

Short Reviews

Introduzione all'archeologia medievale: Storia e ricerca in Italia. By Sauro Gelichi. 12 × 22 cm. 180 pp., 77 figs. Rome: La Nuova Italia Scientifica (Studi Superiori, 350), 1997. ISBN 880430-0552-9. Price: Lire 36,000 pb.

This book forms part of a very useful series of affordable texts which introduce Italian students in particular to themes and periods of archaeology. The series also incorporates translations of works by British and American scholars such as T. W. Potter's *Changing Landscape of South Etruria* (published as Studi NIS Archeologia vol. 4 in 1985), G. Barker's *Landscape and Society: Prehistoric Central Italy* (translated in 1984). The series is not limited to Italian archaeology, however, as seen in wider studies by E. Zanini, *Introduzione all'archeologia bizantina* (1994), and in translations such as of E. Harris's *Principles of Archaeological Stratigraphy* (1983). Gelichi's *Introduzione* in fact expands on the multi-authored volume edited by R. Francovich, *Archeologia e storia del medioevo italiano* (vol. 3, 1987), which contains discussions on various sites covered and updated here. It also precedes publication of a further volume on *The Archaeology of Late Antiquity* (noted on p. 15).

Gelichi's book offers an extremely tidy and readable attempt to chart the emergence of a 'medieval archaeology' in Italy from its early Germanic burial-oriented origins to its role as a modern science with links across disciplines (Chapter 2). It discusses its academic and institutional growth and also highlights continued concerns over safeguarding the medieval heritage — problematic as this is so extensive (Chapter 3). Furthermore Gelichi sets Italian medieval archaeology into a wider European context to see how advanced its methods and questioning are. To do this he utilizes an extremely useful series of case studies supported by sufficient illustrations — which are displayed in his Chapter 4. These draw across the whole medieval period, from late antique fortified sites (Invillino) and Ostrogothic palace villas (M. Barro) to medieval mining communities (Rocca San Silvestro) and tower houses (Pisa); and from early-medieval glazed wares to late-medieval iron tool production. In many cases the examples chosen are fairly familiar to scholars knowledgeable of Italian medieval archaeology (and, as stated, largely drawn from the 1987 Francovich edited volume), but to new readers these are excellent and wide-ranging examples, supported by a good bibliography, which will provide an important foundation. Gelichi also offers a valuable review of evolving perceptions of burial archaeology (pp. 33–51, 157–69).

There are imbalances within the examples utilized, although these largely reflect imbalances within Italian medieval archaeology itself: hence there is greater interest given to settlements, houses, and monasteries of the early medieval period (6th–9th centuries) and little depth to the full medieval deposits of towns and later monastic activities; similarly, the emphasis on medieval ceramics of the 11th century and later reflects Gelichi's own research. However, this is no serious imbalance: Gelichi's archaeological work has covered both the early and full medieval periods and this allows him to convey clearly the information offered. Accordingly, this volume forms an excellent introduction to the current status of medieval archaeology in Italy.

NEIL CHRISTIE

Wroxeter: Life and Death of a Roman City. By Roger White and Philip Barker. 17 × 25cm. 160 pp. 100 figs. and pls. including 25 in colour. Stroud: Tempus, 1998. ISBN 07524-1409-7. Price: £14.99 pb.

Wroxeter has long been cited as a valuable guide to observing the latest phases of Romano-British town life and in interpreting sub-Roman residual urban authority. Unburdened by medieval and modern successors, the near-open site has seen extensive excavations providing vital insights into evolving (and decaying) urban structures. The results of the most recent and substantial of these campaigns were set out in the recent English Heritage publication *The Baths Basilica Wroxeter: Excavations 1966-90* (P. Barker, R. White, K. Pretty, H. Bird and M. Corbishley, 1997).

White and Barker's companion volume is a more accessible and affordable summary and appraisal, and one which also gives due weight to the site's Anglo-Saxon and medieval phases. Drawing upon the ongoing multidisciplinary Wroxeter Hinterland Project, this attractive book sets out to outline the present state of knowledge regarding the site. Opening with an account of the lengthy history of antiquarian and archaeological investigation of the city, seven chronologically arranged chapters detail Wroxeter's development from Roman fortress to medieval village.

Particular attention is paid to the occupational sequence on the site of the Roman baths basilica. Here, during the late 5th and early 6th centuries, a market appears to have occupied the roofless building shell. From c. 530-70 the basilica was demolished and a total of 33 timber-framed buildings of varying size and function constructed, the group dominated by a centrally placed substantial, possibly multi-storey structure. The baths' *frigidarium* may have functioned as a church during this period, suggesting that the resident of the central building — and the individual likely to have been responsible for the remodelling — was a bishop, a scenario recognized in Gaul in which local aristocratic figures assumed Church leadership. Claims of contemporary building activity across other *insulae* and an implied substantial Dark-age urban population are, however, somewhat questionable, largely on the results of insecurely dated and ephemeral structures. This 'ecclesiastical stronghold' was not long-lived. By the mid-7th century the town centre was abandoned and settlement concentrated in the north-eastern corner of the Roman defences, under the site of the present day village. The authors postulate the presence here of a monastic community situated within an identifiable (defensive?) enclosure, perhaps acting as a thread of continuity through to the establishment of the Anglo-Saxon village in the 7th century. Documentary and topographical evidence of a monastic origin for the Anglo-Saxon church of St Andrew is compelling. Subsequently the village underwent steady growth throughout the medieval period, with 33 families in 1350 and peaking in 1812 with 112 houses prior to its rapid 1840-80 decline.

The highly readable text is well supported by illustrations. Overall, the images are crisp and sharp throughout, although detail in the more complex excavation phase plans is inevitably lost in reduction (e.g. fig. 10). Conversely, other plans would have benefited from further reduction of scale (for example, figs. 13, 15 and 28). In addition, the complexity of the post-Roman occupational sequence at the baths basilica would have benefited from phase plans. These are, however, minor criticisms, and this book can be recommended as offering a lucid, well-reasoned and affordable overview of the current state of knowledge regarding Wroxeter and its hinterland. With its useful glossary of specialist terms and pointers to further reading, it will prove of use to non-specialists wishing for a succinct overview. For those more *au fait* with the site, it serves to broaden out discussion from the more focused and technical English Heritage 1997 publication and provides a useful and affordable supplement until the latter's companions appear. The

authors state at the outset that they hope to bridge the 'uncomfortable gap' between the general reader and the specialist. With this book they have succeeded admirably.

ROGER KIPLING

Bones from Medieval Deposits at 16-22 Coppergate and Other Sites in York. (The Archaeology of York, 15/5). By J. M. Bond and T. P. O'Connor. 18 × 24 cm. xxviii + 130 pp., 17 figs., 4 pls., 19 tbs. York: York Archaeological Trust/C.B.A., 1999. ISBN 1-827414-93-1. Price: £16.00 pb.

Craft, Industry and Everyday Life. Bone, Antler, Ivory and Horn from Medieval York. (The Archaeology of York. The Small Finds 17/12). By A. MacGregor, A. J. Mainman and N. S. H. Rogers. 21 × 29.5 cm. 200 pp., numerous illustrations. York: York Archaeological Trust/C.B.A., 1999. ISBN 1-872414-99-0. Price: £22.50 pb.

The York Archaeological Trust maintains the high standard of its fascicule publication with two volumes that study human use of animal resources.

Bond and O'Connor compare assemblages later than the Anglo-Scandinavian period from different sites across the town, identifying the small college at The Bedern as having an economy unlike that of the rest of the town — and in contrast to the Gilbertine Friars in Fishergate. Otherwise, Coppergate stands slightly apart from the rest because pigs were probably being kept in the open spaces near-by, a use of marginal land on the edge of towns that may well have been typical. An urban craft, horn-working, is revealed by concentrations of goat horn-cores, though there are very few clearly identifiable bones from the animal. Until some method of distinguishing them unequivocally from sheep is found, a potentially significant contribution of archaeology to the general study of the medieval agricultural economy will remain unexploited; the peasants may have been keeping more of the rapacious goat than documentation reveals.

The great expansion of sheep-rearing is one development, in Yorkshire particularly from the Cistercian houses, that written evidence reveals. It is not so clear in the archaeological record at York, where the proportion of sheep bones increases only slightly, cattle remaining the main meat animal. One change from the Anglo-Scandinavian practice is that the lambs were more likely to be culled in summer than in winter, with a second cull of one-year-olds the following summer. This is evidence of milking, another practice which may be under-represented in the documents. Most of the sheep bones are from older animals, however, which certainly reflects the importance of wool.

Sheep bones were much less used than cattle for making artefacts, with pig fibulae made into pins. Antler, however, was decreasingly used, which is seen as a reflection of Forest Law taking effect as the Norman Conquest began to bite. The evidence for working of bone also declines, however, so perhaps the stigma of trades associated with blood and dirt also had an influence. It is argued that at Coppergate there is not enough waste for a permanent workshop to have operated, so the mode of production may have involved itinerants going from fair to fair. The market even in Anglo-Scandinavian York should surely have been large enough to sustain sedentary craftworkers, however, and the extant waste may not be giving the whole story. One increasingly specialized craft, dominated by sedentary males, was textile production, and Penelope Walton Rogers contributes an important section on the tools involved, which augments the fascicule on production which she published in 1997.

Eye-catching objects include an almost complete box-lid made from bone strips nailed to a wooden backing, and a whale-bone sword pommel. Whale also features amongst the exotica in the faunal collection, as it was food that counted as fish, not meat,

on fast-days. So did porpoise *porc-poisson*. Why must details like that stick in the memory when the important conclusions drift off into thin air?

DAVID A. HINTON

Die Wikingerzeit Gotlands I: Abbildungen der Grabfunde. (Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademien) By Lena Thunmark-Nylén. 23.5 × 30.5 cm. 396 pp. including 511 illustrated objects. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1996. ISBN 91-7402-241-5. Price: SEK 360 pb.

Die Wikingerzeit Gotlands II: Typentafeln. (Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademien) By Lena Thunmark-Nylén. 23.5 × 30.5 cm. 18 pp. + 316 pls. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1998. ISBN 91-7402-287-3. Price: not stated pb.

Although the Baltic island of Gotland has been a province of Sweden since the Middle Ages, it was virtually an independent state during the Viking Period when its culture differed in a number of respects from that of the Swedish mainland. In this connection, the well-known 'picture-stones' come immediately to mind, as catalogued by Sune Lindqvist, *Gotlands Bildsteine* (2 vols., 1941-42), and continued by E. Nylén and J. P. Lamm whose study, *Stones, Ships and Symbols* (1988), lists more recent finds. The remarkable concentration of silver hoards provides another example, highlighting the Viking period wealth of Gotland material familiar from the detailed catalogue by Mårten Stenberger, *Die Schatzfunde Gotlands der Wikingerzeit* (2 vols., 1947-58). Then there is the Gotlandic female jewellery which differed in type from that worn in the rest of Scandinavia. The ubiquitous oval brooch, which is known from throughout the Viking world, from Iceland to Russia, was replaced on Gotland by a brooch in the form of a stylized animal-head, for which see the doctoral thesis by Anders Carlsson, *Djurluvsformiga spännen och gotländsk vikingatid* (1993). These brooches, worn in pairs in the same manner as the oval brooches, were characteristically accompanied by a third brooch belonging to another distinctive type of Gotlandic jewellery in the form of a box-shaped or 'drum' brooch, which formed the subject of Lena Thunmark-Nylén's thesis, *Vikingatiden dossspännen — teknisk stratigrafi och verkstadsgruppering* (1983).

Now, in the tradition of Birger Nerman's *Die Vendelzeit Gotlands* (2 vols., 1969-75), comes *Die Wikingerzeit Gotlands* of which the first two volumes are reviewed here. These are both devoted to plates and are the first in a series by Lena Thunmark-Nylén which is to be completed by a full catalogue of the artefactual material, with systematized description and chronological discussion. Vol. 1, sub-titled *Abbildungen der Grabfunde* (1995), illustrates photographically, by grave-group, the artefacts from archaeologically investigated cemeteries and Vol. 2, *Typentafeln* (1998), illustrates 'about 10-20 per cent of the Viking Age artefact material from Gotland', all shown actual size where possible. The latter is arranged 'according to categories and types, beginning with brooches, dress pins and belt fittings and ending with weapons, vessels and miscellanea'. These are superb compendia and together provide a splendid visual reference source which will, with the completion of the series, place the Viking Period archaeology of Gotland on an entirely new footing.

JAMES GRAHAM-CAMPBELL

Catalogue of Seals in the National Museum of Wales. Volume 2: Ecclesiastical, Monastic, and Collegiate Seals with a supplement concerning Wales. By David Williams. 22 × 30 cm. 67 pp. including 11 pp. of illustrations. Cardiff: National Museums and Galleries of Wales, 1993. ISBN 0-7200-0452-7. Price: £14.50 pb.

David Williams is to be congratulated on persevering with his work of cataloguing the seal dies and the seal impressions in the National Museum of Wales. Whereas the first

volume dealt with Seal Dies, Welsh Seals and Papal Bullae, the second volume lists Ecclesiastical, Monastic and Collegiate Seals and brings the Welsh elements of volume 1 up to date. There will clearly be a third volume, which is rather shyly announced in a note on p. 52. It would have been useful to the reader if the total number of volumes and their scope had been clearly enunciated at the beginning of volume 2.

It is important to realize that the seals catalogued in this volume are the Museum's collections of seal impressions. Many of them are in materials such as gutta percha, sulphur and plaster casts, wax, and plasticine. The history of seal casting, particularly in the early 19th century, still needs to be written, and some valuable material towards such a study is tucked away in the supplementary notes to volume 1 on p. 52. Could volume 3 explore this more fully?

The Museum's collections were built up, though this is not stated, as a reference collection and this volume relates mainly to English and not to Welsh seals. There is a small number of Continental seals. It is interesting to reflect on the lack of interest in seal impressions in England which means that the latest publication on such English seals is in a Welsh publication.

The seals are described in detail though there is little evidence given about when the seal impression was made. The catalogue is erratic in stating whether a matrix exists. In some it is clearly stated, while, in others, it is not stated though anyone following up the references would be able to work out where it is. For instance, for M63 the seal of the Augustinian Priory of Cottingham, the remark is made that the ownership of the matrix can be traced back to 1720, but it does not mention that it is today on display in the British Museum. This may appear to be pedantic but it is important in cataloguing seal impressions to note which are the impressions from existing and easily available matrices and which are the sole examples of now lost matrices.

This is a most useful catalogue of some 300 impressions, illustrated by eleven pages of photographs. One wishes that there had been the opportunity for more illustrations and that the principles on which the illustrations had been selected were clearly set out.

Today there is greater interest, particularly on the Continent, in the study of seals and the information that they can give to the medieval archaeologist on all sorts of matters such as costume, armour, place and personal names, heraldry, status of religious houses, iconography, and style of address. It is to be hoped that Dr Williams will continue his work and that future catalogues will be more widely illustrated. They should certainly serve as the foundations for the more detailed studies of the seals of particular types of institutions, both religious and secular, which are sorely needed.

JOHN CHERRY

Castle and Church (Castrum Bene, 5/1996). Edited by L. Kajzer and H. Paner. 238 pp. 16 × 21.5 cm. Many figs. and pls. Gdańsk: Archaeological Museum, Gniez Castle, 1996. ISBN 83-85824-45-6. Price: not stated pb.

The *Castrum Bene* series is an eastern European equivalent to the long-standing biennial Château Gaillard conference. The first *Castrum Bene* symposium took place in 1989 in Hungary, and took 13th-century castles as its theme. Later meetings covered a variety of topics, the themes of the last two being bishops' castles and earth-and-timber castles, although the published proceedings are still awaited from the Hungarian organizers.

The conference under review was the first to be held outside Hungary, in Poland, and took place in 1996 in the restored castle of Gniez. Castle and church was set as the theme,

and thus the main subjects under consideration were those castles built by the Teutonic Knights. These structures form an important part of the historic architecture of northern Poland. There are fifteen papers in the published proceedings, mainly in German, but with some in English, and the comment is made in the foreword that not everyone who gave presentations at the conference submitted material for publication, as was the original intention.

To take just two papers, Pavel Bolina's on Moravian castles and Zeljko Tomcic's on fortifications in medieval Croatia, it becomes apparent that this volume is not just a study of the buildings of the Teutonic knights, but those of the military religious orders generally. Bolina shows that the arrival of the first military order in Moravia occurred in the second half of the 12th century, with the Hospitallers, with the Teutonic Knights arriving about the end of the 1100s. Although not as widespread in Moravia as their brother orders, grants of land to the Templars begin towards the end of the first half of the 13th century, and this order was also a more prodigious castle builder. Many of the strongholds built were either destroyed in the Hussite wars in the 15th century, or disappeared from view with their incorporation into Renaissance palaces. However, the ruins of the Templar castle of Templstejn, first mentioned in 1298, have attracted considerable attention in print.

In 1102 Croatia was incorporated into the kingdom of Hungary, and from the middle of the 12th century a number of estates were created by Hospitallers and Templars. Tomcic shows that over the last few years the foundations laid down by historians have enabled archaeologists to record the evidence for the activity of the military orders, mainly through fortified towns and churches. Much evidence has been lost, and although some traces remain of these sites, of one, Pakrac (or St John) there is no trace. However, as the author emphasizes, there is much work here for field archaeologists to be kept busy for many years to come; the study of these sites is in its infancy.

This is a useful volume, reminding us in the west of Europe just how active castle studies are further east, although the quality of the illustrations is very uneven.

JOHN R. KENYON

Marseille, les Ateliers de Potiers du XIII^e S. et le Quartier Sainte-Barbe (V^e–XVI^e S.). By Henri Marchesi, Jacques Thiriot and Lucy Vallauri, with Marie Leenhardt. 21 × 29 cm. 389 pp., 329 figs. and pls. and 8 colour pls. Paris: Documents D'Archéologie Française, 65, 1997. ISBN 2-7351-0621-7, ISSN 1255-2127. Price: FF 340 pb.

A 1991 rescue excavation in the Sainte-Barbe suburb, 100 m north-east of the medieval city wall of Marseille, revealed an area, under the jurisdiction of the bishop, specializing in pottery production in the 13th century. Earlier occupation comprised a Greek and Roman necropolis and 5th- to 7th-century A.D. domestic occupation. The first documentary reference to *Burgi oleriorum* was in 1264. The quarter was destroyed by the city council in 1358 to clear the area in front of the city walls in a period of political instability following the Black Death.

For the first time in France, urban pottery workshops have been analysed over a period of 100 years. Their products included a wide range of coarse unglazed cooking wares and table wares, with the earliest maiolica to be found so far in France. The Islamic kiln-type, and the Islamic pottery forms, suggest the influence of foreign craftsmen, shedding new light on the development of technology and the origins of maiolica in the south of France.

The pottery quarter was organized with regular plots along a central lane. The mud-built buildings, on stone foundations and with tiled roofs, were set in yards with numerous pits and little depressions which may have been used for the preparation of clay. Nine single-flue updraught kilns of Islamic type were found, with rows of fire bars, to support the pots, set in the kiln sides. Many trivets were found but there were few potters' tools. Three small kilns for the preparation of glazes and oxides were also found, giving new data for the understanding of the manufacturing processes, which are quite foreign to those employed for the usual grey wares produced in the region.

400,000 sherds were found. There was a wide range of 50 forms made for the kitchen and table, storage and lighting, together with several exotic types. Eighty per cent of the products were whitewares, and 10% of these were tin-glazed; 3% were decorated in green and brown; The kitchen wares were red. In the first phase the motifs were Islamic, comparable with North Africa and Sicily, with Languedoc and Provençal geometric patterns appearing in the later 13th and early 14th centuries. International contacts were confirmed by the presence of eastern Mediterranean Byzantine sgraffiti, Italian and Maghreb proto-maiolica and other types from nearby Catalonia and Liguria.

The volume is clearly set out in double columns, with figures and plates in the text. The various sections are well spaced and easy to find. The introduction sets out the circumstances of the excavation of an area 60 × 35 m prior to the building of an underground car park. The second chapter describes the pre-medieval structures and finds, then goes on to describe the medieval features and discuss the finds. Chapter 3 deals with the kilns and methods of production while Chapter 4 describes the pottery made there. There is a useful series of drawings of the various types, setting out their form and function. This is followed by a more detailed typology, with details of the individual vessels. Unusual types include albarelli, horns, spindle whorls, water pipes and distilling apparatus. Green and brown decorated floor tiles were also made. A series of charts sets out the development of the various forms. An annex by Jacques Thiriot presents an important study of kilns with fire bars in the Mediterranean basin and in the Middle East, as well as a discussion of the technology.

In 1993 an extension to the Musée d'Histoire de Marseille was opened to display the Sainte-Barbe finds. There is a 1/10 model of the area and its buildings, together with kiln reconstructions. This admirably prompt response to the site, recognizing its importance for the city, provides a welcome, but alas rare, complement to a well-presented and thorough account of one of the most important medieval kiln excavations in France in recent years.

JOHN G. HURST

The Great Barn of Bredon: Its Fire and Reconstruction (Oxbow Monograph 76). By F. W. B. Charles. 22 × 32 cm. viii + 96 pp., 146 figs. and pls. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1997. ISBN 1-900188-27-9. Price: £20.00 hb.

Bredon Barn, Worcestershire, is one of the group of great medieval barns in the western Cotswolds. This book briefly describes the barn's structure and history but its emphasis is on the fire of April 1980 that destroyed much of the original timberwork and on the reconstruction carried out by the author thereafter. It is very fully illustrated, mainly with photographs of the damage and the restoration work.

From tree-ring evidence, Bredon was built in the mid-14th century (earliest possible felling date 1335 using recent sapwood estimates; incorrectly cited as a felling date range on p. 21). The barn is unusual in two ways. First, it stands on an episcopal manor (of the

Bishop of Worcester) rather than being monastic. Second, it is fully aisled rather than using crucks or base-crucks which are more characteristic of the group. The structural description lacks detail, e.g. on jointing or scantling; all the drawings lack scales and it is only possible to establish the thickness of the stone walls by calculation. Brief comparisons with five other barns in the Cotswold group shows that Bredon is the widest at 44 ft. overall (13.5 m), only approached by the other aisled barn, Great Coxwell (43 ft.; 13 m); it is, however, the shortest of the six. Thus, aisled construction was probably chosen to achieve the wide span, perhaps to compensate for external limitations on the length. The timber structure seems old-fashioned for its date, with strainer beams as well as tiebeams on each truss. These allowed the rearing of H-shaped frames, carrying with them the tiebeam braces; the tiebeams were only dropped on after the arcade plates were added. Also old-fashioned are the compound principal rafters, with cleats between the two members. A notable feature is the reeve's room over one of the two porches, complete with built-in cupboard and fireplace with chimney.

A chapter by Christopher Dyer places the barn in its historical and agrarian context. It was built while the Bredon demesne was being farmed directly and its estimated capacity is 420 quarters of grain in sheaf. As the demesne yield later in the 14th century was not more than 200 quarters, the barn must have functioned jointly as a corn and hay barn. Dyer also suggests that the barn survived because the demesne was later leased as a single unit (in 1401) and it continued to serve the main manor farm in the post-medieval period.

The main sections of the book describe the fire and its aftermath. The fire destroyed the whole upper roof of the barn and badly damaged half the trusses. Fortunately, a very detailed survey had just been completed. Thus, once the National Trust had agreed on restoration (not an easy decision), it was possible to reinstate the original form. The trusses themselves were repaired piecemeal, retaining as much of the original timber as possible. The technical aspects and the difficulties of the work are very well described and full credit is given to the craftsmen who carried it out. The outstanding photographs demonstrate the magnitude of the task. In all, the book is an impressive description of a remarkable achievement.

N. W. ALCOCK

Somerset Parks and Gardens: A Landscape History. By James Bond. 28 x 30 cm., heavily illus. in colour and b. & w. Tiverton: Somerset Books, 1998. ISBN 0-86183-465-8. Price: £29.95 hb.

This is perhaps the fullest and most lavish county study of historic parks and gardens yet published or likely to be. Bond's approach is broad, and the book full of fresh and intimate glimpses of designed landscapes. We hear of an account for twelve weeks' work planting brook willows at Taunton in 1210-11, of the earliest known use of the term nursery in the arboricultural or horticultural sense at Merriot in 1369, and of the survival until the early 19th century at Leigh Court of white or fawn cattle said to have descended from beasts owned by St Augustine's Abbey, Bristol. They were so savage that in 1806 their owner had them all shot, so exterminating the only known herd of wild park cattle in south-west Britain.

PAUL STAMPER