

Reviews

Castles, towns and rural settlement in the Crusader kingdom

Pilgrims' Castle ('Atlit), David's Tower (Jerusalem) and Qal'at ar-Rabad ('Ajlun): Three Middle Eastern Castles from the Time of the Crusades. By C. N. Johns, edited by Denys Pringle with a Foreword by Adam Johns. xx + 398 pp., c. 200 figs. and pls. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 1997. ISBN 0-86078-627-7. Price: £75.00 hb.

The Churches of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem: A Corpus. Volume II. L-Z (excluding Tyre.) By Denys Pringle. 22 × 28 cm. xxiv + 456 pp., 203 pls., 107 figs., 10 maps. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. ISBN 0-521-39037-0. Price: £85.00 hb.

Secular Buildings in the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem: An Archaeological Gazetteer. By Denys Pringle. 22 × 28 cm. xix + 159 pp., 113 pls., 62 figs., 4 tables, 10 maps. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. ISBN 0-521-46010-7. Price: £45.00 hb.

Frankish Rural Settlement in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. By Ronnie Ellenblum. 16 × 23 cm. xxi + 321 pp., 21 figs., 14 pls., 5 tables, 9 maps. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. ISBN 0-521-55401-2. Price: £40.00 hb.

International interest in the history and archaeology of the crusader kingdom of Jerusalem shows no sign of abating and continues to attract scholars of widely differing backgrounds. Of the three authors reviewed here, the late C. N. Johns was a Field Archaeologist in the Palestine Department of Antiquities during the 1930s and 1940s, Denys Pringle was Assistant Director of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem from 1979 until 1984, and Ronnie Ellenblum lectures on Historical Geography at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. What all three have in common is the ability to demonstrate the enormous amount that can be achieved by systematic work on the available evidence, and it is not too much to claim that each in their respective fields has produced results that have revolutionized our understanding.

The decision to republish nine of C. N. Johns's most important contributions to the archaeology of the crusader period in the Variorum Collected Studies Series is particularly welcome. Seven of these papers are reports that originally appeared in the *Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine*, five of them on successive campaigns at the 13th-century Templar castle at 'Atlit (Château Pèlerin) in the early 1930s, and the other two on the citadel in Jerusalem and the Ayyubid-Mamluk castle at 'Ajlun in Jordan. But pride of place must go to the first and largest item in the collection, the *Guide to 'Atlit: The Crusader Castle, Town and Surroundings*. Johns's work at 'Atlit remains his most enduring achievement. His excavations not only proved how much can be gained from a proper investigation of a medieval fortification, but also revealed the sophistication of the defences and the opulence of the polygonal chapel and the other buildings within. The *Guide*, which was originally published in 1947 and runs to almost 100 pages, represents Johns's distillation of his discoveries. Sadly almost all the copies of the original edition were destroyed before they could be distributed, and until now it has been extremely hard to find. Johns's work at

'Atlit pointed the way for subsequent excavations such as those at Belvoir. Although his publications are now over 50 years old, they retain their significance better than most thanks to the subsequent history of the site: since the early days of Israeli rule 'Atlit has formed part of a military establishment; it has therefore been closed to casual visitors, and the opportunity for further scientific enquiry has been strictly limited.

In the late 1970s the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem initiated a project to compile a complete corpus of all the church buildings of whatever denomination which still exist or which are known to have existed in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. This project was placed in the highly competent hands of Dr Denys Pringle, then Deputy Director of the School and now Principal Inspector of Ancient Monuments, Historic Scotland. The first volume of *The Churches of the Crusader Kingdom* appeared in 1993 (reviewed *ante*, vol. 34 (1994), pp. 311–12), and we now await the third which will be solely devoted to the churches of Acre, Jerusalem, and Tyre. This second volume contains discussion of 148 church buildings, including those at Lydda, Nablus, Nazareth, Sebaste, Sidon and Tiberias as well as many in rural areas. The famous orthodox monasteries of St Catherine at Mount Sinai, St Sabas and St Theodosius find a place, as do the castle chapels at Montfort, Shaubak and elsewhere. In each case Pringle gives an account of the history of the locality, a description of what is known of the structure of the church, including details of any archaeological excavations and epigraphy, and a summary of any contemporary documentation. Many of the sites have suffered damage during the present century, and wherever possible the author has illustrated his discussion with older photographs. As in the earlier volume there are plans and drawings by Peter Leach, and each entry contains a full bibliography. There is also a series of maps, and the index covers both the published volumes. When the first volume appeared, it immediately established itself as an indispensable work of reference. Volume two lives up to the high standards of scholarship and presentation that we have now come to expect, and author and publisher deserve our warmest congratulations. It goes without saying that we look forward to the appearance of volume three.

Pringle's second book, *Secular Buildings in the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem*, is, by his own admission, largely a by-product of the much larger project on the churches. It is similar in format and design to his other publication, and consists of a gazetteer of 243 localities in which remains (other than churches) dating from the crusader period are known. In addition he discusses a further 28 possible crusade-period sites and 21 sites where he rejects earlier crusader attributions. Unlike the volumes on the churches, the descriptions are quite brief. In each case we have a short summary, frequently illustrated with one or more photographs and a plan, followed by a bibliography. There is no doubting the value of this book as a reference tool and as a companion to the author's corpus of churches, and the remarks made earlier about the high standard of scholarship and presentation apply here equally. My one criticism is that the index only lists place-names, and so anyone hoping to use it to find references to all the localities listed in the gazetteer belonging, say, to the Hospitallers or to the Templars will be frustrated.

Ronnie Ellenblum has based his study on much of the same documentary and archaeological evidence as Pringle. As his title suggests, he has set out to investigate the extent of Frankish rural settlement in the Kingdom of Jerusalem, but in the background is another, much larger question: that of the history of the Islamization in the Palestinian countryside. His thesis is strikingly original. He is able to argue that, at the time of the crusader conquest, large parts of the rural area of what was to become the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem still had a predominantly Christian population, whereas in only certain regions — eastern Galilee and parts of central Samaria being the most obvious — were Muslims in the majority. Ellenblum demonstrates — and this is the main thrust of his book — that in the 12th century far more western Europeans (or Franks) settled in the

rural areas than earlier writers such as Praver were prepared to believe. There were several Frankish new towns, most of which have been known for some time, but also there many Franks living among the indigenous population, a situation made possible by the lengthy period from c. 1125 to c. 1170 during which the heartlands of the kingdom enjoyed relative security from attack. In other words, he challenges the accepted orthodoxy that the Franks stayed almost entirely in the fortified towns or major castles, and in the process he opens the way for a partial return to the older idea that the Franks created an integrated society with the *indigènes*. However, a major part of his thesis is that these Frankish settlements and settlers limited themselves to those areas that were predominantly Christian already: where Muslims made up the bulk of rural population, evidence for Frankish settlement, except in major fortresses such as Safad, is entirely absent. Ellenblum suggests that the areas that were predominantly Muslim by the 12th century were those that early in the Islamic period had been exposed to nomadization, with the consequent displacement of the pre-existing population, and then sedentarization. After the 12th century, and with the expulsion of the crusaders from the Holy Land in the 13th, the Islamization of the countryside proceeded significantly as the indigenous Christian communities suffered the consequences of warfare and the infiltration of Turcoman pastoralists. What we have here is a re-interpretation that is both bold and persuasive. It is of course possible to quibble over details: for example, (p. 155) the Latin text seems to me to say that Rolandus Antelmus held land in the village of La Hadia not that he held the whole of La Hadia, or (p. 164) the author has clearly overlooked other evidence for Lorens de Francléue and his assumption that when his family sold property before 1179 to the Abbey of Mount Zion it sold all its property is unwarranted.

While we might regret that Pringle and Ellenblum were not able to benefit from each other's work, there is no doubt that between them they have advanced the subject of the archaeology of the Kingdom of Jerusalem appreciably. In the past both authors have been involved in excavations which fully justified expectations. Together their studies ought to stimulate interest and, it might be hoped, investment still further; certainly they have helped shape the agenda for future archaeological enquiry. I know I shall be keeping these books on the shelf nearest my desk for a long time to come.

PETER W. EDBURY

The Anglo-Saxons from the Migration Period to the Eighth Century. An Ethnographic Perspective. (Studies in Historical Archaeoethnology, Volume 2.) Edited by John Hines. 17 × 24 cm. 480 pp. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1997. ISBN 0-85115-4794. Price: £50.00 hb.

Overall, this volume represents a stimulating contribution to the field of Anglo-Saxon studies. Arising from a symposium in 1993 hosted by the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Social Stress in San Marino, it contains twelve main contributions, and their accompanying discussions, with topics ranging from settlement studies and evidence for farming, to symbolism, religion and ethnicity, spanning the early and middle Anglo-Saxon period, and focusing mainly on British material. Within this volume there does, however, seem to be a problem surrounding definitions, one which was made explicit by Chris Scull in the final discussion, who asked whether the symposium was on the Anglo-Saxons, or on early medieval Britain. As the papers by Pohl, Powlesland, Härke and Fowler demonstrate, there is still much debate over the extent to which the changes in language, material culture and social systems from the 5th century (or perhaps the 4th) are the result of population incursions from the continent (whether in the form of mass migrations or elite invasion and take-over), or of much more complex and less clearly understood processes.

Their papers thus focus on the problems of early medieval Britain, and the often contradictory literary and archaeological sources, whereas other authors, such as Wood and Hooke focus more on the early Anglo-Saxons as an identifiable people, clearly recognizable in the archaeological or linguistic record. This inherent division can be seen in the accompanying discussions where the differing perspectives of the contributors are highlighted.

Pohl's paper on ethnic names and identities in the British Isles is perhaps the most valuable in clarifying such debates. He provides a very useful summary on current thinking on early medieval ethnicity, and the problems in its interpretation from the sources, whether they be archaeological, historical or linguistic. His emphasis on the creation of ethnic groups, on the importance of local and territorial groupings of people, alongside those which can be termed ethnic, and his critique of the frequent back-projection of clear-cut ethnic identities from the Christian era into the non-literate past, are all issues which archaeologists in particular need to take on board in their classification and analysis of material remains. Härke highlights such problems from a different perspective, in his wide-ranging survey of the documentary and archaeological evidence for social structures. He demonstrates how, when looking at age distinctions, gender relations and social classes, these sources often show little correspondence, and that the funerary archaeology, in particular, shows a mass of local and regional variation which fails to be accounted for by simplistic models. Both Powlesland and Fowler present more purely archaeological papers. Powlesland, drawing on results from the recent excavations at West Heslerton, presents a compelling argument for the reinterpretation of early Anglo-Saxon settlements, suggesting, among other things, an 'early Anglo-Saxon settlement shuffle' caused by a collapse in late Roman land tenure systems, that hall buildings may have had upper stories and supported timber floors, and that Grubenhäuser were, in fact, cavity-floor buildings (whose use cannot be inferred from the non-primary deposits often contained within). Powlesland calls for a radical reappraisal of early Anglo-Saxon settlement patterns, based on his argument that the zoned settlement at Heslerton (of which a detailed description is given here) is not so different from settlements like Mucking and Sutton Courtenay, but that the apparent differences are due to incomplete excavation of these latter sites. If these arguments are accepted, along with Fowler's suggestion of broad continuity in subsistence from perhaps the prehistoric period through to the late 7th or 8th century, then archaeologists may start having to take seriously Pohl's arguments that ethnic labels are not the answer to explaining developments in this early period — that perhaps they are only the beginning of the questioning.

Contributions dealing with the middle Anglo-Saxon period are on slightly safer ground in this respect, with useful papers by Scull, giving an update on the evidence for urban functions of sites in pre-Viking England at Ipswich, London, Southampton and York; by Hawkes, demonstrating in fascinating detail how the conversion to Christianity had a dramatic impact on art styles and animal symbolism; by Hines, who looks at similar developments in religious practices and beliefs, and by Charles-Edwards, Lendinara and Dumville who mine the historical sources in revisions of the ideas surrounding kinship, legal structures and over kingship respectively during this formative period. On the whole, then this is a well-written and timely contribution, marred only by some inconsistency of aims (although this is perhaps unavoidable), the high price, and by occasional spelling errors (unfortunately including names of sites and of archaeologists) in the discussion sections.

Armagh and the Royal Centres in Early Medieval Ireland: Monuments, Cosmology and the Past. By N. B. Aitchison. 15 × 24 cm. x + 356pp. Woodbridge: Cruithne Press/Boydell & Brewer, 1994. ISBN 1-873448-02-3. Price: £39.50 hb.

Understanding the Universe in Seventh-Century Ireland. (Studies in Celtic History 15.) By M. Smyth. 15 × 24cm. vii + 341pp. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1996. ISBN 0-85115-313-5. Price: £35.00 hb.

Both these works are based on doctoral theses and are concerned with concepts of cosmology in early medieval Ireland, but they approach the topic through different types of primary source and utilizing different methodologies. Not surprisingly, they reach quite different conclusions. Marina Smyth's universe is one defined by Christian learning, and the focus of her scholarly and detailed study is a small group of compilations made in Ireland, probably in the second half of the 7th century, that endeavoured to explain the cosmology of the Bible with the aid of patristic and grammatical commentaries. Her conclusion is that access to a rather narrow range of sources meant that even the best Irish scholars had only an extremely simplified knowledge of the secular sciences of the classical world. She finds no support in these works for the range of scientific disciplines which Aldhelm implied could be studied in 7th-century Ireland, though one would need an examination of a greater variety of texts before finally dismissing Aldhelm's testimony. Within the limits imposed by their belief that everything in the observable universe can be explained from the Bible, her Irish writers produced remarkably rational accounts as they sought to eliminate contradictions and to follow Augustine in explaining apparently miraculous phenomena as an unlocking by God of a potential which was always present in the physical world as He had created it. Thus obtaining water from rock was not a subversion of the natural order, but a release of one of the four essential elements which were contained within all things. For some of their illustrative material the Irish authors drew upon the physical world with which they were familiar. There are references to local tides, salt-extraction, the use of seaweed ash, the filtering of sea-water and to species of wild animals to be found in Ireland. The shells of sea-turtles, occasionally to be found in Irish waters, and the hardened skin patches observed on stranded whales are cited as evidence that stone can be generated from water. Use of such personal observations anticipates the work of Bede in *De Temporum Ratione*, and gives an added interest to what is a worthy, but very narrowly focused volume.

Interpretation of the observable physical world for ideological purposes is also the theme of Nicholas Aitchison's volume, but there any similarity ends. His focus is on the fashionable archaeological subject of the reinterpretation of prehistoric monuments in later centuries. He suggests a sophisticated manipulation of both literary texts and certain Bronze- and Iron-age monuments to support the aspirations of political and ecclesiastical elites in early medieval Ireland. The interdisciplinary approach is to be welcomed and what results is never less than stimulating. His focus falls particularly on Navan Fort and the nearby ecclesiastical complex in Armagh. Navan, he suggests on the basis of archaeological evidence, was never 'a royal fort', but a cult site, which was co-opted as Emain Macha, the seat of the Ulaid in the Ulster Cycle, to suit the ambitions of the Uí Neill in the early middle ages. His case for seeing the Ulster cycle as 'a window' on early medieval politics, rather than on the Iron Age, is strongly argued and will ruffle a few feathers, not least at the modern interpretative centre at Navan Fort which comes in for some harsh words in the conclusion. Promotion of Navan as the centre of the high kings of Ireland also suited the aspirations of the clergy of Armagh for primatial status. Aitchison presents a complex argument based on recent techniques of spatial analysis for the layout of early medieval Armagh as symbolizing both cosmic order, reflecting the ideal or celestial city, and an ideological political order. The architects also apparently included a set of

binary oppositions to demonstrate the superiority of Armagh's St Patrick over Kildare's St Brigit. Such complex constructions could be viewed as the visual equivalent of the numerological patterns which David Howlett has detected in 7th-century Irish Latin verse; Aitchison sees parallels in intent with the *Liber Angeli* and other early hagiographical works produced in Armagh. The discussion of the layout of Armagh is intriguing, but one suspects that it may command less acceptance than the consideration of Navan, not least because little of it is archaeologically verifiable and depends on Armagh's topography having remained unaltered from the 7th century to more modern times. That the past and its monuments were manipulated in the early middle ages is not in question, but there is a danger of projecting too much back into earlier centuries of our knowledge of more recent ideological exploitations or of current intellectual trends. Reflecting on these two volumes, in many ways it is Marina Smyth's careful scholars with their complete acceptance of a cosmology defined by the Bible who seem more alien to our present sensibilities than Nicholas Aitchison's early medieval spin-doctors.

BARBARA YORKE

Raunds Furnells. The Anglo-Saxon Church and Churchyard. (English Heritage, Archaeological Report 7.) By Andy Boddington with others. 21 × 30 cm. xiv + 133 pp., 107 figs. and pls., 2 fiches. London: English Heritage, 1996. ISBN 1-85074-520-X. Price: £35.00 pb.

The Raunds Area project, a collaboration since 1979 between English Heritage and the Northamptonshire County Council, investigated about forty sq km in the eastern part of the county. The project was designed to carry out archaeological research in a rescue context, to deal with all periods, using all relevant disciplines, the aims of the Winchester Excavations Committee back in the early sixties.¹

This is the first final publication to come out of this endeavour and covers the excavation of a church and its whole cemetery at Raunds Furnells. The analysis, we are told (p. 3), is 'along the lines of the Frere report (DoE 1975)' at Levels IIIa and IIIb (modified Level III), IV comes into it, and even II. Does anyone else pay the slightest attention to these 'levels'?

The excavation started in 1975 with trial trenches by David Hall. Andy Boddington directed the excavations from 1977 to 1979 when Graham Cadman took over until completion in 1984. It must be said at once that this excavation was especially important because it covered the whole church and all of its cemetery within identified boundaries. Andy Boddington is the author of the church and cemetery sections, about half the book.

There are also seven excellent specialist reports. The exemplary discussion of the physical anthropology by Faye Powell is marred only because most of the evidence on which it relies is on microfiche, including, amazingly, the burial catalogue by Andy Boddington. This includes basic stratigraphic information such as the intercutting of the graves, but to all intents and purposes is thus unusable. Terry Pearson's presentation of the pottery is commendable and Rosemary Cramp presents the carved stone in the manner of *The Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*, but with drawings as well as photographs, in an exceptionally interesting contribution. There may, for example, have been as many as six or seven stone coffins out of the 363 burials identified, i.e. as many as 1.9%. There were only seven monolithic coffins from Old Minster, Winchester, 0.9% of all graves, and still

¹ M. Biddle and R. Quirk, 'Excavations near Winchester Cathedral, 1961', *Archaeol. J.*, 119 (1964), 150-94, at p. 150; M. Biddle, 'Excavations at Winchester 1962-63, Second interim report', *Antiq. J.*, 44 (1964), 188-219, at p. 188.

only 1.5% of the late 9th- to late 11th-century graves. The Raunds figure is extraordinary and supports Rosemary Cramp's observation that the Midlands are exceptionally rich in stone coffins. She is also right, I think, in seeing No. 305 solely as a grave cover, suggesting that the cross carved on its lower side at the wide end was meant only to be seen by the dead (at the Resurrection, when the Cross would be the first thing seen). David Parsons writes on the liturgical and social aspects of the church and cemetery in the thoughtful and informative way to be expected from him.

But it is above all the sequence of churches and especially the graves from the fully excavated cemetery which are here published in word, drawing, and photograph. The plans are clear, handsome and well thought out; the photographs show sparkling clean skeletons in shallow grave-pits. The analysis of the buried population is ingenious and illustrated in informative and interesting diagrams. One would think that everything anyone would ever want to know is here.

And yet, the book leaves one with a feeling of unease. It is as if the work was done in archaeological isolation. The recording method is described on p. 3 ('meticulous'). Two oblique photographs were taken of each burial and the plans were drawn from the photographs after the excavation was finished; 'only the grave cut and structural items were drawn in the field' (p. 3). The numbering systems are bizarre: there are no layer numbers, no feature numbers or grave numbers, but Unit numbers and Group numbers, so that G700 is a floor in the church (Fig. 11), not a grave, while the graves have unit numbers. 'Normally the lowest stratigraphic unit number within a group is used as the group number', but with a 'burial unit number' between 5000 and 5999 'reserved exclusively for skeletal material' (p. 3).

The site seems to have been understood in splinters. The major cemetery plans at 1:200 (Figs. 25-26) show the church and skeletons and stone details only. Plans of the area near the church, at 1:50, show spreads in the cemetery (Fig. 10) and grave-pits which intersect (Fig. 11). The two sets of information are not united. It is difficult to find full descriptions. Even the data about the very important 'founder' is not brought together and is not to be found in the over-elaborate and confusing index. Tried and tested excavation and recording methods of our discipline are ignored. Was the excavation strategy devised (?in 1979) to suit the computer?

There are other general worries.

1. How was the site as a whole excavated? The photographs of the 1975 trenches (Figs. 62 and 89) show that there was about half a metre of overburden the lower part of which showed clear stratification. Were the upper levels of the site bulldozed off down to church level in 1979? Was the site then shovelled off in spits (? 'arbitrary records' p. 3) until grave-cuts or very obvious layers appeared?
2. No overall photographs are published. Figure 8, of the church, shows the largest area.
3. There are drawn sections of the individual walls of the church (Figs. 13 and 23), but none across the church, either E-W. or N-S. There is not a single section across a grave, let alone across several graves showing how they intercut. There is no section across the boundary ditches. Were no sections drawn?
4. There is not a single O.D. level on any of the plans. The mini-sections across the walls have a datum at 59.00 m O.D., but these cannot be related to the floors, for which no levels are given.
5. There are no co-ordinates.

In conclusion, the report is good on detail. Its analysis is ingenious and thorough, and the skeletons were carefully cleaned and beautifully photographed. The variations in burial types and conditions are inventively and usefully analysed. The horizontal stratigraphy is well understood and discussed in interesting ways with clear diagrams. But the vertical stratigraphy was ignored, certainly in publication, and presumably also on the excavation. As a result, the graves, with very few exceptions, had to be treated as one group (SP20) with only a brief discussion of grave generations: 'It is clear that the graveyard was "frozen" just at the beginning of the second generation of burial associated with the second church' (p. 49 under the heading 'Grave plots'), but on p. 50 a sequence of four graves is described.

Although the project took a long time and seems to have had endless resources, it is in many ways deeply flawed. It would do burial archaeology a disservice if this excavation were to be seen as a model for future work.

BIRTHE KJØLBYE-BIDDLE

The Severn Estuary. Landscape evolution and wetland reclamation. By Stephen Rippon. 17 × 25 cm. xiii + 318 pp., 54 figs., 32 tables. London: Leicester University Press, 1997. ISBN 0-7185-0069-5. Price: £75.00 hb.

This book summarizes the development of the alluvial landscape of the Severn Estuary over the last 2,000 years, using a wide range of sources, from excavations and palaeoenvironmental studies, to map regression, placenames and documents; Rippon makes much use of data from 'grey literature' and Sites and Monuments Records, which expands the dataset from a few 'dots on the map' towards a genuine landscape. He aligns himself with the 'pays' school of landscape history, which looks for local solutions to the relationship between human activity and the natural environment. He emphasizes that in a marginal wetland landscape, the processes of exploitation and reclamation can only be understood in the context of the evolving coastline, although he notes that 'marginality' is a misleading concept for what can be a varied and valuable resource. Four main periods are discussed: Roman reclamation; Saxon and medieval coastal defence; a late medieval crisis of renewed flooding; and protection and enclosure, largely completed by the 18th century.

On the Somerset Levels, the Roman period saw extensive salt-working in the Brue valley (Rippon has drawn extensively on the unpublished notes of Samuel Nash, an active local fieldworker), and elsewhere a busy agricultural landscape including a villa at Wemberham. Elsewhere in the Estuary, Rippon proposes an extensive system of Roman sea walls, probably initiated by the military. However, recent evidence from developer-related work at Goldcliff and Nash has shown that the drainage systems were local, and developed over a long period: a Roman military sea-wall for the Caldicot Level therefore seems improbable, despite the Goldcliff inscribed stone, which implies 3rd century military involvement on a linear feature on the modern coast (Rippon cites Fulford's re-dating of the stone to the 2nd century). At Rumney Great Wharf on the Wentlooge Level, Allen and Fulford have identified ditches on the foreshore which correspond to those surviving inland, leading them, and Rippon, to suggest that the present drainage pattern is largely a Roman creation. However, the group of ditches which run behind the sea wall cut through the 'Wentlooge palaeosol', a deep soil which has developed on the upper surface of the Wentlooge Formation containing medieval and residual Roman pottery; the 'palaeosol' seals an earlier, localized, group of ditches on a different alignment: only the latter are tenable as Roman features. Although he discusses the size and location of the Roman sea

walls, and compares the areas protected and resources involve, no physical evidence survives, apart from the undated embankment of the River Axe. Since there is evidence for a drier period starting in the Iron Age, it may that Roman defences on the scale that Rippon suggests were unnecessary; much of the central Somerset Level was protected by sand dunes rather than sea walls.

The most important feature of the book is the identification of what he calls 'infields': 'roughly oval areas defined by curving field-boundaries and roads, which clearly pre-date the surrounding landscape rather than having been superimposed upon it. As such they appear to have been the earliest reclamations/settlement sites in the newly recolonized marsh' (p. 172). They are assumed to be Late Saxon in date. The ability to identify these early elements is clearly crucial, and the search for more examples will be a key to future studies.

He also discusses the prevalence of ridge-and-furrow earthworks over areas which are recorded in the medieval period as solely or mainly pasture. Rippon distinguishes true medieval ridge-and-furrow, which 'had a fairly limited distribution' (p. 224), from the various later drainage techniques which produce similar results, and suggests that documentary evidence for demesne land-use may under-represent common pasture. Thus he rejects the model previously advanced for an early medieval open-field systems across the Levels, farmed from settlements now lost.

In the post-medieval period, two factors led to the creation of lasting defences: the increased influence of the Commissioners of Sewers, after disastrous floods in the 17th century: it was responsible for ensuring that landowners maintained their stretch of sea walls, and the continued enclosure of common pasture, which saw the spread of farms onto isolated locations on the Levels. At the same time, regional specialization led to an increase in pastoralism (particularly dairying), serving the market of Bristol.

The volume is well-produced, with clear illustrations and a generous number of maps. Its origins in Rippon's Ph.D. thesis of 1993 are reflected both in the geographical balance (Somerset is covered in much the greatest detail, followed by the Gwent Levels) and in the sources cited: although a few developer projects up to 1995 are included, the pace of development is such that the picture is changing rapidly. Nevertheless, it is certainly a brave stab at an enormous canvas, and will provide the framework for discussions of the methods and aims of reclamation for some time to come.

MARTIN LOCOCK

Medieval Finds from Excavations in London: 6. The Medieval Household: Daily Living c. 1150-c. 1450.

By Geoff Egan. 19 × 24.7 cm. xiii + 342pp., 345 figs. London: The Stationery Office/Museum of London, 1998. ISBN 0-11-290490-4. Price: £50.00 hb.

With his latest volume Geoff Egan has produced for the material culture of the medieval household a guide to equal his earlier work (with Frances Pritchard) on *Dress Accessories* (1991). Together they represent two of the most valuable source books available in their respective fields.

Perhaps no one will be more grateful for these volumes than those whose research is, like that of their author, museum-based: already they (and the other four volumes in the Museum of London series) are a customary first port-of-call in any attempt to identify or to date problematic material and for this reason alone the new volume would be widely welcomed. The discussions of the material — its characterization, function, date-range, etc. — are concise and clear. The line illustrations and explanatory diagrams are of a high standard, although a variety of hands can be detected in the series of drawings (evidently

compiled over many years) which are combined on the page. In his introduction Egan acknowledges that limitations on resources have led to a greater reliance than hitherto on photography as a means of illustrating certain of the items: as a result of this treatment, some pages of keys, chains, candlesticks or other objects combine drawings of some items with photographs of others. Fortunately, the high quality of the photography and skilful masking of the images produce composite illustrations that are never unsightly and in many instances are mutually complimentary. In this way, 1,059 objects arranged in 53 categories are presented (including extremely useful sections on 'The fabric of the medieval house' by Jackie Keily and 'Furnishings' by Jane Brenan). Amongst the principal author's most valuable contributions are essays on locks and keys, weights, lighting equipment and metal vessels; Lynne Keys is similarly enlightening on vessels of wood and glass.

Unlike the earlier Guildhall Museum and London Museum catalogues, which have performed sterling service as the most accessible sources for London material, many of the artefacts presented in the present volume are from stratified contexts. This not only has implications for the dating of the material (which is given according to one or other of seven ceramic phases now well established for London between *c.* 1150 and *c.* 1450) but allows some generalized observations to be made on the character and level of material culture in the city. These possibilities are limited to some degree by the fact that several of the most productive sites are riverside dumps and rubbish pits and that none remotely resembles an actual medieval household! Further limiting factors are the widespread loss of later medieval levels through subsequent redevelopment and the fugitive nature of some materials widely used in the medieval home, notably leather, horn and wood, all of which are seriously under-represented in the archaeological record.

Care has been taken to relate the finds further to their historical context with observations on the light they shed on social milieux, on literacy and artistry, and on manufacturing. These sections, although brief and somewhat tentative in the nature of the evidence they can adduce, should recommend this volume to the most artefact-shy historians and indeed there are many insights to be gained from careful reading of the whole text and from scrutiny of the many manuscript illustrations reproduced or redrawn in support of the interpretative text.

There is little to quarrel with here. Personally I would deny that skimmers 'superseded' flesh-hooks: surely they were (and still are) used for skimming the fat from broths and other dishes and for removing the curds from milk. The possibility that the 'keys for turning pegs with square ends' were tuning-keys for musical instruments seems to me to deserve more weight than it is given here: this seems to me to be the most likely identification for them.

These are mere quibbles, however, and are matters of emphasis rather than outright disagreement. The book is excellent in every respect and will undoubtedly be enduringly prized in the manner of its predecessors.

ARTHUR MACGREGOR

Archeologia Historica, volumes 15–18, 1990–93.

The journal *Archeologia Historica* represents the contributions to an annual conference of medieval archaeology in Czechoslovakia. Each conference has a theme represented most clearly in the first section of each collection of papers. The rest of the papers is divided into sections on specific topics such as rural settlement, urban archaeology, castle archaeology, material culture, ecclesiastical archaeology and occasionally environmental archaeology and climatology. The papers are all relatively short and have summaries in German at the end of each, particularly useful as contributions on material from Slovakia

are naturally written in Slovak and there is a couple of Polish contributions as well. Each volume is well-provided with illustrations, using both line drawings and photographic images incorporated within the texts. Commendably, there are few photographic plates separated from the relevant text. However, the quality of illustration varies between individual contributions and there is no apparent attempt at a 'house style'; indeed, some of the illustrations are particularly poor. Many are below the standards of major western journals, but there are sufficient numbers of good quality illustrations to redress the balance.

In approaching these four volumes of *Archeologia Historica*, a natural response might have been to expect to see the effect of the Velvet Revolution on the way in which the past was written. The volumes cover the period from 1990 to 1993, when the changes brought by that Revolution would have begun to spread throughout society; to assume that there would be a change in the way that archaeology was written and discussed would seem reasonable from a western perspective which has tended to write off Eastern European archaeology as ideologically compromised by dogma. It may perhaps be surprising, then, to discover that even the 1990 volume, reporting contributions from 1989, bears little trace of dogma and would not have been out of place in western journals. A partial explanation is provided by the fact that most of the papers in the 1990 volume are technical, discussing ovens, tiles, metal objects and so forth; many others are essentially historical and look at the evidence of documents and artistic representations (paintings and illuminations). Still others are brief accounts of excavations undertaken on medieval sites, both urban and rural. With papers of this nature, it is less surprising that there is little evidence of Marxist approaches; longer and more synthetic papers might have been more prone to explicit ideology. Nonetheless, it seems to be the case that Czech and Slovak medieval archaeology, at least, was little concerned with an ideological approach to the data, and the Velvet Revolution thus had little effect on the nature of the papers published. This probably does reflect the nature of medieval archaeology at the time, as some indication of an ideologically-driven approach should have been apparent in the research agendas of the papers. In fact, there is no overt Marxist theory to scare western readers. Indeed, a pertinent criticism which could be made of the journals is that many of the papers appear rather old-fashioned in their very empirical approach. Given the amount of material available, the lack of discussion of social structure is surprising and rather disappointing; however, in the uncertainties commensurate with the massive political change of the Velvet Revolution, academics can perhaps be forgiven for avoiding controversy.

Rather than a Marxist-Leninist agenda, the only noticeable ideological approach is more at the nationalist level. This is somewhat of an overstatement, but there are a number of papers concerned with the general topic of ethnic identity. Most of these are in the 1993 volume, whose conference theme was ethnic movement and changes in medieval settlement. The papers reflect an interest in the definition of ethnic groups and tracking the movement of peoples through their artefacts — a rather out-dated approach in the West, as a plethora of recent books on nationalism and archaeology can demonstrate. This particular approach does reflect a pre-1989 archaeology; culture history was a strong feature of work undertaken under the Communist regime. Describing the 1993 volume's approach as nationalist is rather unfair; Milan Hanuliak's paper on ethnic change in Slovakia in the 10th and 11th centuries, for example, is a well-considered analysis of the artefactual material which recognizes that the use of particular artefacts was not specific to one community or another, and argues that the Magyar settlement was largely peaceful. It is perhaps an echo of the internationalist tendency of Communist ideology, but very welcome when relations between Slovakia and Hungary are not at their best. Similarly, while Pavel Kouril's paper on the colonization of north-eastern Moravia and Czech Silesia seeks to identify the different ethnic groups who colonized the area over time, he recognizes

the difficulties inherent in the material culture, in determining whether the appearance of 'foreign' material is the result of importation, imitation or the traditions of an incoming population. It is not surprising that the question of ethnic and cultural identity were of particular concern at the time of the conference as the state of Czechoslovakia divided into the Czech Republic and Slovakia; what does impress is the careful and measured approach to such topics.

From a personal point of view, the information on rural settlement in Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia is of particular interest, the papers covering both the medieval and early medieval periods. Although there is more concentration on the period from the Great Moravian Empire onwards, there is some discussion of the early Slav settlements, while the later periods, in what would more properly be termed the early modern period, are also covered in the contributions. There is also a number of very useful papers on the material culture and domestic life of the period, covering rural settlement, minor nobility, urban life, castles and ecclesiastical sites. From the perspective of working in Scotland, the richness of the medieval rural settlement evidence in the Czech Republic and in Slovakia is impressive (although this may be less so to those from south of the border). Even more impressive is the level of recovery of material from urban areas. Most of the papers on artefacts rely on material taken from urban excavations and from castles, providing a wealth of material for specialists and those just interested in medieval material culture in general. In volume 16 from 1991, for example, there are papers on medieval mechanical clocks, iron keys, locks and builders' tools and on ceramic and glass assemblages, while volume 15 from 1990 has a paper on plate armour from Plzen as well as papers on glass and tiles.

The papers on environmental archaeology and climatology are of interest, particularly because these are written with reference to work in the West and also to work in the Eastern Bloc which rarely appears in western texts: a paper in the 1990 volume by Kotyza, Pejml and Sládková demonstrates that, whatever the situation in western Europe, in Bohemia the climate fluctuated wildly during the 14th century A.D., worsened considerably in the first half of the 15th century and then stabilized temporarily in the remainder of the century. The single environmental paper, concerning macro-fossils from excavations in the centre of Opava, leaves the reader wishing that other, similar papers had been included, providing as it does a very detailed picture of the botany of the Opava area in the 13th to 14th centuries. It is unfortunate that the environmental papers are so underrepresented. It would be interesting to see the range of faunal species in urban and castle kitchen middens, to be able to compare the Opava evidence to material from elsewhere in the Czech Republic and in Slovakia. However, it may well be that such issues are considered in greater detail in more recent volumes.

Overall, the journals can be considered a useful addition to any university library, providing a body of material which is rarely available to researchers in the West. Certainly, in the current economic climate in Britain, few libraries would be inclined to take the journal as it will be seen as peripheral to the main interests of teaching departments. However, this attitude ignores the position of Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia in the heart of Europe, standing on the border of East and West in a way that few other parts of Central Europe can boast. To study the archaeology of the Czechs and Slovaks is to study the interface between two very different versions of Europe. It is to be hoped that archaeology courses in British universities will begin to include material from areas like Czechoslovakia to a much greater extent. It can only enrich the archaeology that we do.

Church Archaeology. Research Directions for the Future. (C.B.A. Research Report 104.) Edited by John Blair and Carol Pyrah. 21 × 30 cm. 230 pp., 117 figs., 6 tables. York: Council for British Archaeology, 1996. ISBN 1-872414-68-0. Price: £28.00 pb.

The Archaeology of Cathedrals. (Oxford University Committee for Archaeology, Monograph 42.) Edited by Tim Tatton-Brown and Julian Munby. 21 × 30 cm. 239 pp., many figs. and pls. Oxford: Oxford University Committee for Archaeology, 1996. ISBN 0-947816-42-9. Price: £28.00 pb.

The archaeological study of religious structures has developed at a fearsome pace over the last 30 years. Building on the results of immediate post-war excavations in London and elsewhere, subsequent research-driven fieldwork has ensured that church archaeology is now fully integrated into medieval archaeology as a whole. The numbers of those qualified to carry out buildings archaeology is steadily increasing due to a rise in the number of such projects undertaken by professional units and the growth of specialized courses by the universities.

The two volumes reviewed here provide ample proof of the rapid development and refinement of the discipline but also serve to illustrate the high-standards of fieldwork and academic research now prevalent. Each volume is different in that *Directions* comprises commissioned papers, whereas *Cathedrals* presents the proceedings of an Oxford conference held in 1989. The production standards are high, with good photographic reproduction and solid bindings. The pricing of both volumes is within the lower ranges of what one might expect to pay for books such as these. *Directions* is reviewed first, followed by *Cathedrals* and some overall remarks.

Directions is the result of a C.B.A. colloquium set up with the specific aim of producing a volume that both reviewed earlier research strategies whilst setting an agenda for the future. The volume is divided into five multi-authored parts; The Early Church A.D. 400–1200 (Richard Gem, John Blair, Ian Smith, Ian Fisher, Neil Cameron, Lawrence Butler and Nancy Edwards); The Later Middle Ages (Andrew Brown, Christine Peters, Gervase Rosser, Richard Fawcett and Lawrence Butler); Post-Reformation Churches (Roberta Gilchrist, Richard Morris, John Dunbar, Simon Green and A. J. Parkinson); Human Remains (Elizabeth O'Brien and Charlotte Roberts); and, Legislation (Carl Bianco and Edwina Proudfoot). Fittingly, the volume is introduced by Richard Morris and concluded by Warwick Rodwell.

A review of this length does not allow for a fair assessment of all individual contributions. Instead, comments are offered on each of the five sections in the book. Teachers of medieval and post-medieval archaeology will find Parts 1–3 and O'Brien's contribution on cemeteries in Part 4 indispensable aids, as these form judicious, well-referenced summaries of an extensive range of information. The geographical coverage and length of each of the sections is well balanced. In Part 1 Gem provides a thoughtful but focused account of the potential contribution of studies of architectural symbolism, whilst Blair provides an excellent review of the development of the Anglo-Saxon church A.D. 400–1200. Notable in Part 2 is Christine Peters's contribution on Interior and Furnishings which emphasizes the importance of considering the uses of light and space when interpreting structural remains. Section 4, by O'Brien and Roberts, provides a useful account of current thinking about the historical development of cemeteries and the contribution of biological research; both areas have seen substantial developments in recent years. Parts 3 and 5 are strictly beyond the scope of this review but both are useful. Rodwell's considered Conclusion and an extensive bibliography and index follow.

Cathedrals represents a useful collection of work also drawn from a broad geographical area. After another Introduction from Richard Morris, there is a series of papers dealing with the archaeology of individual buildings: Richard Bailey on early Ripon and Hexham;

Peter Davenport on Bath; Mike McCarthy on Carlisle; Tim Tatton-Brown on Chichester and Rochester; Richard Fawcett on Glasgow; Carolyn Heighway on Gloucester; Warwick Rodwell on Lichfield and Wells; John Blair on Oxford; and, John Crook on Winchester. After a review of the influence of the work of Robert Willis on architectural studies by Michael Thompson, Julian Munby provides an insightful essay on Cathedral Carpentry, building on the work of Cecil Hewett. The specialist contributions on Dendrochronology (W. G. Simpson and C. D. Litton) Mouldings (Richard K. Morris) and Mason's Marks (Jennifer Alexander) serve to illustrate the increasing specialization within the discipline, whilst Richard Gem's account of current legislation shows to what degree archaeological research has influenced government policy.

Overall, these important books will require updating in the near future, if the problems and research themes they have identified are properly addressed. The recent publication of excavations and structural surveys at major sites, such as Canterbury Cathedral, Deerhurst, Romsey Abbey, Salisbury Cathedral, York Minster, St Bride's, Fleet Street and Westminster Abbey, when reassessed against the material in both *Directions* and *Cathedrals*, should move the subject significantly further on. *Directions* is an essential purchase for medievalists and is sure to become a standard reference work. *Cathedrals* is an important book for the study of greater churches that deserves a wide readership.

ANDREW REYNOLDS

Visions of the Past. Trends and Traditions in Swedish Medieval Archaeology. (Lund Studies in Medieval Archaeology 19.) Edited by Hans Andersson, Peter Carelli, Lars Ersgård. 17 × 24 cm. 808 pp., 206 figs., 4 tables. Stockholm: Central Board of National Antiquities and Lund University, 1997. ISBN 91-7209-082-0. ISSN 1102-187X. ISSN 0283-6874. Price: £25.00 pb.

This beautifully presented book — the cover showing a late 19th-century painting of the medieval town wall of Visby by the Swedish artist Richard Bergh — is the fruit of a collaboration between the Department of Medieval Archaeology at Lund University and the Excavations Department of the Central Board of National Antiquities. It contains the contributions of 32 authors: university teachers and doctoral students as well as full-time field archaeologists. In this, *Visions of the Past* represents a unique attempt to bridge the increasing gap between researchers and practitioners of archaeology, something that is undoubtedly facilitated by the fact that Sweden still has a State Archaeological Service. The explicit aim of this book, however, is to present to a wider European audience Swedish medieval archaeology in its current state.

The Swedish approach towards the subject is immediately visible in the thematic grouping of contributions in the index, breaking away from the conventional slots of 'towns and trade', 'churches and monasteries' or 'art and symbolism'. Instead we find themes like 'The Long-Term Perspective', 'Mental and Productive Landscapes' and 'The Building as Human Space'. Together with the individual papers they reveal some of the characteristic traits of Swedish medieval archaeology: its inspiration from the French *Annales* School, its interest in anthropological models developed by prehistoric archaeology (in Scandinavia, it should be pointed out, the period *c.* A.D. 400–1050 is still prehistory!) and in current theoretical approaches. Perhaps above all, it is characterized by its willing critical re-evaluation of the archaeological sources and existing interpretations, with a vision of the past focused on its social, political and mental framework.

This produces both interesting and inspiring reading, of which only a few examples can be mentioned here. Anders Andrén ('Paradise Lost. Looking for Deer Parks in

Medieval Denmark and Sweden') puts the medieval deer park on the map both in Scandinavia and in a symbolic and ideological context. Andrén, whose previous works include the process of town formation in medieval Denmark, the iconography on Viking-period picture stones and the relation between artefacts and written sources, has been one of the most influential scholars of medieval archaeology in Sweden for the past fifteen years. Another example is Jes Wienberg ('The Decline and Fall of the Church. The Middle Ages, Gothicization and the Reformation'), whose long-term interest in church-building as a source for medieval society enables him to observe social crises behind periods of intensive building activity.

While these two papers mainly discuss the situation in SW. Sweden, a region that was part of medieval Denmark, *Visions of the Past* also includes contributions on less intensely investigated regions and from partly different perspectives. There are studies on Värmland (Eva Svensson: 'Forest peasants. Their Production and Exchange') and Hälsingland (Mats Mogren: 'Expansion Strategies and Peripheral Dynamics. Of Power and Resistance in Hälsingland'), both in central Sweden, as well as on Norrland (Thomas Wallerström: 'On Ethnicity as a Methodological Problem in Historical Archaeology. A Northern Fennoscandian Perspective'). A number of papers deal with the region of Östergötland, south of the Mälars area. Of particular interest are the investigations at Borg, near the town of Norrköping, which have yielded the first archaeological evidence of a Viking-period cult-building (Ann-Lili Nielsen: 'Pagan Cultic and Votive Acts at Borg. An Expression of the Central Significance of the Farmstead in the Late Iron Age').

As a whole, the volume embodies a range of topics, perhaps dominated by investigations of the medieval rural landscape and questions such as the regularization of villages or the spatial organization of buildings and settlements. Only three papers discuss artefacts, two of which are dominated by exotica (Mats Roslund: 'Crumbs from the Rich Man's Table. Byzantine Finds in Lund and Sigtuna, c. 980-1260'; Peter Carelli: 'Thunder and Lightning, Magical Miracles. On the Popular Myth of Thunderbolts and the Presence of Stone Age Artefacts in Medieval Deposits'). The strong focus on features, and the almost total lack of contributions concerned with material culture, is thought-provoking as a representation of Swedish medieval archaeology. It is curious, therefore, that the only paper that includes everyday objects (Anna-Lena Eriksson: 'Historical Monuments as Archaeological Objects') is found in a section headed 'Off the Beaten Track'!

MÄRIT GAIMSTER

Ruralia 1. Conference Ruralia 1 — Prague, 8th-14th September 1995. Edited by Jan Fridrich, Jan Klápště, Zdeněk Smetánka and Petr Sommer. 21 × 29 cm. 340 pp., 147 figs., pls. and tables. Prague: Institute of Archaeology, 1996. ISBN 80-901934-7-1. Price: not stated pb.

Proceedings of international conferences usually make poor publication fodder. Standards of editing and production are so often sacrificed to the need for speedy production while the multi-lingual *smörgåsbord* of contributions mean that the threads of argument are too readily lost. This volume, like the Château Gaillard papers it mimics, bucks the trend and shows that, if the chronological and geographical spread of papers is balanced and the themes well focused then something really worthwhile can emerge.

This collection includes 38 papers in English (eighteen), German (ten), French (nine) and Italian (one) from the first standing conference on European rural medieval settlement hosted by the Academy of Sciences in the Czech capital in September 1995. British interests, voiced through members of the Medieval Settlement Research Group, are well

represented with papers by Roberts/Wrathmell/Stocker (M.P.P. mapping project), Hooke (Midlands and Southern England), Lewis (East Midlands), Daniels (Tees Valley), Kissock (South Wales), Butler (Wales), Mytum (Western Britain and Ireland). The real value of the volume for me is in its wide European scope. Barry and O'Keeffe provide impressive surveys for Ireland and there are summaries, mostly under ten pages long, of the state of play in Bohemia, Denmark, Moravia, the Netherlands, Norway and Slovakia (all in English) as well as coverage of Austria, Cyprus, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland and Spain in other languages.

Let us get the quibbles out of the way. The '*avant-propos*' by the president of Ruralia, Jean-Marie Pesez sets out the reasoning behind the conference and the volume. His one-page 'manifesto' should have been translated into all the four languages represented. And is it too Anglocentric of me to wish for summaries or at least abstracts of every article in another language? Surely this would extend the readership for many papers, especially if figure captions were also multi-lingual. Greater unity would have been given to the volume if the borders to figures and their north signs had been standardized and an index added. Still, the quality of the final publication has to be balanced against the commendable speed of its production and in a series of publications, as this is intended to be (hence the '1' in the title), a prompt appearance in the shops is paramount. One final jibe, why is it that so many of the U.K. contributions have been seen before in other guises? Perhaps it should not surprise us overly much. It sometimes seems that there are more opportunities to present work to medieval rural settlement meetings than there is the time to do the fieldwork and so it is inevitable that several versions of one paper appear, sometimes with much sketchier and earlier versions appearing well after the publication of the 'definitive' final text.

The strength of the volume is that, for the most part, it does not dwell on individual sites but seeks to provide reviews of the state of knowledge in regions and across nations. The bibliographies are very useful and I have already started to plague my inter-library loan service with requests. Debates on house construction and settlement layout (some with useful reconstructions) are common to most papers but concerns about conservation, the role of the broader social and cultural setting, multi-disciplinary methodologies, the meaning of landscape seemed to permeate only the British contributions. There is no simple answer as to why this should be. The way in which archaeology in Britain is structured and financed must be influential, as also must be our concern for the significant threats to a finite archaeological resource from large numbers of hungry islanders. Differences in approach are conditioned also by the quality of our source materials (aerial surveys, Record Offices, S.M.R.s, soils data, etc.) which encourage the deployment of a wide range of methods to attack a particular problem. A more subtle reason for differences in the British contributions in this volume is archaeological theory. Medieval rural settlement archaeology may not be a key battleground for theoretical jousting but the comments made in some articles about the use and manipulation of public and private space reflect a welcome awareness of wider debates which are, in many respects, particular to a certain trajectory of archaeological thinking.

What is the value of these kinds of events and their subsequent publication? To an extent we go along with our mental checklist and tick off the methods and ideas relevant to our own projects. In part we also reach out for broader themes in rural settlement study which cross national borders (though not nearly enough), not wanting to feel that we are alone in our quests. But the greatest pleasure is learning something new and in this volume I would highlight the article by André Bazzana and Jean-Michel Poisson. At 26 pages this is by far the longest paper in the volume but it is also a full and important assessment of medieval settlement studies along the northern rim of the Mediterranean between the 10th

and 13th centuries. Work like this deserves a wider audience and I am suddenly reminded why I go to conferences.

CHRISTOPHER GERRARD

Atlas Historique de Saint-Denis des Origines au XVIIIe Siècle. (Documents d'Archéologie Française 59.) Edited by Michaël Wyss. 30 × 30 cm. 444 pp., 384 figs. and pls., some in colour. Paris: Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1996. ISBN 2-7351-0618-7. ISSN 1255-2127. Price: FF 450 pb.

It is generally believed (except by the patriotic author of the *Histoire et Dictionnaire de Paris* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1996), s.n. *saint*) that the remains of St Denis, the martyred first bishop of Paris, were in the mid 3rd century interred on a hill top 9 km to the north of the city, 1.2 km from the Seine and 600 m from the road to Rouen. The grave has not been identified, but within a few years the place attracted other burials. Two centuries later, St Geneviève, according to her 'Life', caused a basilica to be erected over the tomb. The cult spread widely, and by the early 7th century the kings of the Franks had adopted St Denis as their patron. The fairs at St-Denis prospered from the 7th century onwards and were of great importance in European trade. As the burial place of the French monarchs, the abbey was periodically enlarged and rebuilt. It became the focus of a busy, well-defended town, which in 1300 had thirteen parishes, over 2,000 households, and a thriving textile industry. St-Denis owed this prosperity to its close association with the French Crown, its proximity to Paris, and the strategic value of its situation for commerce and defence. It was one of the most important *lieux de mémoire* of the kingdom of France, but came to be marginalized under successive republican regimes.

By the 1890s St-Denis was the most populous and one of the most industrialized communes in the Parisian *banlieue*: its condition in the late 20th century can be readily imagined. In 1973 the plan for extending the *métro* and renewing the town centre incorporated a notable agreement between the town and the state, providing for archaeological research within a zone immediately north of the abbey and for rescue archaeology over the more extensive redevelopment area. Over the following two decades St-Denis witnessed one of the most sustained and focused programmes of urban archaeology in France, reported so far in interim publications and in the fine displays of the town museum. Politically, the enterprise has been part of an attempt to recapture memory and identity. That background is reflected in this lavish publication, which should appeal to those with an attachment to the place (the identity of which, however, is now being reshaped by new cultural forces), as well as to archaeologists and historians.

The *Atlas* serves as an introduction to the site and its history before the Revolution, and will be followed by a series of thematic publications on the archaeological discoveries. The first of the five main sections of this present work deals with the origins and development of the abbey church, including its 19th-century restoration. The second focuses on the burials within the abbey church and in the necropolis and burial churches which lay to the north. Then come the monastic buildings, which lay to the south. The next section deals with the town: its churches, hospitals and convents; its fortifications; and its streets, markets and economic geography. The final part covers the territory surrounding St-Denis: its physical characteristics, communications (including wayside crosses and *montjoies*), farms, estates, settlements, and lordships. Text and illustrations are excellently referenced to source, there are full bibliographies and indexes, and design and print-quality are good.

The volume is an impressive compendium (though for parts of it 'scrapbook' would be a more accurate term) of source material culled from many repositories. Visually, it is

feast of maps, of cadastral, estate, and military surveys, of topographical sketches, paintings, and photographs, and of architectural and engineering drawings, ranging from the 16th to the early 20th century; plus archaeological records from 1901 to the present. Moreover, it presents a wealth of quotations from documentary sources: charters, chronicles, customs, rentals, accounts, and visitors' descriptions. Much of this material has not been published before. A mass of information is served up in catalogues or lists: of bridges, mills, street-names, house-signs, and archaeological interventions in the abbey church, to name but a few. There is very little interpretation or provision of context, in either graphic or textual form. Moreover, the linking passages do not always provide a clear guide to topics or their relevance, and the severe spatial logic of the plan has caused some bizarre placing of material. Cross-references and the indexes will generally direct the reader to what is sought, but more effective discussions of significant underlying themes, such as royal burial or the economy of the town, would have been helpful.

About half the material in the volume directly concerns the medieval period; less than half of that deals with strictly archaeological discoveries, of which almost all those described lay within the abbey precinct. There is nothing on the rich collection of excavated artefacts concerning the crafts and life-style of the inhabitants of the medieval town, and very little on its secular buildings. Economy and social life are presented primarily through texts. The emphasis, not entirely consistent but in part reflecting the degree to which the archaeological material is understood so far, is on topography, spatial organization, and public buildings. Queen Arnégonde's sarcophagus is identified (almost invisibly), but its famous contents are not discussed.

Despite these problems, the *Atlas* is a useful and entertaining resource. Archaeologists will look to it primarily for its presentation and mapping of evidence on the necropolis and the abbey church. Medieval historians will also value it for the extensive extracts from unpublished sources, including ordinances governing the crafts of the town and the register of the Lendit fair. The next volumes in the series are eagerly awaited.

DEREK KEENE

A Breton Landscape. By Grenville Astill and Wendy Davies. 16 × 25 cm. 268 pp. 67 figs. and pls., 29 tables. London: UCL Press, 1997. ISBN 1-85728-452-6. Price: not stated hb.

One of the most notable changes in archaeological fieldwork generally in the last twenty years has been the shift away from excavations of single monuments to a wider appreciation of landscape. At times, one might be forgiven for thinking that most of this work has taken place on the prehistoric and classical in the Mediterranean area and that even there the medieval and post-medieval periods have taken a back seat. This attractively produced volume shows what can be achieved in a more northerly district of Europe in a multi-disciplinary survey aimed specifically at the historic periods. Few will be disappointed at the results and we may confidently expect this volume to become a staple of student reading lists.

The East Brittany Survey is a historic 'landscape' project combining field survey, documentary analysis and standing building recording over an area of 128 sq km in the Département of the Morbihan. The aim of the project was threefold: to discover how much land-use had changed in Brittany in the historic past, to develop a methodology for investigation, and to assess the potential for genuine interdisciplinary work. There are two parts to the book, the first and much shorter deals with methods and background information, the second with a chronological run-through of changing land-use from later prehistory to the present day. A final chapter addresses long-term trends in settlement, land-use, landscape and population.

This is amongst the most stimulating of the large landscape surveys so far published. The text is 'tyrannised neither by the spade nor by the word' and is a truly integrated multidisciplinary work. Impressive quantities of data have been accumulated and a great deal of time spent ruminating on their meaning. The authors deserve huge credit for this. All too often recently one gets the feeling that dedicated teams (usually of students) have spent time collecting data only to find that the synthesizing volume is 'written up' too hastily (under the threat of the next R.A.E.?), without making the most of the material.

The techniques used here are not new, but the scale of the work is staggering. Full use is made of the main archives such as charters (for the 9th century), later feudal texts (13th century onwards), parish registers and monastic records (15th–18th centuries) and cadastral material (19th century). The vast numbers of artefacts and data generated can be gauged from the 3,454 hectares or 1,949 fields which were walked at 50 m intervals using 100 m collection units during only five Easter seasons. Five metre grids were then walked over a selection of 43 fields and followed up with 46 machine-cut trenches in twelve locations. Little wonder that the primary analysis of pottery forms and fabrics took ten years to complete, and, as if this were not enough, the external features of some 4,589 pre-1920 standing structures were also recorded (one demonstrably 16th-century, most 19th-century). For a fuller flavour of the fieldwork and finds, the reader is guided towards Davies and Astill's 1994 publication *The East Brittany Survey. Fieldwork and field data* and the two volumes should ideally be viewed together.

There are many highlights to the text. Prehistory and Roman archaeology provide an essential preface while post-medieval and modern archaeology and history is fully discussed, not merely tacked on to the end. But the main strength of the book lies in its overt interdisciplinarity. Through a series of period-based chapters the archaeological and historical evidence is bounced back and forth. I was impressed with the balance of the text, both within and between chapters. For example, the way in which the absence of much datable material from the 5th to the 11th century was offset against an unusually large amount of written data for the 9th century or, in contrast, how large quantities of pottery and multiple written texts were dealt with in the later medieval period. Writing like this is very difficult to do well but the authors succeed because they search for common themes, always seeking dialogue between the historical and the archaeological record.

This is not just a book for those with an interest in Brittany. Some of the problems faced here echo those closer to home and suggest new ways of analyzing fieldwalking data. Working away at the nuances of fabric distributions can sometimes seem to have little reward and I can well imagine that 'months of work sometimes form the stuff of only one or two sentences'. Nevertheless, the detail with which the material has been analyzed is impressive. Pottery scatters are used to identify buried archaeology but the primacy of 'site' identification is avoided and changing patterns of land-use are given equal if not greater emphasis. As much attention is paid to the 'character' of surface assemblages (i.e. combinations of artefact categories such as tile and slate) as to simple sherd counts. Comparisons made between fabric scatters and the locations of monuments of different dates help to identify relationships between rare early medieval fabrics and Roman roads as well as later medieval settlement sites of higher status. How good it is to see modern pottery distributions treated with an even hand and then to have this data properly integrated with analyses of settlement shape and location and standing building records.

One might have wished for more on methods. There was nothing here to suggest much contribution from aerial survey (some photos, no plots), auger survey, ecology, geochemical work, place-name studies, remote sensing, soil study, test-pitting, topographic survey, and other standard tools of landscape survey, though some of these are mentioned. I was also surprised not to find some discussion of conceptual approaches to landscapes, though the mention of Marc Bloch in the first paragraph and the title of the last chapter,

the *longue durée*, suggested one set of affiliations. Possibly this explains my lack of any feeling for the landscape I was reading about, fewer maps and more attention to the way in which people viewed their own landscapes would have been welcome. In spite of these minor points, the text is highly readable and immaculately produced. Little touches in the layout, having complementary maps on facing pages and ensuring that line quality is maintained on all figures, for example, show that the format for a landscape survey need not be A4. Thankfully there was no microfiche but I did wonder whether the raw data could not also go on the web, much as the Pylos Regional Archaeological Project have now done (<http://rome.classics.lsa.umich.edu/welcome.html>). That would save me having to go out and buy the first volume!

CHRISTOPHER GERRARD

Mawgan Porth. A settlement of the late Saxon period on the north Cornish coast, excavations 1949–52, 1954, and 1974. (English Heritage Archaeological Report 13.) By the late Rupert Bruce-Mitford (edited by Robin J. Taylor). 21 × 29.5 cm. xiii + 146 pp., 114 figs. and pls. London: English Heritage, 1997. ISBN 1-85074-613-3. Price: not stated pb.

Rupert Bruce-Mitford will be best remembered for his work on Sutton Hoo and material of its period, but he began his career as an urban 'salvor' archaeologist in Oxford and as a 'rescue' excavator in the first systematic attempt at investigation of a deserted medieval village, Seacourt. His career was then interrupted by the Second World War, but the publication of the excavations that he ran at Mawgan Porth is a reminder that he retained an interest in the problems of the later Middle Ages.

An extended interim report published in 1956 has meant that the site is well known, although I had not realised that further work was carried out there by the late Ernest Greenfield in 1974 — no report was sent to this journal! Part of a third building complex was excavated, but far from fully, so it does not add very much. That the buildings seem not to have been on the same alignment as in the other two complexes may simply be because of the slope of the ground, and no extra information was gained by applying new standards of recording; indeed, rather the reverse, as the editor is forced to write that there were no details in the archive about the section, the fill or the stratigraphic relationship of a putative 'fire-trench', which might therefore be a feature earlier than the room in which it was found rather than one to be taken into account in explaining the room's function. As there are other similar failings, it is hard to put any weight on conclusions about the differences that may have existed between the buildings of the third complex and the other two. This is not the editor's fault, of course, and he has had the frustrating task of raising some of the possibilities without having the means to pursue them.

Both the courtyard complex and the use of a long-house were unique for the late Saxon period when found, and in effect remain so. Jane Grenville, in her recent *Medieval Housing* was unable to find long-house parallels closer than Jarlishof, already known in the 1950s; there are still only a few nearly contemporary sites that have yielded clear building plans, but whether they are those with stone footings like Simy Folds or Ribblehead, or post-built as at St Botolph's, they do not have the opposed doorways and soakaways which were found at Mawgan Porth. As for the very small courtyard with buildings round all four sides and narrow access passages, there are now sites with buildings attached to fenced enclosures, but not to what amount to little more than light-wells. Any lingering doubts that the site was actually much later in date, and that the reported finds were residual, can be dispensed with, however; only two sherds from a jug (or jugs) are later in form than the bar-lug pottery in which Mawgan Porth was prolific, and there are none of the glazed

pitchers and other wares that occur, for instance, at Launceston Castle. The silver penny found in the trial trenches is the only one from the site, and we now know that it was either in a late floor level, or within the rubble fill of one of the walls. It is likely to have been a contemporary loss, but either at the beginning or at the very end of the occupation. It is the most westerly coin-find of the Reform period, as Michael Metcalf's new *Atlas* has shown; he would give marginally different dates for the issue (c. 991 to 997 or a little earlier, rather than 990-5), and also supplies the moneyer's name, Goda.

The penny had not travelled far from Lydford, but is still the best evidence that the inhabitants had — or were perhaps forced to have — outside contacts. Theirs was a very restricted world, however; even allowing for the abandonment being a process that permitted time for clearing up, and was not hurriedly undertaken to escape Vikings, a sea flood or whatever, there was remarkably little iron on the site, and no copper alloy or lead at all. In a good phrase, the occupants are described as being in a 'stone and bone economy'.

A few of the inhabitants presumably ended up in the cemetery only a few yards away, probably enclosed by a fence. The slab-lined and -covered graves are impressive, but it is a pity that there is no information on their occupants, other than that some were adult and that as many were children, mostly in a distinct group. Further details are said to be in the archive; a few more could have been published, if necessary at the expense of some of the pot drawings, which are more than enough to satisfy even the most extreme addiction to bar-lugs. From the cemetery comes the only hint that the site may not have been forgotten after it was abandoned; one of the two contracted skeletons had what the conclusion describes (p. 87) as a 'medieval' sherd on its jaw-bone, yet the burial had disturbed no earlier grave, and must have been dug through a dangerous depth of loose sand to reach the same level as the earlier burials, if the sand cover built up as quickly as the occupation site's abandonment and state of preservation imply. The photograph of the section shows the depth, but also shows a long vertical root-hole; could the sherd have found its way down one of those? If so, it was a remarkable coincidence that it was discarded on the dunes in the first place, and ended up where it did. But it would be no less remarkable that a much later burial should have taken place and been laid out in what was a fairly unorthodox body position, but one which had precedent in the cemetery.

Sand-blow preserved some of the settlement's walls up to a metre high. The amount of stone-tumble has been used to justify the assumption that they went a lot higher originally, and Alan Sorrell's reconstructions take them up to some eight feet. In view of recent work by Stuart Wrathmell and others, discussion of alternative possibilities would have been welcome; could the walls have been half in stone and half in daub, either with wall-plates at the top, or with short posts seated on the stone part, perhaps even crucks, allowing a much more sophisticated carpentry of the roof than is suggested? Was the community too isolated to obtain good timber? The idea of having a heavy turf or thatched roof supported by the crude arrangements shown seems unlikely. Posts inside a wall line are terribly easy to knock askew, and the post-holes which justify the reconstruction may have been merely for internal features. In any case, if the centre post in the byre end was also used as a rubbing-post by cattle, as the report acknowledges that it would have been to judge from the wear on the floor, then the cow in the reconstruction is about to bring the house down! Even calves can apply a lot of weight during the course of a winter. If they were sheltered indoors in this way, the centre post may only have been high enough to encourage them to lean on it rather than on the partition; or it may primarily have served to tether them away from the walls.

But would it have been necessary anyway to protect even young stock in this way? Cornwall is wet and windy rather than cold. Could the 'byres' really have been dairies, which also need drains? Can phosphate tests reveal this sort of different usage, if another

opportunity arises? The site is now sealed by a golf-course, but would repay further work. Or am I just curious to see whether a modern excavator would use a dumper-truck to remove the sand cover, rather than have a private light railway built, as they did in those heroic post-war days?

DAVID A. HINTON

Kirche und Gräberfeld des 11.–13. Jahrhunderts unter dem Rathausmarkt von Schleswig. (Ausgrabungen in Schleswig: Berichte und Studien 12.) 18 × 25 cm. 284 pp., many figs., pls., maps and tables. Neumünster: Wachholtz Verlag, 1997. ISBN 3-529-01462-1. ISSN 0723-7987. Price: DM 118 pb.

Volume 12 of the series of reports on excavations in the originally southern Danish medieval town of Schleswig deals with the excavation of one end of a church and part of its cemetery in the modern town square. The church was a stone built structure, only 7 m wide internally and guessed to have been some 10–13 m long, that seems to have had twin towers at its western end. It was built upon an area already being used for burial, and a sand layer associated with its construction is dated by dendrochronology and stratigraphy to c. 1120.

About 240 graves were found in a number of trenches opened around the church, mostly on the north and south sides. The cemetery has been far from fully excavated. The skeletons are exceptionally well preserved, with even hair surviving in some cases. Most of the bodies were laid in equally well-preserved wooden coffins, although a few are in brick or tufa cists. One burial lay upon a bed of charcoal, a phenomenon which is already known in a few other cases in medieval southern Scandinavia. The dendro-dates from the coffins point to burial within the period 1082–1205, although one apparently re-used piece of wood goes back to about 1060.

The small finds are relatively few: some 332 potsherds, only a handful of them from grave fills, and two perforated cockle-shell pendants and frequent sticks which are interpreted as pilgrim emblems. The textile remains from nineteen graves, however, are meticulously analysed and discussed by Inga Hägg. Most of the sample, it should be noted, represents the early 12th century, and a high proportion of the graves selected are those of children and adolescents. The Christian rite of shrouded burial is clearly represented by the textiles, although some five graves — mostly adults — of persons also buried in shirts are thought to reflect the clothing of the dead in baptismal shirts. Somewhat tendentiously, the occurrence of straw and herb remains in graves is discussed in terms of surviving 'pagan' practices.

The rich osteological potential of the material is well discussed, primarily by Gisela Grupe. As many as 259 individuals can be identified, although not all can be classified in every demographic category (e.g. by age or sex). The great majority can, however, be assigned to age groups, amongst which the mortality rates show some 33% dying under the age of twelve but nearly 38% passing 40. Only the bodies of adolescents or older persons (12+) can be sexed, and amongst these there is a striking preponderance of males, 95:63. The simple and ample explanation of this discrepancy would appear to be the fact that there is a clear concentration of male burials south of the church, where the greatest area has been excavated, with more female and children's burials to the north. However the report also speculates upon the presence of more men in 'professional' capacities within the town.

Useful, though hardly surprising, data about life expectancy and lifestyle are obtained. There is a higher death-rate for females in the 20–40 age-range, for which the stresses of

childbearing provide the obvious explanation. There is a full pathological study of the diseases, stresses and traumas suffered by individuals as revealed by their bones, and analysis of the diet, which predictably reveals a heavy reliance on marine resources. Of particular interest is a study of children's nutrition and health, which implies that children were weaned at a riskily early age.

This is a report which has been produced to a high quality, with excellent illustrations and useful English summaries. The excavations have provided substantial additional evidence for our knowledge of the medieval church and rites of southernmost Scandinavia, but will be of importance above all, I think, for the contribution they can make to the comparative study of medieval populations, rural and urban.

JOHN HINES

Winchester. By Tom Beaumont James 19 × 25 cm. 128 pp., 90 figs. and pls. including 12 colour. London: Batsford/English Heritage, 1997. ISBN 0-7-13474475. Price: £15.99 pb.

King Alfred, commemorated by a dramatic bronze statue erected in Winchester's High Street, was reburied in A.D. 1100, after a magnificent procession, in Hyde Abbey, with his wife and son, Edward the Elder. Their remains were disturbed when looting occurred at the Dissolution; and again in 1788 when a gaol was built on the site. Current excavations (reported in *The Times* 24 July 1998) are once again seeking Alfred's bones. This series of events encapsulates three of the main themes of Winchester's story as told in Tom James's book. A royal connection, the dominance of ecclesiastical institutions (and therefore architecture) for most of its history and a past elucidated by successive campaigns of digging, some motivated by curiosity, some piratical and, the more recent, scientific.

After a significant settlement started in the Iron Age, Winchester achieved prominence as a cantonal capital in the Roman period and emerged in the 8th century as the prime focus of royal and ecclesiastical power in Wessex. Thanks to the work of exceptionally gifted teams of archaeologists and historians such as Biddle, Keene and Crook, the dramatic story of the city in the late Saxon, Norman and Plantagenet period has been reconstructed in great detail. This book, characterized by a robust and entertaining style and written with verve and imagination sorts out its subject matter with great clarity of exposition, doubtless the result of its author's enthusiastic teaching to the students of King Alfred's College over the years. It is richly illustrated with photographs, line drawings (some re-drafted by students) and colour pictures. This results, however, in a lack of consistency in style. Figure 20 looks as if it has come out of a Bartholomew's town guide with its schematic roads all out of scale. The scale is missing from Figure 49. Figures 37 and 39 purporting to be reconstructions of the castle in the times of Henry II and Henry III are identical. The remarkable coloured displays of lands belonging to institutions in Winchester in 1417 and 1590 are captioned curiously 'Copyright English Heritage'. They are, in fact copied from publications of the Winchester Research Unit with whom the copyright still rests, no doubt a mistake on the behalf of English Heritage but credit must go where credit is due. These are niggles; in general James's book is as deftly illustrated as it is trenchantly written.

So what emerges? Winchester's street plan now seems undoubtedly laid out in a planned late Saxon development, on top of but not coinciding in general with the Roman grid. The royal palace despite being clearly sited, on topographical grounds, near to the High Street between the Pentice and Market Street, stubbornly declines to show up in the archaeological record. Perhaps it is unrealistic to seek a distinction between royal and

ecclesiastical work when itinerant kings over northern Europe were founding monasteries for royal residential as well as religious purposes. James is particularly sensitive to the inferences which can be drawn from a close study of building materials (pp. 43, 54, 107). Winchester seems to have reached its apogee by the end of the 13th century; its subsequent decline is registered by the phenomenal loss of parish churches from 54 in c. 1300 to a handful at the Reformation; a stark reminder of falling population figures. Parallel with this the cathedral priory and the bishop remained, in James's phrase, 'stratospherically wealthy'. After a comparatively stable and comfortable 18th century the city's population began to take off and Winchester acquired the Victorian urban 'amenities', at a distance. As James points out, the railway to Southampton in 1839 isolated West Hill. This led to the relocation of Winchester cemetery c. 1840, the prison c. 1850, and the Hospital 1864-68. Further institutions for the physical and psychological control of the working class, the Police Headquarters and the Diocesan Training College, were also moved here. The gasworks completed the unpleasant medley in this isolated part of the city.

As one would expect from the theme of the series the archaeological evidence greatly outweighs that derived from documents. Consequently the period up to the Renaissance takes up the bulk of the book (pp. 1-96). The years from 1660 to 1997 are dealt with more summarily and occasionally at breakneck speed (pp. 97-128). Here, however, James the historian is in his element, providing a pyrotechnic display of research desideranda. His own Winchester research project, modestly kept under wraps, promises to provide a data base for future analysis; it takes up from where Derek Keene left off, at the end of the Middle Ages. The book ends with a guided tour round the city and a glossary. At all stages James is conscious of writing respectable academic archaeology which will be intelligible and indeed riveting to a wider public. He emphasizes, too, that while Hampshire has an architecturally exciting (neo-Japanese) Record Office in Winchester, it, as yet, lacks a museum commensurate with the importance of the flood of material evidence welling up from Winchester's past in the last half-century. No doubt the marketing arm of the publishers was responsible for the absurd claim 'the first authoritative account of Winchester's development' which disfigures the front cover. The bibliography belies this.

JOHN STEANE

Castle Rising Castle, Norfolk (East Anglian Archaeology Report 81.) By Beric Morley and David Gurney. 21 x 30 cm., xii + 152 pp., microfiche. 103 figs., 17 pls., 34 tables. Dereham: Norfolk Museums Service, Field Archaeology Division, 1997. ISBN 0-905594-23-1. Price £13.00 pb.

Norfolk has the distinction of possessing three of the finest Norman keeps in the country: Castle Acre, fragmentary but excavation has yielded a remarkable transition from 'proto-keep' to keep; Norwich where Henry I's keep was clothed in decorative blank arcading like an ecclesiastical building; Castle Rising, a generation later, also with some decoration, the most attractive, even as a roofless ruin. All three keeps have the characteristic unequal division and were defended by huge earthworks. At all three castles there have been large-scale excavations in recent years: the subject of this review is the work that has been done off and on at Castle Rising since 1970. Of 32 contributors three have died before publication, one as early as 1980, a fair indication of the delays! The excavation entirely, and the publication presumably mainly, was financed by the State; the castle is in the guardianship of English Heritage. The microfiche deal exclusively with animal remains so the report can be largely read without special equipment.

Let us start with the keep, the magnificent building described by the late Allen Brown in the guidebook. Here the negative evidence is invaluable: until the sequence of buildings

starts on the south side of the keep in *c.* 1300 there is scant trace of any occupation outside the keep: there seems little doubt that the keep on the first floor was the main residence, an important point in view of the current controversy about the permanent occupation of keeps. The movement from upstairs to downstairs in the 14th century is a familiar practice of medieval life.

The excavation revealed evidence below the forebuilding for a substantial earlier building with convex sides, identified as a boat-shaped hall. This brings us to one of the most controversial aspects of the castle, the church partially buried under the great bank of the ringwork. It is a tripartite structure, apsidal chancel, tower and nave with opposed doorways at its west end (reconstruction on p. 26). Morley opts for a date of *c.* 1100, not pre-Conquest, nor a castle chapel since it fell into disuse and was partly submerged under the earthworks. The implication seems to be that the hall beneath the keep and church go together at the original village centre. When the castle was built the village was refounded as an intended borough with another church. That seems a useful working hypothesis.

The earthworks at Castle Rising are of massive proportions, some of the largest in the country. It is of interest that the castle relied on earthworks for its defence until the later middle ages, and it is of even greater interest that the keep and original bank are of one design, surely a very unusual state of affairs. The bank was raised two or three times to produce the huge mound we see today. Another controversial feature is the two square projecting earthworks on east and west which look as though they belong to a rectangular enclosure cut across by the oval ringwork of the castle. Morley makes a convincing case based on work on the western annex that this appearance was fortuitous. The western annex was apparently abandoned early while the larger eastern one was retained in use as a barbican. The amount of earth-shifting to alter gradients is impressive.

The multiplicity of periods that the excavators create on the group of 14th and 15th century buildings to the south of the keep seems excessive when in the reconstructions they look very much alike. The most interesting building is the timber kitchen (Fig. 47). The cooking hearths in medieval kitchens are normally against the walls or in the corners and one must have some misgivings about the practicability of cooking in the centre of such an inflammable tower.

The finds from the castle were profuse and a notable and praiseworthy feature of the report is the care and detail with which they are described and illustrated, particularly the small metalwork. The 'zoological evidence' is again very detailed (some in tables and figures in microfiche and will surely provide invaluable comparative material for other sites). The fall in cattle numbers in the medieval period compared to before and after, as opposed to the rise in pig and sheep, is clearly important although this review is not the place to expand on it.

Appendix ii, the 'Guide to the Archive' reveals the scale of work and the sort of costs that must have been involved during the excavations which were formidable. It has certainly left us with a very much clearer picture of this memorable Norfolk castle.

MICHAEL THOMPSON