

REVIEWS

Peter Hunter Blair, *Anglo-Saxon Northumbria* (edited by M. Lapidge and P. Hunter Blair), viii+338 pp., 2 pls., London: Variorum, 1984, £26, ISBN 0 86078 140 2.

“Peter Hunter Blair considered himself a Northumbrian by inclination as well as by birth.” So writes his wife in an affectionate memoir prefaced to this reprint of twelve papers devoted to the Anglo-Saxon history of the north. Though he spent the whole of his working life in Cambridge he always retained a love for the north country and an abiding interest in the past which had shaped it. Nowhere, perhaps, is this more evident than in that elegant and delightful book *Northumbria in the Days of Bede* (1976) where, in his own words, there are passages in which “the heart beats more warmly than is thought fit for a scholar”. Yet scholar he was, and all of these papers show that meticulous attention to the details of primary sources, and that balanced assessment of their worth, which are the marks of true scholarship.

Three themes are presented here. First there is the Anglo-Saxon settlement of Northumbria and the identification of the early boundaries of Bernicia and Deira. This set of papers includes three articles which originally appeared in this journal between 1947 and 1949 when *Archaeologia Aeliana* was edited with distinction by his father Charles Hunter Blair. The work on boundaries has stood the test of time but the study of the origins of Northumbria has now been overtaken (as the editors helpfully remind us) by precisely the type of work on sources which he had hoped to stimulate. A second theme is that of the complex pattern of accretions which resulted in the *Historia Regum* attributed to Symeon of Durham, a crucial source for so much later Northumbrian history. Here, in another paper first published in this journal in 1939, we find him exploring a subject on which he was to produce a masterly overview in 1963. Bede provides the third theme and much of Hunter Blair’s later work was to be devoted to his writings and the manuscripts in which they were preserved. This group of papers includes his Jarrow Lecture as well as the paper on the “Moore Memoranda” which he published in the *festschrift* for H. M. Chadwick, whose own vision of the breadth and inter-disciplinary nature of Anglo-Saxon studies was fostered by Hunter Blair throughout his teaching.

It is clearly useful to have all of these papers in one volume. Yet there must be regret that such a stylish writer should appear in such an inelegant format. The photographic reprint faithfully preserves the printing errors of the originals. The typefaces and the margins vary from paper to paper, whilst end-notes are set alongside foot-notes. Worst of all, there is no continuous pagination. Hunter Blair deserves better than this and, at £26, so does the reader.

RICHARD N. BAILEY

Studies in Scottish Antiquity ed. David Breeze; xiii+489 pp.; Edinburgh; John Donald, 1984. £30.00.

This well illustrated collection of nineteen studies and a eulogy in verse was presented to Stewart Cruden, architect, historian and archaeologist, to mark his retirement from the post of Principal Inspector of Ancient Monuments and Historic Buildings in Scotland. The volume not only reflects some of the personal interests of the recipient but also the wide range of knowledge and expertise which exists amongst his colleagues, whose responsibilities have been or still are directed towards the care of our ancient monuments and historic buildings. By this same token a liberal chronological interpretation of "Scottish Antiquity" must be understood.

Callanish (1) presents a useful and revealing pre-excavation study of this complex of standing stones in Lewis, whilst *The Roman Fort at Bearsden* (2) gives an all but final excavation report on this major excavation on the Antonine Wall, together with some of the ever present problems concerning consolidation and display. The interwoven threads of mensuration and arithmetic in both studies are important and appropriate in offerings to one who was introduced both to prehistoric archaeology and long division in Roman numerals by Gordon Childe. Of the five contributions on medieval themes, it must not be considered invidious to mention only two, as these had particular appeal to the reviewer; the first a long overdue attempt to survey the mottes of Galloway and the Stewartry, and so far as possible to relate field-survey with the documentary evidence, in *Norman Settlement in Galloway* (4); the second a neat analysis of *Scottish Medieval Window Tracery* (6), in which by clarity of text and illustration enlightenment will be bestowed upon even the most untutored, as was the reviewer. Later architectural studies vary in context and nature as between a broad but masterly account of *Scottish Renaissance Architecture* (8), a skilful blend of plans and documentary evidence in the account of the occupancy and furnishings of Holyroodhouse 1669-70 (10), or the later nineteenth to early twentieth century architecture of MacGibbon and Ross (16), whose surviving buildings will be familiar to many local visitors to Edinburgh. If the 1904 Iona commission was "unaccountably lost" by MacGibbon and Ross to the firm of Honeyman, Keppie and Mackintosh, "although the relevant partner, Honeyman, was by then blind and almost retired", the grant of the commission to the latter firm could well have had some influence over the developing architectural interests of the youngest son of Dr. John Honeyman, who from his early youth was a constant guide and companion to his father and about 1903 was already apprenticed to the firm of John Burnet & Sons of Glasgow. Even if no more than tenuously, it could have been thus that the north of England eventually gained an authority on medieval architecture in the person of Herbert Honeyman, and our own Society a regular contributor to *Archaeologia Aeliana* and *Proceedings* from its honorary secretary over twenty-three years. Smaller buildings in Scotland receive sympathetic treatment in *Scottish Parliamentary Churches and their Manses* (13) of the early nineteenth century, distributed primarily throughout the west and north of the country; in the detailed study of the buildings of a single West Lothian farm

(17) from the eighteenth century onwards; and in the novel treatment of the *Victorian Mews in Edinburgh* (18), wherein reticence is also thrown overboard by some suggestions for future action. Except for those who may have been fortunate enough to come across such small gems as the early seventeenth century pleasance and garden at Edzell Castle in Angus, it might be thought that the Department had little concern with the landscape or gardens around monuments in care, other than maintaining the well-mown lawn and weeded gravel. That this is far from the truth is evident in *Towards a Study of Gardening in Scotland* (11), reinforced by an account of Blair Castle gardens in the eighteenth century and the contribution of John Cheere's garden statuary (12). Of equal concern in more recent years has been the need to record and preserve some of the more important examples of coastal military and naval defences, including those of the Second World War, many of which are now obsolete if not already destroyed. Members of this Society, who will be only too well aware of the potential for conservation and display of some of the battery positions at the mouth of the Tyne, will be doubly appreciative of the contribution on *The Defences of the Firth of Forth* (18), in this instance by the Chief Inspector of the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission, England. The difference between what might be desired and what can be done, however, is a problem which also haunts the present as it surely did the past during the formative years of the *Office of Works in Scotland* (14).

Stewart Cruden himself has written elsewhere of that enjoyment described by Henry James as "the sensation of dropping back personally into the past". This volume should certainly help the reader in such a quest. And for those who are inclined to venture more often and with greater intent there is a wealth of information to be gained, not only in the texts themselves but in the copious references, many to little known archival material. The volume is both well produced and pleasing to handle, so that it would be no less than churlish to regret the absence of an index.

GEORGE JOBEY

Between and Beyond the Walls: essays on the prehistory and history of North Britain in honour of George Jobey, Edited by Roger Miket and Colin Burgess. Edinburgh; John Donald, 1984. £25.00.

This volume has been produced to mark the retirement of Professor George Jobey after a career marked by discernment in the choice of objectives, discipline in method, and cogency in publication, qualified at every stage by a rugged individualism. This *festschrift* consists of twenty-two articles contributed by his colleagues, associates and students. Reading its four hundred and twenty-four pages, the reviewer cannot but exclaim that here indeed is God's plenty.

It is in the nature of books such as this that the main determinant of coherence is that each contributor has some link, usually professional, with the person honoured. Its contents in consequence easily become somewhat miscellaneous. A

unity of place has been imposed on the present volume in that every article relates to the Tyne-Forth province. This allows it legitimately to include articles on neolithic long cairns, "native" sites in some variety, brochs, duns, souterrains, the seat of a Northumbrian bishopric in furthest Lothian, with a few heads and cults thrown in for good measure, and a quadrilateral of Roman papers drawn up in formation determined not to abandon the field wholly to the natives.

There is no corresponding unity of time as the articles range from the mesolithic to Professor Birley's reminiscences of George Jobey as a young man. Nevertheless the centre of gravity is appropriately in the Iron Age and the Romano-British period.

As one name has been dropped, and as shortage of space precludes recital of a list of contents, it gives the fairest impression of the range and quality of the contributions if a list is given of the other contributors: D. Breeze, C. Burgess, J. Casey, B. Charlton, R. Charlton, J. C. Day, K. J. Fairless, R. Feachem, C. M. Fraser, A. M. Gibson, J. Gillam, Professor D. Harding, Professor N. McCord, L. McInnes, A. Maclaren, L. Masters, R. Miket, M. Mitcheson, Professor Stuart Piggott, A. Ross, D. J. Smith, Professor C. Thomas, A. Truckell, H. Welfare, and J. Weyman. There is a portrait of Professor Jobey, lists of his excavations and publications, and an index.

J. PHILIPSON