

IX

BOOK REVIEWS, 2008

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William D. Shannon, *Murus ille famosus (that famous wall). Depictions and Descriptions of Hadrian's Wall before Camden* (Cumberland and Westmorland Antiq. and Archaeol. Soc., Tract Series XXII, Kendal, 2007), pp. 38, 15 pls. £7.50

This fascinating booklet falls into two parts. The first is a discussion of descriptions of Hadrian's Wall from Gildas writing about 540 to Humfrey Lluyd of Denbigh whose views were published in 1573 in *The Breviary of Britayne*. The second is a consideration of maps from the Anglo-Saxon map of about 1025–50 to those published by Saxton in 1576 and 1583. This progress of a thousand years is illuminated by reflections on the inadequacy of modern Wall scholars, the travels of the medieval chroniclers, the power of the printed word, and an appreciation of the xenophobia of the English in the sixteenth century.

After a brief review of previous discussions by Collingwood and Birley, we move to the accounts of Gildas, Bede and Nennius. The importance of repeating these well-known sources is to show how Nennius' garbled statements so confused his successors that they came to believe that there had been only one wall in the north, Hadrian's Wall. Yet, they did know that this 'wall' contained a ditch, rampart and towers, as stated by Aethelweard about 1000 while the existence of milecastles was first recorded by John Hardyng, a native of Northumberland, in 1457. It was in the mid-thirteenth century that we first learn, on one of the four maps of Matthew Paris, the local name for this Wall, 'the Picts' Wall'. This was 'the famous rampart, of which everyone has heard' (William of Malmesbury, writing in about 1120).

The printing press allowed the words of classical authors to reach a far wider readership than before, though it took decades, if not centuries, for the implications of this 'new' knowledge to be understood. In the meantime, it is no coincidence that Wall scholarship now acquired an international dimension. It was a Scot, Hector Boece, who first asserted that the southern Wall had been built by Hadrian, and in this he was supported by an Italian, Polydore Vergil. It was, S suggests, the fact that they were foreigners which led their important statements to be ignored.

Boece had the further distinction of knowing that there was a more northerly wall, thus opening a new line of research, while it is possible that Vergil had actually visited its southern counterpart; S offers his views on which chroniclers had seen the remains they described. S' diligence in researching the sources allows him to offer additional information on what John Leland had seen.

S suggests that the Walls were included by Paris on his maps because they were 'still-impressive visible reminders of our heroic national past'. Paris was a monk at St Albans, and his work appears to have been little known beyond the walls of his monastery, but later maps were published in Rome, Venice and Spain, some apparently attempting to show the Wall more realistically, as a ruin.

In the face of such erudition, it is almost churlish to offer any word of criticism, but, in the interests of accuracy, one is necessary. In footnote 105, S states that, 'the only contemporary depictions of the Wall that we have, those on the Amiens patera, the very similar Rudge Cup and the Hildburgh fragment . . . each shows a crenellated wall'. This may be the case, but the discovery of the Bath pan has cast doubt on this interpretation for on this object the crenellations are upside down suggesting, to this reviewer at least, that we are simply dealing with a design not a depiction of Hadrian's Wall.

In this booklet, the author has not only righted a great wrong but ensured that Wall studies will never be quite the same again. It is thoroughly recommended not only to those interested in the study of the Roman Walls, but in the wider history of our area, while its references and bibliography should lead many readers on to further research.

David J. Breeze

David Austin *et al.*, *Acts of Perception: A Study of Barnard Castle in Teesdale*. (English Heritage and The Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland Research Report 6, 2007), 2 vols., pp. 706; 372 illus; 58 tables. ISBN 978 0 9510388 57. £65.

These impressive volumes are the result of archaeological excavations within Barnard Castle undertaken from 1974 to 1981. Volume one consists of nine chapters looking at the topography, political background, estate, monument and the remains themselves from the earliest earthwork castle *c.* 1093 through four distinct periods; ending in *c.* 1630 with the deliberate destruction of this important site. In volume two there are a further two chapters detailing the pottery and clay fragments and the domestic and craft artefacts. The castle and its archaeology are well illustrated throughout the text.

Anyone interested in the early history of Barnard Castle will find much of interest in this work, but its primary focus is upon the archaeology of the site. The earliest history of the castle's site is complex as it is unclear if this was a tribal territory or a manor. Thereafter, as part of the Balliol estates, Barnard Castle began to take shape. Their successors to this site were the Beauchamps (earls of Warwick), who continued to adapt the castle during periods of political turmoil. By the mid-fifteenth century the Nevilles were possessors of the castle and its estates. When they fell from grace others took over, but when Sir Henry Vane took control in 1625–26 the fate of Barnard Castle was sealed. Vane preferred to live at nearby Raby Castle and thus plundered Barnard Castle to refurbish Raby from 1630 onwards.

During many summertime excavations, every part of the impressive ruins of Barnard Castle was explored. These revealed an early ringwork in the inner ward that probably had an outer bailey. Work in the middle ward uncovered many interesting medieval features. The extent of both the Balliol and Beauchamp Castles were also uncovered. Features of the town ward were also found, such as a sluice that could be partly reconstructed from surviving timbers. Because of the wholesale destruction on the later castle by Sir Henry Vane, very little of its architecture and archaeology has survived.

The various finds are copiously illustrated and catalogued in volume two. They ranged from leather shoes to decorative tobacco pipes and many different types of pottery from England and Europe. Aspects of the castle's structure are highlighted by many different experts as well. So, in short, there is something for everyone in here.

Maureen M. Meikle

David Oldroyd, *Estates, Enterprise and Investment at the Dawn of the Industrial Revolution. Estate Management and Accounting in the North-East of England, c. 1700–1780* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), ix, 217 pp., 9 ills, 2 maps. £55

In recent years the history of the North East of England has received a substantial boost with the publication of a number of well-researched and informative regional studies. The establishment of the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) sponsored North East of England Historical Institute (NEEHI) in 2000 has clearly led the way, but there have been other important publications too and David Oldroyd's study of estate management and accounting in the eighteenth century is an example of the rich history of this English region. The product of in-depth research, Oldroyd's monograph charts the development of the managerial process and accountancy techniques during the industrial revolution. His analysis complements the growing national literature concerning the emergence of British entrepreneurial endeavour.

Expanding on his earlier study of the Bowes family, Oldroyd offers the reader valuable insights into the business activities of two other influential north-east families, the Cotesworths and the White Riddleys. With his use of family papers, letter books, printed primary material and extracts from account books, as well as a helpful technical glossary, he shows how these estates were transformed into centres of industrial development and commerce. In this very readable study the author does what he sets out to do: namely, to exploit the accounts and estate records in order to test various 'hypotheses concerning the management of estates and the attitudes of their owners and stewards'. In a very detailed introduction Oldroyd explores the changes in land ownership and usage, estate-practices and accounting systems in both a regional and national context, as well as the financing of such endeavours, notably the growth of banking and the 'closely knit network of local credit' in the eighteenth century.

He demonstrates how the increasingly detailed accounts kept by these families throw light into the commonplace but important activities that kept these estates and the local communities together. They illustrate the size of their businesses and the 'hands-on approach' used to sustain them; legal arrangements made by the families and their wider business interests and networks; the level of expenditure on equipment and the profits these men returned on their investments; the staff employed, the costs of employing them and their places of work. Various interesting personal characteristics are highlighted, such as George Bowes' 'fiery temper' which in 1726 led to a duel with Richard Ridley. William Cotesworth emerges as a colourful and domineering individual whose 'profound mistrust of human nature' manifested itself in bitter business rivalries. As Oldroyd notes, in 1725 Richard Ridley was quite prepared to have Cotesworth killed. This was not the only time Cotesworth's life was threatened and serves to illustrate the level of animosity between these leading businessmen. In many respects the contrast between the families in this book is quite revealing. It shows, on the one hand, the established landed families developing their business interests via significant marriages, while the new gentleman, and particular the yeomanry, embraced progressive enterprises and enjoyed their new-found wealth. The Cotesworths were certainly part of this process.

In an otherwise nicely-produced volume some of the images, particularly the front cover and portraits, do not do justice to the author's efforts to illustrate his work. The index is also disappointingly slight. Despite these minor reservations the study offers considerable

reflections on the advent of industrial and commercial activity, and demonstrates the wealth of information to be mined. This important work, I am convinced, will stimulate further investigations into the 'business culture' of these important north-east families and their estates.

Richard C. Allen