without further evidence could as easily be prehistoric as 'dark age' or medieval.

This leads to consideration of the role of excavation. A number of the sites have been excavated, some fairly extensively, none totally. In all cases the interiors seem to have held one or more rectangular hall-like buildings and it is assumed that the rest of the interiors were open spaces. This the present reviewer finds hard to believe. With the discovery of 51 buildings (of five phases) in half the quite small bailey at Hen Domen, Montgomery, one would have to assume that Hen Domen was quite exceptional. The fact is that only extensive and highly detailed excavation will recover the evidence for non-post-hole buildings and it is likely that many buildings in timber castles were timber-framed or of wattle and daub, or clay, or turf and will be difficult to find. This volume demonstrates that the limit of information to be gained from field survey and the study of the relevant documents has probably been reached and that the next stages in the study of these beautiful and impressive but intractable sites must be geophysical survey followed by a programme of detailed, ideally total, excavation of those sites which either promise the most evidence, or are most enigmatic, or most at risk.

Such a programme runs counter to present archaeological thinking, which has had to concentrate on rescuing sites from oblivion, but the understanding of these early castles cannot be advanced much further without excavation, and partial or summary excavation can no longer be justified. A splendid survey such as this forms the solid basis for such a programme of research, even if it takes many decades to implement.

One further thought. At £75.00 this book is beyond the pockets of most students and, indeed, most archaeologists. The plates from which the figures have been made are presumably available. It would be a very great service if a paperback edition with a reduced text (perhaps in two parts — one earthwork castles and one stone castles) could be made available at a price which would make it possible to use it in the field, which is, after all, where it belongs.

PHILIP BARKER

Burgen der Salierzeit. Teil 1: *In den Nördlichen Landschaften des Reiches*. Teil 2: *In den Südlichen Landschaften des Reiches*. Edited by H. W. Böhme. Teil 1: 342 pp.; Teil 2: 388 pp., 540 figs. (both). ISBN 3-7995-4134-9. Price: DM 108.

Die Kaiserkrone Konrads II (1042-1039). By M. Schulze-Dörlamm. 145 pp., 143 figs. Price: DM 48.

Der Mainzer Schatz des Kaiserin Agnes. By M. Schulze-Dörlamm. 134 pp., 216 figs. Price: DM 48.

Schachspiel und Trictrac. By A. Kluge-Pinsker. 223 pp., 80 figs. Price: DM 48.

Deutsche Münzgeschichte. By B. Kluge. (Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum Forschungsinstitut für Vor- und Frühgeschichte; Jan Thorbecke Verlag Sigmaringen, 1991.) (All volumes measure 21 × 30 cm). 302 pp., 70 figs. Price: DM 48.

The exhibition at the Historisches Museum der Pfalz, Speyer, on the subject of *Die Salier und ihr Reich* has been accompanied not only by its own catalogue, but also by a lavish series of twelve volumes, published in 1991 by Thorbecke, to which over a hundred scholars from many disciplines have contributed. Subjects covered include settlement history, regalia, numismatics, political and constitutional matters, the church and more. The exhibition, and the research behind the publications, are under the auspices of the Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum, Mainz.

Two volumes are devoted to castellology — *Burgen der Salierzeit*, edited by H. W. Böhme. Volume I covers the northern regions, volume II the southern ones. Both are copiously illustrated with line drawings, aerial photographs, maps, architectural photographs and artists' reconstructions, though the varied backgrounds of the materials used precludes a house-style for the volumes themselves. Presentation is excellent, and the combined price, DM 108, very reasonable.

It is not possible, in a brief notice, to do more than indicate the range of contents. These divide (mixing the contributions from both volumes) into regional surveys of varying size and studies of individual sites. The discussion also extends into the wider field of defended settlements with its inclusion of the defended settlement at Charavines beside Lac Paladru in eastern France. Among the general surveys are: Lower Saxony (Heine), the Harz-Elbe region (Brachmann), the northern Rhineland (Friedrich), the Meuse-Semois-Lesse region (Matthys), the Limburg region (Meulemeester), Luxemburg (Metzler and Zimmer), Hesse, the Rhineland-Palatinate and the Saarland (Böhme), Bavaria (Zeune), Alsace (Billier and Metz) and Switzerland (Meyer). Individual studies include Goslar (Meckseper), Weissenstein/Marburg-Wehrda (Meiborg and Reuling), Haus Meer/Büderich (Janssen), Ename in Belgium (Callebaut), Horath/Harpelstein (Clemens and Gilles), Miltenberg-Altstadt (Wamser), Habsburg (Frey), and in Austria Salsendorf (Krenn) and Zwentendorf (Szameit). There are also treatments of small groups of sites in the middle Rhineland (Liessem) and the Upper Palatinate (Bernhard and Barz). There is something of interest here on a variety of topics — earth and timber and masonry technology, defences, domestic buildings, daily life seen through artefact evidence, castle siting, distribution and settlement role.

Although certain recent English authors have incorporated some German material — notably Colin Platt (*The Castle in Medieval England and Wales*) and Michael Thompson (*The Rise of the Castle*) — on the whole, Germany is not much noticed in our general output. These new volumes (together with the continuing Château Gaillard volumes and the recent articles and helpful book notices in the journal *Fortress*) may encourage us to take more note of this area. 'German castles', which in the wider medieval coverage of these volumes extend outside modern Germany, provide a fascinating story of their own, which has been pursued, the editor reminds us in his foreword, through excavation and survey since the first half of the 19th century. They are also of direct relevance to various British themes such as the origin and form of mottes and other earthworks, the development of the tower-keeps and the role of halls and other structures in castle-planning, all of which (and much more) are touched on here.

Other volumes among the twelve include:

Der Mainzer Schatz des Kaiserin Agnes. The hoard unearthed in Mainz in 1880, consisting of 25 pieces of polychrome jewellery — some of them of distinctly regalian character — has been conventionally ascribed to the Empress Gisela, wife of Conrad II, and dated to the later Ottonian period. By rejecting internal art-historical analysis alone, and by imaginatively applying the conventional archaeological evidence of grave goods (especially from Slav eastern Europe, where the custom persisted longest) as well as Byzantine iconographical evidence, the author highlights the eastern influences in the treasure, and on comparative archaeological dating suggests that it was more likely to have belonged to Agnes of Poitou, wife of Emperor Henry III (1039–1056). One must ask, however, whether such a relatively fine chronological difference as this could really be illuminated by indirect archaeological links of this kind. In *Die Kaiserkrone Konrads II (1042–1039)*, the same author applies similar rigorous methods of broadly based archaeological analysis and comparison to investigate the true age and origins of a single, famous artefact: the high medieval imperial crown; only this time she comes to the conclusion that the traditional attribution to Emperor Conrad II, based on an inscription on the crown, must be the correct one.

Schachspiel und Trictrac, a volume on board-games (chess and backgammon), must count among the most original and intriguing of the series. Once again the subject is approached from an archaeological angle rather than the more traditional art-historical one; and in the process it presents a much greater corpus of material than would otherwise have been possible, as well as exploring such questions as dating and social environment through the find-contexts. Stylistic attributes and evolution are of course important in the light of the dating evidence, and the catalogue includes a useful tabulated summary of the iconography of the gaming pieces. Neither geographically nor chronologically is the evidence strictly confined to the Salian empire, and the English reader may especially appreciate the fact that British finds (including the Gloucester gaming-set) are placed in their wider context. As a window on one small facet of aristocratic lifestyle, this volume may be seen as nicely complementing those on castles.

Like the preceding title, *Deutsche Münzgeschichte* has a wider brief than its main title and inclusion in the series *Die Salier* might imply. Indeed, its great value as a work of reference lies in the breadth of its chronological scope, dealing as it does with the coinage of late Carolingian and Ottonian as well as Salien Germany.

Like the castle volumes, these contributions to the series are richly illustrated with distribution maps, line drawings and photographs (many in colour). They are furnished with catalogues as appropriate.

R. A. HIGHAM and S. BURNELL

Castellogica bohémica 2. Edited by T. Durdík. 29 × 20 cm. 400 pp., numerous figs., 16 pp. photographic supplement. Archaeological Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, Prague, in co-operation with the Ancient Monuments Institute of Central Bohemia, Ancient Monuments Institute Ústí nad Labem, West Bohemian Museum in Píseň and the August Sedláček Club. Prague, 1991. Obtainable from Archeologický ústav CSAV, Knihovná, Letenská 4, CS — 118 01 Praha 1, Czechoslovakia. Price not stated.

This is the second volume of a miscellany, devoted to the problems of castles and feudal residences within Bohemia and Moravia. It retains the format and direction adopted in the initial volume (see *Fortress* 12, Feb. 1992). The articles are grouped in several sections: general studies, single sites, militaria, artefacts, documentation and bibliography. The contributions are published in Czech with German summaries.

The section relating to general studies contains three papers. The first, by T. Durdík and P. Bolina, concerns chapels at Bohemian and Moravian castles in the high Middle Ages, reviewing their typology, the development of their form and relationship to castle

organization. This is followed by the first part of an extensive study of the development of manorial residences within the upper territory of Nové-Zámky in N. Bohemia by F. Gabriel and J. Panáček. This forms an introduction to the problems and sets out the methodological approach. It also considers place-name evidence. In the third study, T. Durdík offers an hypothesis of a possible royal origin for Lichnice Castle based on an analysis of the southern corner of the ruins. This would place it in the earliest stage of Bohemian royal castle architecture.

The section relating to single sites contains seventeen articles relating to castles, fortified manors, and in one instance a fortified church. Among these articles are the results from field survey of the castle at Velký Kouřim which clearly demonstrates its place in the transition between early hill forts and the castles of the high Middle Ages. There is an architectural examination of Nové Hrady Castle in N. Bohemia. Significant results have come from an investigation of siegeworks at the castles of Zvíkov and Cornštejn where advanced forms of fortification are also being studied. Prominent among the articles relating to fortified manors is that dealing with the history and building development of the manor in Dřevčice near Prague.

In the militaria section, J. Unger describes the important discovery of a pre-Hussite fight flail, putting back the use of this weapon in Bohemia to the end of the 14th century. In the section covering artefacts, the mass of material from the castles of Křivoklát and Točnick considerably advances knowledge of tiles and stoves in the late Middle Ages and early modern period. It is also a description of a pottery vessel from the Jindřichův Hradec area dated with the help of coins.

The documentary section contain seven items covering single sites. The note by J. Bašta is interesting from the methodological viewpoint as it draws attention to the misdating of prehistoric fortification remains which up to now have been considered to be survivals of medieval feudal residences. The final section, bibliography, provides the first part of the annotated bibliography of *Casopis turistů (Traveller's Journal)*, founded in 1899. The 60 volumes which have been published contain many interesting and valuable reports and references.

This volume presents a good cross-section of current work on Bohemian castellology and opens it up to wider European scholarship. We can only hope that the present uneasy economic situation in Czechoslovakia allows the publication of further volumes already in the course of preparation by many researchers.

TOMÁŠ DURDÍK
(rewritten by Andrew Saunders)

The Palaces of Mediaeval England c. 1050-1550. By Thomas Beaumont James. 19 × 25 cm. 188 pp., 94 figs. and pls. London: Seaby, 1990. ISBN 1-85264-030-8. Price: £25.00 hb.

The magisterial *History of the King's Works* has provided scholars of the buildings of the English kings with an invaluable quarry of information and ideas. James's survey takes *The History* as its basis, adds to it the results of recent work in noble and episcopal building and comes up with a chronological survey of large-scale building in England from 1050-1550.

It is perhaps unfair to criticize a book which does not purport to be based on a re-examination of the evidence for failing to take the subject significantly further. What James's book does is produce a pocket survey of major building in the period linked to major political events. Unfortunately the social history of these important buildings is not fully examined. Occasionally there is some cross-referencing between the layout of the buildings and the life which went on within them. However James fails to advance our knowledge of the development of these important medieval buildings by suggesting why, for instance, rooms became more subdivided and specialized. When royal ordinances and regulations are mentioned there is no suggestion that these may hold some of the answers. We are frequently

brought to the verge of important questions relating to the development of the buildings without answering them. For instance England's place in a European architectural context is briefly discussed. It would have been useful to know how the Normans' buildings compared with contemporary Continental examples and how slow the Tudors were in adopting Italian ideas. James may have found that England was rarely as far behind the Continent as is often supposed.

The *King's Works* materials are often well used. Particularly good and illuminating are the series of maps beginning on page 165 which show the increasing concentration of royal residences in the Thames Valley. However, the analysis of the trend towards concentration round London which accompanies it is weak. The suggestion that houses like Knowle and Otford were acquired because they were close together is strange. The houses Henry VIII acquired after 1530 were almost all ones in which he had regularly stayed prior to 1540. Those visits had been dictated by well-worn royal travel routes (to the south coast or to Woodstock for instance) or by existing good hunting grounds. Thus acquisition of those buildings depended on more complex factors than geography alone.

Another comparative diagram based on the *King's Works* material compares the dimensions of great halls. Be careful of the plan of the hall of Hampton Court for it is in fact half of the hall's undercroft and the buttery. The explanation of the varying sizes of the halls merely mentions 'scale of activities'. It would have been good to relate the hall to the rest of the building and the changing balance between functions which took place in communal halls and in more private and smaller rooms. If Hampton Court had been correctly drawn a good point could have been made about the sudden vast increase in size of the great hall under Henry VIII.

Although several of the *King's Works* plans are reproduced, no annotated plan of an episcopal residence appears (Wolvesey appears on p. 43 without any clue as to what it shows or of which way it lies), nor is there a plan of a major residence of the nobility. A map showing the distribution of episcopal residences would have been helpful, although there is a most interesting diagram tracing the itinerary of the Bishop of Hereford in 1289-90.

The lack of an examination of primary evidence weakens the book in several instances. In his discussions of interiors and decorations James seems unaware of manuscript illustrations, many of which have been published. This would have helped in his discussion of Henry III's bed at Westminster and the ceilings at Clarendon. The one manuscript illustrated, although useful, is not of a medieval interior. It also seems unlikely, as suggested, that the use of tapestry was an innovation of Edward IV.

In all James takes us through the period in an agreeable manner with several flashes of insight. He is good when it comes to the feeding of large numbers in the 'palaces' and when he makes connections between royal and episcopal buildings. There is much merit in taking the book on to the reign of Henry VIII and treating the early Tudors as a development of the 15th century. However, it does seem strange to have chosen Nonsuch for the cover, and one wonders whether this is a clever statement about the building's medieval origins or whether it was the only medieval palace the publisher could think of.

SIMON THURLEY

Change and Continuity: Rural Settlements in North-West Lincolnshire. By P. L. Everson, C. C. Taylor and C. J. Dunn. 21 x 27 cm. xix + 235 pp., 153 illus. London: H.M.S.O., for the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England, 1991. ISBN 0-11-300024-3. Price: £49.50 pb.

This catalogue of medieval settlement sites visible as earthworks in 125 parishes in Lincolnshire is another of the thematic volumes produced by the Royal Commission. One is immediately struck by the very high standard of illustration. Here are meticulously drawn plans of earthwork sites, in the production of which the staff of the Commission has developed

a remarkable expertise. In addition there are numerous photographs, both modern views from ground level, and a wide range taken from the air. The sites are discussed in the cautious and scientific terms necessary for this type of inventory, and we are given both a good deal of information from the documents, and additional archaeological evidence deriving from field walking and excavation. The great majority of the sites are deserted or shrunken villages in a landscape which was principally occupied by nucleated settlements. Other sites described include moats, manorial complexes, monastic houses, granges, fish ponds, parks, gardens and the usual accompaniments of medieval and early modern settlement. The areas covered includes a variety of geographical zones, running eastward from the Trent valley, through clay vales and the limestone ridge to include a section of the chalkland Wolds. Selected sites are recommended for preservation: in fact much of the evidence recorded here has already been destroyed in the spirit of ignorant vandalism characteristic of our treatment of historical monuments.

In the lengthy introduction we are provided with an interpretative framework to help us understand the mass of information in the main text. The prehistoric and Roman background is described — there are relatively few pre-medieval settlements coincident with the village sites. Little light can be shed directly on the formation of nucleated villages, though this process is assumed to have taken place in the 11th century or later. The plans reveal both regular villages, often consisting of rows of tofts of standard size, and villages which have developed piecemeal, including those of the polyfocal type. Often the analysis of earthworks and surviving property boundaries reveals radical changes in the use of space in the settlement, with peasant tofts being laid over former arable fields, and manorial enclosures taking in former peasant tenements. There is much evidence of village expansion, both in the form of large planned units and piecemeal additions. We can also observe the abandonment of all or part of the villages, whether for agricultural use or incorporation into the often large garden complexes of the post-medieval mansions.

Is all this really an independent source of information about rural settlements, or is it just an illustration of events which are known from other sources? The answer must be that the earthwork and topographical evidence stands on its own, because it tells us of aspects of the villages which cannot be discovered elsewhere, such as the regular plans. And as the introduction points out, some of the deductions about village histories clash with the written evidence. How, for example, can a village already large at the time of Domesday show so much evidence of expansion apparently in the 12th and 13th centuries? It must be recognized, however, that the type of survey work presented here can form only one ingredient in a full multi-disciplinary approach to settlement history. The earthworks may tell us that a village was planned at some time, but it cannot tell us when or by whom. One is frustrated by the relative rather than absolute chronology provided by a survey, and can look forward to systematic excavation of boundary earthworks which could provide an indication of dating.

These surveys were carried out ten years ago and more. Since then the Royal Commission has adopted a more comprehensive view of the medieval countryside, and has begun to survey complete parishes, rather than the 'monuments' which are selected here. It is unsatisfactory to see ridge and furrow systems disappearing off the edge of these drawings, and not to know how the rest of the land of the township and parish was used. When the Royal Commission began its work, the monuments to be recorded were mainly standing buildings. Now survey extends to sites represented by earthworks or below-ground remains. In the future the Commission must recognize what is already acknowledged by individuals on its staff — that the whole landscape is a monument, and that volumes such as these should contain maps of complete village territories, including all traces of the former use of the land, such as ridge and furrow and hedges. This is a daunting prospect, and is perhaps practicable only in selected cases, but is the obvious development from such an excellent volume as *Change and Continuity*.

The Agricultural History of England and Wales. Volume III, 1348-1500. Edited by Edward Miller. 15 × 23 cm. xxv + 982 pp., 35 figs., numerous tables, 23 pls. Cambridge: C.U.P., 1991. ISBN 0-521-20074-1. Price: £85.00 hb.

This, the penultimate volume of the series to appear, completes the coverage of the Middle Ages by describing the history of agriculture in England and Wales from the Black Death to the end of the 15th century. Volume II, published three years earlier, attracted much adverse comment because of certain idiosyncracies perpetrated by its editor. Happily Volume III is without such perversities. However, its production has not all been plain sailing. As the preface makes clear, the volume has been twenty years in the making, during which time the list of prospective contributors has undergone a number of changes. Individual authors have submitted and revised their contributions at widely variant dates. The series format has inhibited the full expression of more recent ideas, and the result is openly and honestly admitted to be 'a compromise between our view of the subject around 1960 and the panorama, more clearly visible to us in some directions than in others, in 1990'.

The dominant characteristic of the period described is the reduced population in the wake of the plague, which resulted in significant changes in social structure, estate organization, settlement, and land use. The volume provides us with nine chapters, of which three, covering the occupation of the land, farming practices, and tenant farming, are organized on a regional basis, with England and Wales divided into ten regions, each treated by an author with detailed local knowledge. Those contributions are important because they underline not only the considerable regional variety, but also the local contrasts within the regions. The editor himself provides an introductory chapter, Farmer contributes chapters on the marketing of produce and on prices and wages, Bean a chapter on landlords, and E. B. Fryde and Natalie Fryde a chapter on peasant unrest. All contain much valuable material. On the whole, however, they are written by historians of traditional stamp, and the extent to which they address the problems which concern medieval archaeologists is somewhat limited. There is much about enclosure, for example, but only the regional sections by Fox and Dyer offer any real discussion of what this meant on the ground — the shape, size and extent of the new fields and the nature of the fences and hedges which surrounded them. Ridge and furrow, one of the most widespread manifestations of late medieval cultivation, finds no mention whatsoever.

Despite this, there is much in the volume to interest the landscape historian. The expansion of parks and warrens over abandoned arable is a recurrent theme (pp. 80-81, 92, 103, 234-35). There are further examples of medieval woodland plantations (pp. 117, 411) to add to those documented by John Harvey. Some agricultural practices more familiar from the 16th or 17th centuries are shown to have their origins in the late Middle Ages: the appearance of more complex multiple open field systems along with the use of grass leys, inhoking and every-year's land (pp. 222-25), the use of legumes as part alternative to fallow (pp. 268-70), manuring by sheepfold (p. 290), marling (pp. 188, 311), the practice of beat-burning (pp. 309-10). Records of medieval coppicing will no longer come as a surprise, but some interesting examples are quoted (pp. 193-94, 301-02). Other topics which one would have expected to find here are, however, scantily treated — the decline of the English vineyard is scarcely mentioned. There are also some apparent inconsistencies. The editor takes a rather negative view of the uncultivated marshland, woodland and moor of Yorkshire and Lancashire (pp. 42-43), while Britnell extols the fisheries and pastures of the Fenland and the warrens of Breckland as a valuable resource (pp. 53-54). Two contributors see the assarting movement as having run its course by 1348-49 (pp. 81, 411), while others see it continuing into the late 14th or even 15th century (pp. 105, 117, 135, 147). Do these anomalies reflect genuine regional differences?

For many archaeologists Chapter 9, in which le Patourel and Butler discuss rural building in England and Wales respectively, will be of most immediate interest. The authors achieve this, using a skilful blend of documentary, architectural and archaeological evidence, in just a hundred pages, though not entirely without minor error — part of the 15th-century

brick-built lodgings wing at Ewelme manor does survive, *contra* p. 834. Mrs le Patourel's section on peasant buildings was written in the late 1980s, just when the time-honoured concept of the flimsy, short-lived peasant house was beginning to be questioned. She comments upon the number of substantial small late medieval houses of probable peasant origin surviving today in some regions, but Stuart Wrathmell's reasoned reinterpretation of the Wharram evidence appeared just too late for inclusion in the references. The sections on agricultural buildings are particularly useful since there has been little previous attempt to bring together the very scattered evidence from this period. The sheephouse is identified as a sufficiently distinctive form of building for it to be identified even from earthwork remains (pp. 878–81). Many questions remain, however. The size of barns in relation to estate policy, arable acreage and harvesting and storage methods would have warranted further exploration. The loss of pannage through woodland reduction ought to result in many more pigs being fattened in styes in this period, but as yet we seem to lack evidence of late medieval pigstyes. Do staddles really appear this early (p. 872)? What was the reason for the change from circular to rectangular dovecotes which apparently begins in the late Middle Ages?

Only Mrs le Patourel's part of Chapter 9 is reasonably well provided with illustrations; Dr Butler elected not to illustrate his section, since much of the Welsh material is readily accessible elsewhere. The remainder of the volume is poorly served. One can sympathize with the publisher's wish not to make the volume even bigger, but many of the topics discussed cry out for mapping. Such maps as do appear are clear enough, but, it has to be said, rather uninspired.

Thirteen pages are taken up by a select bibliography comprising over 300 references. While this is customary for the series, it is difficult to see what purpose it serves. It is not a record of all secondary sources consulted, which are detailed much more fully in the footnotes; nor is it very helpful as a guide to further reading, since there has been no attempt to arrange it on any sort of thematic basis. The index is inadequate: 'meadow', 'common', 'orchard', 'coppicing', 'assarting', 'marshland', 'reclamation', 'drainage' are just a few of the key topics omitted which find mention in the text.

The overall verdict must be a welcome for an enormous wealth of scholarship now made easily accessible, but qualified by some reservations about the presentation. The series format established in 1956 ought to have set a standard capable of being modified as the subject itself and the expectations of its practitioners develop; instead, sadly, it seems to have become something of a straitjacket.

JAMES BOND

Excavations at Chepstow 1973–1974 (Cambrian Archaeological Monographs No. 4). By Ron Shoesmith. 21 × 29 cm. ix + 174 pp., 81 figs., 15 pls. Bangor: Cambrian Archaeological Association, 1991. ISBN 0-947846-02-6. Price not stated.

At first sight this is a volume that justifies its long period of gestation. It is a handsomely produced A4 volume with attractive soft covers which combines a summary of the archaeological evidence for the town before 1971 with the results of eleven small excavations within the town of which the work on the alien Benedictine priory is perhaps the most important. The volume is divided into a number of sections: part one covers the topography of the modern town, a historical outline and documentary summary using mainly published sources, and a note of previous excavations including a number of unpublished ones. Part two contains the excavation reports. The third section covers the finds, and the fourth is a general concluding section summarizing the evidence for each period of the town's development and setting it within its wider context.

A closer inspection of the volume reveals that all is not well, however. A standard format is used for each report and a laudable attempt has been made to use similar scales for the various illustrations. A summary of the aims and methods of excavation for each site is followed by a factual description of the stratigraphy. A section on dating follows and the description concludes with a discussion and interpretation section. Each site is discussed in

isolation 'because of the difficulties establishing contextual links between separate sites'. This immediately causes problems. If you wish to assess the significance of each excavated site you are forced to read portions of the discussion section for each stratigraphic phase and cross reference this to the conclusions drawn at the end of the volume. If you wish to examine each site by phase, you are forced to cross reference between illustrations, which are not always divided into phases, and the relevant text, which usually lies on different pages.

That this leads to confusion is clear from the very first site described. On p. 19 we read under 'Dating': 'There was no evidence to date the construction of the Port Wall'. A little later under 'Discussion' we read that: 'Although there is no archaeological evidence from Site 2 to indicate the date of construction of the Port Wall, historical evidence and comparisons with parts of the castle suggest that it should be ascribed to the period 1272-78', and we are then directed to p. 162 for this material to be put in context. Understanding of this section of the report is made more difficult by the long and often tortuous sentences, many of which contain weak arguments. For example, 'The recess in the wall was originally thought to be a late feature associated with the 19th-century doorway which led through it. However, closer examination disclosed that it was of an earlier date and that it could have been designed as part of the original wall; but it could equally have been cut into the wall at a later date without disturbing the outside face' (p. 19). We are told nothing further of this 'close examination'. Under phase 2 of the same site, we read that a pit partly fills this recess and it is of late 17th- or 18th-century date and that it may have related to a privy built up against the wall. No attempt is made to link the two parts of the site report to question whether the recess had been deliberately cut for the pit, or whether the pit was cut into an already existing recess in the town wall. It is left to the reader to work out that: (1) the difficulty in dating the recess implies it was part of the original construction; and (2) it would have been poor building practice to build a privy deliberately into rather than against an existing wall. Therefore, it is almost certain that the recess was in existence by the 17th century and probably belonged to the original construction or at least when the wall was being used defensively.

Under site 3 we are told (period 2) that the Port Wall and tower were apparently built at the same time and the lowest two courses consisted of roughly coursed limestone blocks laid on a red clay (p. 22). Above these foundation courses both wall and tower were constructed of about 1 m of random stonework above which it then became roughly coursed. Under the 'Discussion' section we learn that the clay was in fact brown, that the varying types of masonry may have been the result of changes in construction methods or a later refacing. However, the rubble core appeared to be homogenous where the wall was seen in section. Finally, under Period 3 we learn that the wall may have been substantially refaced during the 15th century, that it had different mortars used in different sections. Nowhere is the detailed evidence supporting the relationship between the tower and the wall discussed, nor is any attempt made to correlate the mortars with the phases of repair.

Under site 6 we have to remember the details of complex post-pit F8 (referred to as pit 8 on the overall site plan, fig. 13) from the 'Description' section on p. 30, so that we can follow the suggestion made for the first time in the 'Discussion' on p. 33 that it held a door post. Given that both sections are filled with various numbers this is clearly impossible. The site 6 description starts on p. 27, yet it is only on p. 34 we finally learn that it is a 13th-century half-timbered building with a stone plinth which was rebuilt in the 14th century, and that it was possibly used as a workshop. A throwaway suggestion made here for the first time suggests the building may have been of two storeys.

At first sight all the excavation reports are written in this infuriating way and the faint-hearted may well be persuaded to abandon the effort and turn to the conclusions. However, all is not lost, as dramatic change takes place when the report on the monastic remains is reached. The descriptions of buildings and contexts are clearly expressed and linked together, the discussion sections read convincingly and only the limitations of the plans hinder the easy interpretation and understanding of the sites being described. The addition of full phase plans for the monastic building remains would have been far more helpful than the publication of the buildings in sections, especially when the fold-out plans

relating all the contexts together cannot be folded out sufficiently to allow them to be read at the same time as the rest of the report. As a minor grumble it would have been helpful if figs. 14–16 showing the different phases of site 6 had been aligned with the overall site plan.

A major strength of the book is the quality of its specialist reports and the medieval pottery report by Vince is perhaps the most impressive of these, although the absence of an analysis of the Roman cremations is surprising. The concluding section summarizing the evidence for the development of the town from the Roman period is clear and detailed as far as it goes. It would however have been considerably strengthened if it had been rewritten nearer to the publication date in order to take into account the more recent discoveries of the Monmouth Archaeological Society and the Glamorgan–Gwent Archaeological Trust. Despite this the short section outlining future research needs remains as topical now as it did when it was originally written.

To summarize, the report contains much good information, and despite the fact that the summaries and specialist reports are all ten years old, they make valuable contributions to the archaeological record. There remains however a place for a good history of the town combining archaeological and historical sources and interpreting all the available archaeological information including that from the excavations since 1974.

DAVID HAIGH

La recherche archéologique en France 1985–1989. 21 × 30 cm. 286 pp., 97 figs. and pls., 39 maps. Paris: Ministère de la Culture, de la Communication, des Grands Travaux et du Bicentenaire, 1990. ISBN 2–906796–10–7. Price: 200 F pb.

French archaeology gives the impression of being in a state of perpetual crisis, despite the production of a series of recommendations and reports from distinguished scholars, from Jacques Soustelle to Christian Goudineau, over the past quarter-century. The guerrilla warfare between the Sous-Direction de l'Archéologie (SDA) of the Ministry of Culture, the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), the universities, and the museums has been regularly chronicled in *Nouvelles de l'Archéologie*, which provides a lively and outspoken forum for public debate among professional archaeologists. Many of the complaints and criticisms will be familiar to British professionals — lack of funding for training and research, insufficient time for rescue excavations, an inadequate career structure for those entering the profession.

Notwithstanding the jeremiads of *Nouvelles*, however, French archaeology has made tremendous strides since the early 1980s. The amount of money available for archaeology of all kinds has increased almost exponentially, 'public archaeology' is now well established at *département* and municipality level, the regional Directions des Antiquités are wholly professionalized, a new *Grande École* devoted to the heritage in all its forms has been created, and much more. Of particular importance in all this has been the role of the Conseil Supérieur de la Recherche Archéologique (CSRA), re-established in 1985 under the leadership of Christian Goudineau of the Collège de France, supported by Jean Guilaine.

The Minister of Culture, Jack Lang, designated 1989 as *l'Année de l'Archéologie*. It was the occasion for a major exhibition at the Grand Palais in Paris and many cultural events and publications throughout France, designed to demonstrate archaeology's role in explaining the past and illuminating modern society. In addition to more 'popular' publications, such as the sumptuous volume *De Lascaux au Grand Louvre: Archéologie et histoire en France* (1989), with its preface by François Mitterand, the French Government has issued a more sober and factual report directed towards the professional community in France and abroad.

La Recherche archéologique en France is a report on four years' achievement by CSRA in fulfilling its brief. It was charged with creating a national archaeological research plan, encouraging the development of scientific teams, co-ordinating the work of the monolithic elements of French administration in this field, bridging the traditional gap in France between *préhistoriens* and *historiens*, setting up a system of longer-term projects, mitigating the perennial problem of delays in publication, and making proposals for improved survey,

inventory, protection, and presentation of archaeological sites. This volume reports principally on the first of these tasks (though in his introduction Goudineau makes some wry comments on the failure of CSRA to convince other ministries of the holistic nature of archaeological research).

The report is divided into two sections. The first section covers the work of the Ministry of Culture; it is a handbook to the organization of archaeology within that ministry, valuable in that to the outsider its structure and operations have hitherto had a somewhat impenetrable quality. The statistical data are impressive: for example, the total budget of the SDA increased from 70.6 million francs in 1985 to 180 million in 1989. However, this increase is due principally to external funding from local authorities and developers, which is paid to another state body, the Association pour les Fouilles Archéologiques Nationales (AFAN) and then used to fund excavations. None the less, direct state funding rose by 50% over the period under review. Rescue archaeology was, of course, the main area that benefited from AFAN funding, but it is interesting to see that archaeological survey, including aerial survey, has at last assumed an important place in French archaeology.

The French record in archaeological publication has long been a cause for reproach on the part of other scholars. Determined efforts have been made to improve the situation, most notably through the admirable series *Documents d'Archéologie Française*. Another excellent initiative is the superb series of *Guides Archéologiques de la France*, probably the finest site guides available anywhere in the world. There is, however, a discreet silence about the failure to publish the results of the important excavations at the Grand Louvre in Paris, which is one of the worst scandals of modern European archaeology.

The SDA also finances a number of longer-term research projects, and these are described in the second part of the volume. The traditional *préhistoire/histoire* division still persists, the former ending with the advent of the Iron Age. Some of the 'history' projects are firmly rooted in the Iron Age and Gallo-Roman periods, but others have a longer chronological span, such as H1 *La ville*, which is concerned with urban development from Roman Gaul to the early modern period, or H3 *Mines et métallurgie*. H16 *Édifices et établissements religieux depuis la fin de l'Antiquité*; H17 *Naissance, évolution et fonctions du château médiéval*; H18 *Villages et terroirs médiévaux et post-médiévaux*; and H19 *Les ateliers médiévaux et modernes, l'archéologie industrielle: organisation et diffusion* are in fact the only programmes devoted solely to post-Roman archaeology. However, the influence of medieval archaeologists such as Gabrielle Demians d'Archimbaud and Jean Chapelot and urban specialists such as Henri Galinié, combined with the increasing amount of rescue archaeology in historic town centres, is progressively weaning the younger generation of French archaeologists from the traditional preoccupations of their predecessors, prehistory and Roman Gaul.

Despite the caveats of Christian Goudineau in his introduction, this report paints an impressive picture of the growth of archaeology in France in the first half of the 1980s. To judge from recent issues of *Nouvelles de l'Archéologie*, however, the next report of this kind is unlikely to be so encouraging.

HENRY CLEERE

Short Reviews

The Survival of Roman Antiquities in the Middle Ages. By Michael Greenhalgh. 17 × 24 cm. 288 pp. London: Duckworth Press, 1989. ISBN 0-7156-2129-7. Price: £35.00 hb.

Pavia: La Tradizione dell'Antico nella Citta Medievale. By Claudia Maccabruni. 17 × 24 cm. 133 pp., 24 figs. Pavia: E.M.I. Editrice in Pavia, 1991. ISBN 887-129236-7. Price: 22,000 lire.

These two books offer fascinating insights into the survival, reuse and influence of Roman antiquities in the post-Roman and medieval eras. Greenhalgh seeks to give an exhaustive overview of the various modes of survival of Roman structures and works of art