

Reviews

AN HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION OF THE
PRIORY OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE OF MONK BRETTON
IN THE EAST RIDING OF THE COUNTY OF YORKSHIRE.
By J. W. Walker, O.B.E., F.S.A. (The Yorkshire Archaeo-
logical Society) 1926.

The author of this learned book, the result of much indefatigable work and careful research, has already made his mark in the study of Berkshire antiquities and by his presence and labour amongst us has greatly strengthened our Society. But he comes to us from the "Shire of Broad Acres," and one fears sometimes his heart is in his native shire. Mr. Walker was for some time Hon. Secretary of the great Yorkshire Archaeological Society, which has reason to be grateful for all that he has accomplished for it. His latest achievement is embodied in this book which contains a record of how, under his direction, an important Yorkshire Priory has been thoroughly freed from its burden of earth and exposed to view, when before his work began there was only a fragment of wall above ground and nothing was known of its plan or buildings.

But that is not all. Not only has Mr. Walker rescued the buildings from their buried state, removed the accumulation of stones and earth that covered them, but he has accomplished the no less arduous task of writing a history of the Priory about which very little was known. The present writer knows not which were the more difficult task and Mr. Walker is to be congratulated on both these labours.

The land upon which the Priory stood belongs to Mr. J. Vincent Horne, who readily gave permission for the excavation, and the project received the ready approval of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society, which munificent body was able to provide funds for the carrying out of the scheme. It was begun in 1923 and has occupied Mr. Walker and his colleagues three years. Mr. Horne proved himself an admirable landlord, supervised the excavations when Mr. Walker was doing good work for us in Berkshire and provided for transport for the carting away of

thousands of loads of broken stone, sand and lime and aided the work in every possible way. Several other experts have assisted by their advice, amongst whom have been Mr. Peers, Miss Rose Graham and other learned antiquaries.

The book begins with a general history of Monk Bretton, which here need not be followed save to note that there is an abundance of references and full authorities are recorded for every statement. The Priory was founded by one Adam Fitz-Swane, who died in 1159, and had many vicissitudes until it was dissolved by Henry VIII, when it was completely plundered. A list of Priors is given, also the seal, the Chatularies of which two have been found. There is a very complete architectural history of the remains with abundant illustrations, which enable the reader to realise the former beauty of the buildings and the life led by those who lived in them. There is a chapter on the mediaeval glass found during the excavations and in a pocket there is a large size map admirably drawn in colour showing the full extent of the Priory with its Church, cloisters, chapter house, refectory and other parts of the monastery. There is a good index and nothing has been omitted so as to make the work complete.

P.H.D.

THE CHURCH PLATE OF BERKSHIRE.

It will be good news to Berkshire people, especially the Clergy, and to all who love the treasures of the Church, to know that Mr. J. W. Walker, ably assisted by his daughter, has accomplished his self-sacrificing task in visiting every parish in the County and recording every piece of Church Plate therein contained. Having visited the Chapel of St. George, Windsor, they have entirely finished their work. But the chief task remains of publishing the records they have compiled. Publishing is always a very costly business and entails much labour and arrangement, and Mr. Walker is determined to produce a volume that is worthy of the subject and of the County. He is now preparing a prospectus of the book, which will be in form royal octavo, adorned with a large number of collotype illustrations showing the rarest and most important pieces of Plate in the County. The price of the book will be one guinea and a

half to subscribers, and will be raised to two guineas soon after publication. The co-operation of all members of the Society in supporting Mr. Walker's work is earnestly solicited. The Berkshire Archæological Society is partly responsible for the inauguration of the undertaking, which the author might not have been willing to carry out but for the encouragement given to him by the officers of the Society. Each member can assist him by making the work well known to their neighbours and friends, by studying the prospectus when it reaches them, and by being ready to subscribe to the work. Mr. Walker realises that it will be a costly undertaking so far as he himself is concerned. He is willing to spend a considerable sum in the production of the book. It is the duty of all of us to lighten that burden as far as possible, and those who can afford it may be willing to contribute a sum of money in excess of the cost of one subscriber's copy and associate themselves with the author in making the volume a great success.

P.H.D.

EGHAM, SURREY: A HISTORY OF THE PARISH UNDER CHURCH AND CROWN. By Frederic Turner (with maps and illustrations). Published by Box & Gilham, Egham, 1926.

We have remarked in a review of another work how much we always like to welcome books from the pen of members of the Berkshire Archæological Society. It is our good fortune to welcome another work, the History of Egham, by one of our members, Mr. Frederic Turner, who more than once has contributed to this Journal.

This History of Egham is an excellent account of a parish, which till recent years was quite rural, but now, owing to the eternal march of bricks and mortar, has become suburban. The work under notice takes us back into the distant past. Egham has been the scene of some historic events: the most notable being that day in the year 12— when King John met the Barons at Runnymede.

In nearly every parish in this land the most ancient building is the Church, but in Egham the old Church was swept away

and the present building erected in 1820. Though Mr. Turner has no old Church to describe, he has nevertheless a long line of Vicars to write about and of them he tells us much of interest. Before the days of the Reformation the neighbouring Abbey of Chertsey held the manor and the way in which the manorial history is related might be copied by those who contemplate writing a parish history.

There is a great deal in the history of this Surrey parish that we should like to mention, but we must leave it to the reader to learn its story from the book that lies before us.

In taking leave of it we cannot refrain from one remark: we hope this is not the last book from Mr. Turner's pen that we shall have the pleasure of both reading and noticing in the pages of this Journal.

J.H.C.

WANDERINGS IN ROMAN BRITAIN, by Arthur Weigall. (Thornton and Butterworth, London.) 6/-.

"Wanderings in Roman Britain" is a book that has long been badly needed and to have it from the pen of Mr. Arthur Weigall adds to its value, for he is both a skilled archæologist and a pleasant writer. At the extremely low price of 6/- one wonders how such a well-printed, well-bound and well-illustrated volume can be produced at such a price. One notable fact about this book is that it is printed on good paper, not weighted with barytes with which so many modern books are spoilt.

Never since Thomas Wright issued his "Roman, Saxon and Celt," a book still eagerly sought for, has any volume appeared attempting to connect the Roman Conquest of Great Britain as a whole, showing the extraordinary organization of the great Roman Empire and the employment of Continental and Asiatic troops. Mr. Weigall lays much stress on the fact that these strangers, arriving on this island as soldiers and settling here as colonists, must have had a marked effect on the native population as he, from his vast experience on the subject, states definitely and with shrewd reason, that there must yet remain here many descended from them. There was a fashion some

sixty years ago to attribute everything in England to Saxon colonisation, and to Saxon energy ; but to the ethnologist who has really studied the physionomy and dialects of England, it is obvious that there exists strong Continental, not to say Asiatic, peculiarities in many an out-of-the-way English village, not to be accounted for by Saxon invasions, Norman knights or by later gypsy inroads. To the thinking mind the coming of the Roman legions and the founding of fine cities and colonies existing for at least 400 years—that is to say, for several generations—must have left its mark on the country and upon the native population. Future writers on local and parochial histories ought to possess this book ; it fills a gap in the library shelf and ranks as one of the best books on the subject ; we can but express the hope that Mr. Weigall may realise the extreme value of his last literary effort and that future additions will appear from time to time, chronicling all Roman discoveries up to date. Every school should possess the book ; it will have a keen interest for young as well as old. We should also like to compliment the publishers on the admirable style in which they have produced the volume and most confidently we recommend our readers to get the book and keep it for further reference.

J.H.C.

OXFORD AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD, by Cecil Headlam, M.A.

(J. M. Dent & Sons, 13, Bedford Street, W.C.2.) Price 2/6.

This, the most recent guide to Oxford, is worth more than the price of 2/6 for which it is sold, for it is well got up in a convenient form and well illustrated by its editor, Mr. Gordon Home, under whom the series 'Cathedral Abbeys and Famous Churches' has appeared. Some twelve volumes have already appeared, and if they are as good as the one here noticed archæologists will be well advised to possess the series. The present volume, 'Oxford and Its Neighbourhood' is decidedly original. Commencing with Oseney Abbey, St. Frideswides' legend and other quaint items, it passes on to the Cathedral of Christ Church, giving pictures and an interesting sectional drawing of the Great Tower to illustrate the different periods of architecture, as well as the interior of the choir as it was in 1837.

To the architect this little volume is of exceptional interest, especially the amateur architect, who longs to understand, and who finds a purely technical book on the subject too puzzling and too difficult. In the volume under review there is arranged, to suit both professional and amateur, the details of the capitals (p. 45).

Page 50 gives a sketch of the so-called 'Nowers' tomb, but this identification is clearly wrong, as the chief quartering on the central shield is that of Gaynesford. The Gaynesford family intermarried with the family of Poyle of Hampton Poyle, who are said to have been resident in Surrey at an early date, the first entry of the name being in the reign of Edward III. The burial-places of the first three of the name of John Gaynesford are not known. John Gaynesford, the first, died in 1348, the second after 1358, and John Gaynesford, the third, after 1417, and the probability is that it is this last who is buried under the tomb attributed to Sir John Nowers. The identification of the tomb has been placed in the hands of Mrs. Hautenville Cope, expert on heraldry to the Connoisseur, whose opinion is the above, but who has not yet sent in her final report on the impaled arms. The identification is important, it coincides with the opinion of Anthony a Wood, and how the name of Sir George Nowers became associated with the tomb is difficult to understand.

Space prevents further criticism of Mr. Headlam's volume, which further describes the most interesting of the many churches in the vicinity of Oxford, lying between Oxford and the Thames.

J.H.C.

OUR EARLY ANCESTORS, by M. G. Burkitt, M.A., F.S.A., F.G.S.
(Cambridge, The University Press, 1926.) Price 7/6.

To those interested in Prehistoric History, this latest addition to the subject will be extremely welcome: from the pen of one so well qualified to explain this very recent science upon which a good textbook is needed. So many discoveries have been made within the last 30 years, that any new book is welcome as carrying the subject up to date. Mr. Burkitt's book covers a wide area, and tells us of discoveries all over Europe, giving

a very charming account of European history during the Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze and Copper Ages.

It should find a place on every library shelf for the author has drawn his references from foreign writers not usually accessible to English readers. In fact he opens up a new view of the subject, and his book will be widely read. It was wise to publish at a price within the range of all, and we can heartily recommend its purchase ; it is well worth 7/6, and will be a reference book worth possessing for some time to come.

J.H.C.