

## REVIEWS

### TYNESIDE CITY AND COUNTY HISTORY SERIES

C. M. Fraser and K. Emsley. Pp. 142. David and Charles, £2.25

This new series of local histories departs from the convention of dealing either with a single city or county and admits volumes on conurbations or on such a grouping as the Potteries. We have had many histories of Newcastle and it is refreshing to have one of Tyneside. Certainly this is the best local history we have had for some time.

The authors have avoided the repetition of all the customary anecdote and have gone to the best sources for accounts of the development of industry and of local government. In a few instances they suffer from the limitations of their sources, but, taking account of their very limited space, they have compressed into 142 pages a great deal of hard information.

If therefore note is made of omissions this may fairly be regarded as a suggestion that the authors might have been allowed or encouraged to cover more ground.

Is it by intention or by inadvertence that Newcastle grindstones are not mentioned? Soap-making too is only mentioned incidentally and not at all in the chapter on industry. Bruce's academy is mentioned, again incidentally, but no hint is given of its local pre-eminence in its day. In the account of the foundation of the Durham College of Science no reference is made to the influential intervention of the Mining Institute nor to the great importance of the (possibly belated) acquiescence of Durham University. There is no systematic treatment of religion. Bede is given a reference and Wesley a page or so, but the Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, Unitarians and Quakers as well as the Anglican Church have all contributed something to the make-up of Tyneside. We have not perhaps contributed much on Tyneside to music at the national level and it is fair no doubt that it is only noticed in reference to local songs, to music-halls, and to the Bagpipe Museum, but the names of William Shield and Charles Avison, modest though their repute may be, might have found a place. Another blind spot is painting, though an etching of T. M. Richardson senior is reproduced on the dust jacket. We may be grateful for the account of the printing industry on Tyneside though its establishment in Newcastle might have been advanced a full half-century by a reference to Robert Barker, the King's printer, who set up a press in Newcastle in 1639. It would have been better to have omitted the Bewick vignettes: unless Bewick's work is reproduced well it is quite meaningless.

The general reader and the student will find in this book an excellent account, highly compressed but soundly based, of the development of Tyneside. Moreover it is readable, well printed (apart from the Bewick vignettes), outstandingly well proof-read, and it has an index and a hard case.

J. PHILIPSON

#### BOOKS RECEIVED

D. W. Harding: *The Iron Age in the Upper Thames Basin* Clarendon Press 1972, pp. xii + 178, £10.

R. W. Davies: *Hadrian's Wall—a Practical Guide to the visible remains* Sunderland 1972, pp 95. Price 60p + 6p postage.

B. Dobson and D. J. Breeze: *The Army of Hadrian's Wall* Frank Graham 1972, pp 48. Price 40p.

The first of these publications brings together the results of the archaeological work of the last century on the pre-Roman Iron Age in the upper Thames basin. This survey is of greater value in that it covers an extensive natural region. The book is a very handsome production.

Mr. Davies' guide is faithful to its subtitle in being confined to visible remains and very much concerned with how to get there and what to see. It may be obtained from Eyewitness, Sunderland College of Education, Ryhope Road, Sunderland.

The remaining booklet by Doctors Dobson and Breeze is an account of such information about the Roman army as is a necessary foundation for any study of Hadrian's Wall. The exposition is clear and orderly and the illustrations agreeable. The name of our late member Mr. Austin Child on the verso of the title is given a redundant *e*.