Reviews


Despite its imperfections this is a useful book. It has always been hard to find out much about the Saxon Shore forts: the meagre facts are scattered in unlikely places, and since Richborough there has been no major onslaught upon them. True, there have been recent excavations at Burgh and Reculver, but the one may never be published, and it is early to assess the other. A book, therefore, devoted exclusively to the Shore and one as full of fact and ideas as White’s is very welcome.

The author, attempting as complete a coverage as possible, has felt it necessary to trace the history of thought about the Shore in some detail in Chapter I. Despite the fashionableness of this method, much of it seems a waste of space: what various early writers in their ignorance thought is not ‘evidence’; ancient sources tell us too little to make sense of the Saxon Shore, and it was not until they were supplemented by archaeology that the evidence became sufficient to support a sensible theory. The rest can be dismissed as mere mouthing.

The second chapter gives us the best account of Carausius which has yet appeared. He has attracted more attention from numismatists than anyone else; here the coins are kept subordinate to the reconstruction of the reign. It is curious that Eicholz’s article in *J. Rom. Stud.,* xliv, has been missed.

The third chapter summarizes the evidence from each British fort. Here as elsewhere we must acknowledge White’s astonishingly wide reading, but still he has missed important points. It is a pity that he consulted no British archaeologist, for while it is possible to do one’s reading in America, local familiarity would have produced the latest evidence and corrected mistakes. He could have been saved describing the internal angle turrets of forts as ‘interior bastions’ (p. 41 and cf. 34); more seriously, he need not have missed the ‘Roman gate’ at Portchester (*Antiq. J.*, xxxv, 219). Richborough was built by Carausius, but the proof is not as stated on p. 36. The theory that Richborough was an island is a nonsensical paradox but a hardy annual; it has no basis either in common sense (would the Roman army land on an island, only to have to land all over again on the mainland?) or in fact. Some years ago this reviewer saw a section cut by some local archaeologists across Watling Street where it crosses the ‘marsh’ separating Richborough from the mainland. This trench proved a total absence of causeway. It is typical of present-day amateur efforts that this vital section has never been published, disproving as it does the insularity of Richborough. On Dover White’s only source is the *Victoria County History*; he has not discovered the reports in *Archaeol. Cantiana* describing the post-war excavations (which totally failed to find the fort). At Pevensey the coin of Constantine was not found ‘suspiciously near the base of a wall foundation’ (p. 41) but actually underneath a bastion (*J. Rom. Stud.,* xxii, 67). Brancaster, as well as Reculver, lacks bastions (p. 41). The Norfolk Broads (p. 39) have been known for some years to be in origin medieval. Serious mistakes occur also on p. 52 (Caernarvon for Caerleon) and on p. 104, note 62 (Pevensey for Chichester).

Chapter IV gives a sensible and up-to-date discussion of the *Notitia* and the light it throws on the Shore. (White’s thesis is that the Saxon Shore was a product of the reorganization of 369.) Chapter V contains a valuable discussion of the contemporary system along the NW. coast of Gaul, and a useful map; neither has been available in English previously except for the very short treatment by M. P. Charlesworth in *The Lost Province.*
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It will be clear by now what a useful quarry for references and facts the book is (with the exceptions noted and a few more); but what of the author’s own views? His main idea is that the Shore is late (post 369); and that in origin the forts are Carausian, built against attack from the central empire. This theory accounts both for their strength (unnecessary against pirates) and for the absence of comparable structures in Gaul. There is much to recommend this view, but White overstates the case. It is true that the forts ‘command’ between them ‘the major invasion routes into south-east Britain’. But only one or at the most two would face any one invading army, and each fort had but a small garrison which could be easily masked.

Then again this theory of the unity of the Shore was not in accordance even with the evidence available to White: he brushes aside the differences in fort-form. But these certainly have a chronological significance, as the existence of Richborough I should have warned him. And now that we have the inscription from Reculver (discovered in 1960) which, supported by pottery, demonstrates that the fort was built c. 215/20, the point is proved that the system is not a unity in its construction. Again, he holds there is no evidence of Saxon menace to Britain in the third century. But it is hard to believe that the historically attested Saxons confined themselves to one side only of the Channel; and the early forts at Reculver, Richborough I (and ? Brancaster) must have had some purpose.

Thus we cannot accept White undiluted: but he may have a good point when he suggests that Carausius built Richborough II (? and one or two others) against Constantius. He rightly insists that the Shore demands a fleet, and that Carausius had one: but he is on less sure ground when he tells us that there is no evidence for a fourth-century British fleet (p. 43). He overlooks (a) the British camouflaged scaphae maioribus liburnis exploratoriae (Vegetius, iv, 37), (b) Claudian on Stilicho’s British expedition, (c) the implicit evidence of the Yorkshire signal-stations. When he tells us (p. 51) that these last were designed ‘to warn the inhabitants . . . of the interior’ he shows ignorance of the topography (I. A. Richmond, Roman Britain, p. 64).

To readers of Medieval Archaeology the main interest of the book will lie in White’s conclusion in favour of the ‘Shore settled by’ as against the ‘Shore attacked by’ the Saxons, as an explanation of the term. Indeed, it would be a major event could it be established that substantial numbers of Saxons were already in residence before the collapse of Roman Britain. The evidence amassed by White is partly historical (he discusses the undoubted use of Germanic mercenaries in late Roman Britain) and partly archaeological (which means mainly the existence of Romano-Saxon pottery). To the present reviewer the case appears unconvincing. (i) We have no knowledge of where the mercenaries were employed, but likelihood suggests the north. (ii) Not all Germanic mercenaries were Saxon. If Germanic soldiery were going to be settled in eastern Britain to stave off Saxons, the Roman government was not reduced to using Saxons for the purpose. (iii) The ‘Saxon Shore’ is a term given us by the Notitia: but the Notitia also gives us a list of the garrisons involved (dated by White after 369); none is Germanic. (iv) The distribution of ‘Romano-Saxon’ pottery does not really correspond with the Saxon Shore, extending as it does over much of SE. Britain north of the Thames, but south of it only in Kent. (v) It is true that in Gaul, behind the front line of Shore troops, Germanic laeti, often of similar race to the intruders, were utilized in depopulated areas as a second line of defence; they are listed in the Notitia, and were based on important towns set well back from the coast. If Romano-Saxon pottery denotes laeti in Britain, we need to know why the Notitia omits to list them, and we would expect to find them based on the civitates, not the forts; but this is what Myres’s map fails to show. (vi) It is as well to be very cautious in our approach to ‘Romano-Saxon’ pottery, in so far as any of it is to be dated before the fifth century. As defined by Myres it consists of a number of groups, not all admitting of the same explanation. In recent years stamped pottery and even bosses have been appearing in earlier and earlier Romano-British contexts, and it is quite likely that such things will turn out to have a
respective native pedigree. In so far as there is a connexion between certain late Romano-British pots and certain early Saxon ones, it is equally or more likely that the latter are copying the former and not vice versa. The only truly Romano-Saxon pots, those in Saxon fabric which admittedly copy Roman ornament, cannot be dated before the early fifth century. It is only in the decades after 410 that there is any acceptable context for Saxon settlement on the east coast. In my view stamped and bossed pottery of the fourth century only appears to have ‘barbaric’ character because it was later copied by barbarians: the copying need not have taken place in Britain. There is little at present to contradict the ‘Shore attacked by’ position.

To sum up: some of the conclusions reached in this book are wrong (the unity of the Shore-system) or probably misguided (‘Shore settled by’). But for all that it is such a storehouse of useful references that it will be widely used.

S. S. Frere


Helgö is the ancient name of a small island in Lake Mälaren, 30 km. west of Stockholm. Its archaeological potential has only recently been recognized, as a result of chance discoveries of two gold rings in 1946 and of silver and bronze vessels in 1950. These were followed in 1954 by systematic excavations which are still in progress, revealing increasingly complex structures and yielding an amazing variety of finds. Something of the island’s richness may be judged from the two major pieces of the present report: a bronze Buddha and an Irish crosier-head, surely one of the most remarkable meetings of east and west in the annals of archaeological discovery. In date the finds range from about A.D. 400 to the eleventh century. The presence of imported pottery and metalwork, the clear evidence of metallurgical activity, and the significance of Helgö’s position on both E.-W. and N.-S. trade routes have all led to the belief that the site may be the immediate precursor of the great commercial centre at Birka, ‘only a few kilometres away from Helgö’ (p. 37). (The relevant maps, figs. 2-5, have no scales.) The present report provides little structural evidence to substantiate this hypothesis, however, and other commentators would see the excavated buildings as those of a ‘large farm’ (H. Arbman, The Vikings, p. 27) or at best ‘the residence of a petty chieftain’ (D. M. Wilson in Antiquity, xxxvi (1962), 156).

The continuance of the excavations and the richness of the material have prompted the publication of lavish interim reports and catalogues, with the laudable intention of making ‘the important material available to scientific researchers’ (p. 19). The volume reviewed here is the first of these interim reports; a second is proposed for the seasons of 1957 and 1958, and thereafter there will be a series of annual reports. These will be supplemented by a series of special studies of ‘the individual phenomena’.

In principle this is an excellent scheme; in practice its outcome is deplorable. In the present volume, the structural pattern of the remains described has not been worked out, as it should have been, by the excavators on the ground at the time of the excavation. ‘A preliminary study’, we are assured, ‘reveals that at least three more or less distinct building periods can be distinguished. A more careful study of the post-holes taking into account their size, depth, intersection, filling, etc., would certainly give a valuable supplementation of these results’ (p. 73). It is true that the reader is given data for such a study, in the form of photographs (without scales), plans and sections (at the awkward representative fractions of 1: 14 and 1: 75 but without drawn scales) and detailed descriptions of pits, post-holes and hearths; but no drawing, photograph or description can recapture the immediacy of observation in the field, or all those subjective impressions which enable the good excavator to interpret his structures on the spot as
no one else can do. Underlying all this reportage, of course, is the fallacy that archaeologists work with hard objective facts, like so many rigid pieces of jig-saw puzzle, which anyone can assemble correctly because the pieces can only be interlocked in one way.

If the account of the structures is unhelpful, the catalogue of finds is positively wasteful, partly because every relic, however insignificant, has to be included, partly because little or no time has been spent in classifying the abundant objects into their leading types. Thus two plates (44-45) are devoted to photographs of 36 spikes for horse-hooves, which could have been reduced to two leading types illustrated by three or four line-drawings. Four pages, two columns to a page, are devoted to unillustrated fragments of ‘scrap-iron, tins (sheet iron), undecided (sic) fragments’. There are forty pages describing potsherds, of which some 90% are featureless body-sherds; there are only two complete pot-profiles, but over two hundred rim-profiles, many of them scarcely distinguishable one from another, none of them arranged in any sort of classificatory scheme, and none of them indicating the probable diameter of the vessel. Conspicuous waste in the use of half-tones is demonstrated by pl. 30 with its nondescript fragments of bronze vessels and by the photographs of metal objects which fail to reveal details shown in the line-drawings: compare fig. 23, no. 12, with pl. 38, no. 5; fig. 24, no. 1, with pl. 38, no. 11; fig. 24, no. 3, with pl. 28, no. 4; fig. 24, no. 7, with pl. 27, no. 1. These and similar extravagances in the listing and illustrating of the finds make this interim report unnecessarily cumbersome and expensive.

It should be added that the translation is frequently curious and sometimes even incorrect. Thus the pins of brooches are described as ‘needles’ (items 98, 475, etc.). Fragments of sheet-iron, possibly from vessels, are listed as ‘tin’ (pp. 150 ff.). ‘Carbon’ (p. 55 et passim) may possibly be charcoal; but the significance of ‘partly cindered clay’ eludes this reviewer. In brief, this report does little to maintain the high traditions of Scandinavian settlement-archaeology.

Leslie Alcock


The general poverty of the fragmentary or rusted objects recovered from the Ladby ship-burial emphasizes how incredibly fortunate the accident was that the sixteenth-century grave-robbers failed—only by a couple of feet—to reach the Sutton Hoo burial-deposit. It also emphasizes how inadequately we can guess the richness of a robbed grave of this character from the scraps that may be left behind.

The Ladby ship-burial is of the Viking period and dated by the author (the Keeper of the Conservation Department of the National Museum, Copenhagen) to c. 950. This is a stylistic dating, based on the supposed Jellinge style of the strap-distributor on the dog-leash, and the ‘gripping-beast’ in Norwegian Borre style and a running pattern of Jellinge character that appear together on the silver whip-handle. The Scandinavian animal-styles, however, are not always very sharply defined or precisely datable. The gripping-beast and Borre styles at any rate go back well into the ninth century, and for various reasons, among them the early complexion of all the objects in the Ladby ship imported from western Europe, an earlier date for the burial, perhaps c. 900, may seem more probable.

Ship-burials are well known in Norway and in Sweden—as yet the only authenticated home of pre-Viking ship-burial, its earlier appearance in Suffolk being intrusive and abbreviated, and in Norway uncertain. Ladby, however, is the only ship-burial of any period so far found in Denmark. In several respects—the construction of the ship itself, the style of several objects—it conforms to the Norwegian pattern. It does so also in the evidence that the grave was deliberately opened and ransacked while detailed
knowledge of the location of the body in the ship was still current. This phenomenon was first recognized and discussed by A. W. Brogger (Viking, ix, p. 43; The Viking Ships, pp. 97-103) for the robbed ships of Vestfold, including the Oseberg and Gokstad ships. Brogger’s theory was that these robbings represent the public silencing of a restless spirit believed to be disturbing the neighbourhood, a practice which does not, however, need to be associated with the introduction of Christianity, an idea which seems to be a factor in Dr. Thorvildsen’s dating structure.

The Ladby ship-grave is unique in the number of slaughtered horses it contained. Apart from the saddle-horse, which stood in life ready, like the modern motor-car, outside its owner’s door, and which is often found in such burials, ten other horses were slaughtered and thrown into the bows of the ship. Under the horse skeletons were those of at least four dogs, representing two different breeds. Magnus Degerbøl’s contribution is on these skeletal remains.

The Ladby grave presents an exact parallel to the Sutton Hoo ship-burial in that no wood worth mentioning of the ship survived, only iron bolts and clenched nails in alignments in a thin layer of discoloration. If the Ladby ship presented a similar problem of excavation, so far as the boat itself was concerned, to that presented by the Sutton Hoo ship, it also thus posed a similar problem as to what to do with the insubstantial traces of the ship when the grave-goods had been removed and the study of the vessel completed. The solution found by the Danes is of considerable technical interest, not merely in the Sutton Hoo context but also in the matter of the preservation of monuments in the field in general. It is referred to again below. It is surprising, in view of the analogy, that there is no mention of the Sutton Hoo ship in this book, especially in the section dealing with the technical features of the Ladby ship and its place in the evolutionary series of northern ships, for the Sutton Hoo ship occupied an important intermediary position between the Nydam ship of c. 400 and the Viking vessels of the ninth and tenth centuries.

The Ladby ship was 68 ft. long, as compared with the approximately 84 ft. of the Sutton Hoo ship, 79 of Gokstad, 69 of Oseberg and 73 of Nydam. It was oak, clinker-built, with seven strakes a side caulked with cow hair. The fourth strake from the keel line on either side was narrower and thicker than the others. It served to stiffen the hull fore and aft, and, as in the Oseberg ship, to support the ends of the ribs, which were riveted off to this strake and did not rise any higher, and to carry the thwarts. This technical development, strengthening the strake which joined the bottom of the boat with the sides, is known from the sagas, where the strake is called megin hufr; it is not found in the earlier Nydam and Sutton Hoo vessels. Four stout iron rings, which survived on the gunwales of the Ladby ship just aft of amidships, and which must, it seems, be shroud rings, imply that the boat carried some provision for sailing, though the absence of any effective keel, the narrow beam (2.85 m., 9 ft. 4 in.) and small freeboard (0.45 m., 18 in.) show that the sail can only have been used in quiet waters such as those of the Great Belt, to rest or supplement the oars in light following winds. No traces of the mast itself were found. The author offers as one explanation (p. 110) of this providing of what was essentially a rowing boat with a not very effective sail ‘the ignorance of the builder . . . after all, this was in the infancy of the sailing ship’. This is perhaps not so, for there is documentary evidence (the accounts of their voyages given by Othere and Wulfstan to King Alfred) that the boats buried in Viking mounds, even the Gokstad ship, a replica of which was sailed across the Atlantic in 1893, are not fully representative of contemporary northern shipbuilding and that more specialized and ocean-worthy sailing vessels were in existence (Cf. Alan Binns’ introduction to H. Arbman, The Vikings, pp. 13-14).

The Ladby ship was normally propelled by sixteen pairs of oars, and steered with a large paddle over the stern, as is indicated by the presence of additional and longer rivets in the hull at the appropriate point. The following table adapted from that of Dr. Thorvildsen (pp. 48, 110) and incorporating the Sutton Hoo ship, gives some indica-
tion of the place of the Ladby vessel amongst other notable northern ships. The figures are in many instances close approximations and should not be treated as exact.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Beam</th>
<th>Length-breadth ratio</th>
<th>No. of strakes a side</th>
<th>Height of gunwale above water-line amidships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nydam</td>
<td>73 ft.  (22 m.)</td>
<td>10 ft. (3 m.)</td>
<td>1:7:3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2 ft. 1 in. (0.62 m.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sutton Hoo</td>
<td>84 ft. (25·2 m.)</td>
<td>14 ft. (4·2 m.)</td>
<td>1:5:7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2 ft. 6 in. (0·75 m.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oseberg</td>
<td>69 ft. (21 m.)</td>
<td>16 ft. 9 in. (5·10 m.)</td>
<td>1:4:2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2 ft. 10 in. (0·85 m.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gokstad</td>
<td>79 ft. (24 m.)</td>
<td>17 ft. 3 in. (5·25 m.)</td>
<td>1:4:5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3 ft. 8 in. (1·10 m.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ladby</td>
<td>68 ft. (20·6 m.)</td>
<td>9 ft. 4 in. (2·85 m.)</td>
<td>1:7:2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1 ft. 6 in. (0·45 m.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two further features of interest connected with the boat are the well-preserved iron anchor, over 4 ft. in length, with 30 ft. of iron chain, which lay in the bows; and evidence at stern and stern of the dragon head and tail that formed the ship's extremities. This evidence takes the form of a series of iron spirals which projected to form conventional curls on the curve of the dragon's neck, and iron fittings, with spiked projections, that may have represented scales, at the curve of the tail. A ship's prow cut in a small stone mould from the Swedish Viking-period town of Birka provides an exact parallel for the curls of the dragon's mane.

The grave-goods consist mainly of horse-trappings, bits and stirrups with little or no visible decorative features; a remarkable gilt-bronze fitting (strap-distributor) with crouching beasts from an equally remarkable adjustable lead for a leash of four dogs; a fine bunch of iron arrow-heads and certain imported objects and fragments which are of the eighth or ninth century, none in good condition. Notable is a solid silver Carolingian buckle with rectangular plate, deeply chased with acanthus leaves and originally nielloed and gilt, and I would also single out a fragment, part of the flange or rim (pl. I, e) of a shallow silver plate or paten about 6 in. in diameter. The running interlace on a dotted ground seen on the rim suggests that this vessel came from the British Isles or from the art-province on the continent under Anglo-Saxon influence. But I know of no surviving Saxon dish or vessel of this type. Other remains show that the grave-goods had included a shield, a gaming-board, a bronze cauldron and a wooden bucket. There are many textile impressions (not studied in detail) and evidence of cloth with gold thread. The iron objects do not appear to have been examined by radiography, which might have revealed significant ornamentation or technical features under the rust.

The Ladby ship was discovered in 1934 on the southern bank of Kerteminde Fjord in the north-east of the island of Fyn by an amateur, P. H. Mikkelsen, who also financed the subsequent excavation and the preservation of the remains. The mound that had covered the burial had been ploughed away and was scarcely discernible. Excavation was carried out in 1935 under Gustav Rosenberg, of the National Museum, where the objects mostly now are. Rosenberg wrote two preliminary reports (Fra Nationalmusets Arbeidsmark, 1936 and 1937) and was working on the finds, having completed the reconstruction of the ship on paper, when he died in 1940. The work of publication was finally completed in 1957 by Dr. Thorvildsen. Of his book it need only be said, with the possible small reservations indicated above, that it is everything that such a publication should be. Well-arranged though the contents are, an index would still have been useful. A colour-plate records designs painted on a wood fragment, a reminder of the important part played by colour in Viking art. The designs on the original have now faded and become invisible.

To see the Ladby ship today is a remarkable experience. The outlines of the vessel, with rivets in position, were left as exposed in the ground, with the anchor and chain and the horse skeletons in the bows. An enormous internally-lit glass show-case,
shaped to the outline of the boat, was built around it (fig. 8). This in turn was covered by a reinforced concrete vault (figs. 7, 9), and a barrow some 12 ft. high was then built over the whole (fig. 10). One walks down steps into the earth to see the ship in situ, beneath a barrow of the estimated original size.

The question of similarly preserving the Sutton Hoo ship was discussed in 1939 with the Danish authorities, but war had broken out within three days of the conclusion of the excavation. The problem was not precisely the same—the soil conditions, for one thing, were different—and it was not a moment at which so costly and, at the time, still speculative a work, could have been carried out, assuming that the landowner would have agreed to it. The Sutton Hoo hull, having been very fully recorded by experts, was therefore lightly filled in and left as it was in the ground. Unfortunately the severe frosts in 1940 and 1942 and the unrestrained activities of allied tanks seriously disturbed the remains.

The Ladby ship was surrounded by a number of burials of the Viking period. These are also published and discussed in Dr. Thorvildsen’s book (pp. 89-94). The contents of the most important included a pair of tortoise brooches and a fine trefoil brooch with zoomorphic figures in the Borre style.

R. L. S. BRUCE-MITFORD


Our Scandinavian colleagues put us to shame by the size and thoroughness of their publications. These two enormous volumes on the Viking-age treasures of Gotland can be added to those works, Birka I, Osebergfundet, Trelleborg, etc., to which archaeologists of the Viking period will constantly refer. This is a remarkable work and one can understand why eleven years have separated the publication of the two volumes: one can only admire the perseverance of the compiler and praise the result of his work.

The material dealt with is intrinsically the richest in Viking-age Europe; 687 treasure finds are listed in the second volume (which was published in 1947) and a further 31 finds have been added since then; 312 of the original 687 were single finds and 372 were larger hoards. All these finds come from a comparatively small island, some 75 miles long and only 30 miles across at its widest point.

As well as the objects, many of the hoards contain more than a thousand coins and the classification of this material has set problems which have not been very satisfactorily resolved. Stenberger has attempted to divide the hoards, according to their content, into twelve groups, and the single finds into two main and four sub-groups. The rather cavalier way he has dismissed this classification in seven pages shows, I think, that he himself has not really been able to make sense of the material, such distinctions as morgenländische Münzen, morgenländische Münzen und in der Regel unversehrte Silbergegenstände and morgen- und abendländische Münzen, do not really tell us anything. The list is interesting only in its omissions; there is, for example, no classification morgenländische Münzen, Schmuck und Hacksilber. This point seems worth following up until one examines the list of hoards and sees that Norrgårda, for example, contains no European coins, 8 + 10 Arabic and Persian coins, a fragmentary bracelet, 17 + 3 bracteates (of bronze, gold and silver) and a gold bar. Surely this cannot be classified under morgenländische Münzen und in der Regel unversehrte Silbergegenstände, which is the only heading which at all approximates in description to the contents of the hoard?

The first chapter is of a much higher quality. By means of a series of distribution-maps, based on a land utilization map of 1700 compiled by I. Moborg, Stenberger has shown how the pattern of hoards and other Viking remains reflects the settlement and cultivation pattern of that period, and draws the conclusion that the area settled and
cultivated by the Vikings was very similar to that settled and cultivated by the seventeenth-century Gotlanders.

This short but convincing and brilliant chapter is followed by a discussion of the find places themselves. With such a statistically acceptable number of finds it has been possible to draw certain conclusions as to the features which govern their burial. Most of the finds lay not too far away from the farms and were buried with regard to some obvious physical feature, either natural or artificial—under (or in front of) a large stone, in relation to a number of standing stones, in prehistoric earthworks or the ruins of earlier houses. Few treasures have been found in the remains of Viking houses. Presumably many of the treasures were buried under trees of which traces have long since disappeared (I once met an army officer who had buried a fortune in gold sovereigns during the Cretan campaign, putting them under the tallest tree in a particular grove: presumably the Vikings would have done a similar thing) and it may well be that the five treasures found in bogs in Gotland were buried in relation to a physical feature which has now disappeared. Whether this is the case or not, Stenberger makes it quite clear that it is impossible to prove that these Gotlandic bog-finds have any religious significance. He has also been able to analyse the containers of the hoards: 23 were found in pots, 20 in copper and bronze vessels and so on. Naturally traces of wood or cloth are rarely found.

Stenberger examines very carefully all the possible reasons for the burial of these hoards and very properly comes to the conclusion that they were laid down during the troubled times created by the raids which culminate at the beginning and the middle of the eleventh century. With the aid of the very meagre literary material which survives from the tenth and eleventh centuries, he attempts to sort out the historical evidence and concludes that, although there were political incursions into Gotland by such people as Olof Tryggvasson, Olof Haraldson and Erik Jarl, much of the piracy was carried out on the usual Viking basis of private enterprise at a period when most of northern Europe seems to have been in a troubled state.

The greater part of the book is taken up with a typological discussion of the various objects found in the hoards: bowls, brooches, ear-rings, beads, etc. It is a remarkably thorough study and will certainly become a standard work of reference. Particularly interesting is the discussion of such ubiquitous objects as the penannular brooches and the various armlets, arm-rings and neck-rings. Studies of such subjects are rare and are scattered in so many obscure places that it is useful to have the evidence assembled in a convenient form such as this. The chapter on coins is short, as is to be expected in a book which was being prepared at a period when the great corpus of Swedish coin-hoards was just getting under way. When the numismatists' work is published this book will be of even greater value to the student of archaeology for it will form a basis for a chronological study of the antiquities of the Viking age.

The three chapters on the goldsmith's technique are of uneven quality. The studies of the methods of twisting wire and of stamped ornament are particularly valuable, but the chapter on niello and filigree is rather slight and does not take sufficient account of the continental and English material. The Austris brooch, for example, cannot be seen as an Irish-influenced object; all its elements, other than the purely Gotlandic ones, are derived from Anglo-Saxon sources; the Alfred Jewel and the British Museum shrine-plates are the chief artistic sources of the ornamental make-up of the brooch. It is difficult to see the connexion between the early eighth-century Tara brooch and the tenth-century Austris brooch which Stenberger takes for granted.

With the few exceptions I have mentioned, this book is an extremely valuable addition to archaeological literature. I hope that it will inspire somebody to do a similar piece of work for the Viking-age treasures found outside Scandinavia, for, with the work of Grieg, Skovmand and now Stenberger, we have a considerable amount of material in a usable form which could enable us to make general judgements concerning the Viking hoards of Scandinavia.

D. M. WILSON

This second edition of a booklet written by Mrs. Clarke (then Miss Kirk) in 1948 will be warmly welcomed. The text has been expanded and brought up to date and includes now, amongst other changes, a fuller discussion of the technique of the jewels and a useful note by the Ordnance Survey Department discussing the exact location of the site where the Alfred Jewel was found. Format and printing, too, are now vastly better (for the first edition suffered from post-war stringencies) but it is to be regretted that a new block, which does not show the details nearly so well, has been used for pl. i (the front and back views of the Alfred Jewel) in place of the one that did duty both in the 1948 edition of this booklet and in the Department’s *Summary Guide* of 1951.

No student can afford to be without this concise account of two of England’s major historical jewels, and even those who possess the 1948 edition should not fail to acquire this new one.

D. B. HARDEN

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This eminently readable book about the Vikings is the second to appear by a Scandinavian archaeologist within recent months. The first, by Professor Brondsted (*The Vikings*, Penguin, 1961) reviewed the history of the period from the ninth to the eleventh centuries, and then, following established practice, examined the archaeological evidence under such headings as weapons and tools, towns and fortifications, coinage and art, before concluding with a general survey of everyday life, religious beliefs, poetry and burial customs.

In the present series, Professor Arbman is supplied with a smaller canvas, his text being less than half the length afforded his Danish colleague. Within this compass he presents a vivid picture of the Vikings in their homeland and of their exploits overseas, achieving this by a careful integration of the historical and archaeological evidence. Each complements the other and as the story unfolds to involve the British Isles, the Atlantic outposts, the continental coastline, the Baltic lands and the rivers of western Russia, the reader is made aware more clearly than ever before of the extraordinary contribution archaeology has made over the past fifty years to our knowledge of the Viking period. This is particularly true of the Scandinavian homeland, where subsequent events have conspired in the conservation of open sites and where enlightened scholarship has taken full advantage of the opportunities offered. Here, behind the adventurous sea raiders, ambitious kings and feuding families of the later sagas, the spade has brought to light the deeper, if more materialistic, undertones of their existence. These concern the evolution of a pagan peasant economy into a mercantile society which, however primitive, succeeded in holding the disorganized kingdoms of western Europe to ransom for almost two centuries and blazed the sea routes along which medieval trade was to flow.

The initial chapter, the most successful in the book, traces this evolution from the isolated farmsteads and villages of Denmark, central Sweden and Norway, established before the Viking age proper, to the thriving merchant towns of Hedeby, Birka and Kaupang in the ninth and tenth centuries. Trade comes to life in the foreign imports, grave-goods and coins; the rise of specialist craftsmen engaged in boat-building, carpentry and smithing is illustrated by the boats, tools and weapons of the new society; and the formation of merchants’ guilds can be witnessed in trading posts and in runic inscriptions which already refer to merchant ‘ventures’.

By contrast, the picture outside the homeland is often shadowy, relying to a greater extent upon hostile chroniclers, but again recent discoveries are full of promise for
future research. In the east, Viking merchant towns have been partially explored at Staraja Ladoga and Novgorod with tightly packed wooden houses and plank streets set within timber fortifications, and large mixed cemeteries such as at Gnezdovo on the Dniepr afford striking confirmation of the funeral customs described by Arab merchants and travellers. In the west, expeditions have uncovered saga homesteads in Iceland and Greenland and a complete settlement has been excavated at Jarlshof in the Shetland Islands. Often, as in the comparative dearth of archaeological knowledge of our own Danelaw, a challenge remains, to which Thetford, Ingleby and ceramic studies are only beginning to provide the answer.

Finally Arbman devotes a chapter to Viking art, a study in pagan motifs which came under a variety of influences, not least from English and Irish sources. Art serves to emphasize the cultural cross-currents and inter-relationships brought about by Viking expansion. Obviously, much lies beyond the scope of this study, which is primarily concerned with Viking expansion and the light which archaeology throws upon social life and affairs. Shorn of the romanticism engendered by saga literature and of the lurid light thrown upon them by the ecclesiastical chroniclers who were their victims, the Vikings emerge through these pages in truer perspective thanks to the archaeological evidence. It is this contribution which should appeal to the reader, for Arbman demonstrates throughout his story how excavation is adding to history, indeed making it, in one of the most turbulent periods in the emergence of modern Europe.

The book is translated and edited with an informative preface by Alan Binns. Printer’s errors are few: Alingren should read Almgren on p. 152 in a useful bibliography of the more important works. The text is illustrated by clear line drawings and a representative series of plates.

J. R. C. HAMILTON


The Castle of Naesholm in north-west Zealand, three miles west of Nykobing, was first investigated in 1911, and its full excavation undertaken between 1935 and 1954. This extensive work is here the subject of a lengthy and generally well-illustrated report, with summaries in English. Being a detailed examination of a minor Danish castle built and occupied within a very limited period of about a hundred years, it forms a most useful contribution to the study of medieval castles.

Although there is practically no documentary history for the site, it appears to have been a royal castle begun c. 1240 during the long period of unrest and civil war. About a century later all the royal castles in this part of Denmark fell into the hands of Johan of Ploen, and a bailiff from Holstein occupied Naesholm. A revival of the power of the Danish monarchy began in 1340 with the coming to the throne of Valdemar Atterdag, and Naesholm must have fallen into his hands sometime between 1340 and 1346. The course of the battle and storming of the castle could be traced by the excavators.

The castle stands on a low promontory. By means of transverse ditches an irregular oval mound was created, surrounded by a continuous ditch. In the centre of the flat-topped mound was a small, square, masonry tower. The top of the mound was divided into two unequal parts by a right-angled ditch, which joined the central tower and created a small enclosure or inner ward. The nature of this site, an artificial lake, required, and subsequently helped to preserve, a good deal of timberwork. Features such as close-set posts at the base of the mound were found, which were designed to prevent the erosion of the earth sides. Instead of an outer rampart there was a bar of stones lying just under the presumed water-level. This would have been an effective obstacle, and is a feature observed elsewhere in Danish castles.
The interest of the castle lies not only in its construction and setting but also in the recovery of traces of the various buildings which occupied the top of the mound as well as the central tower. Within the inner ward were two adjoining houses. One of them had a stone- and brick-built cellar with remains of vaulting surviving. The walls of the upper floor were of beaten, straw-tempered clay and there was evidence for an external gallery. In the other house was a stove for heating, the earliest known example of its type in Denmark. It is suggested that these two houses within the inner enclosure represent the dwelling of the castellan. Elsewhere on the mound were other buildings, among which were three adjoining houses including a Danish house type, the herberg, a hall with two-story extensions at the gable ends. This group of buildings suggests the quarters for the domestic staff, the farm labourers and possibly, in times of crisis, the soldiery. There were more buildings which may have served as stables and byres and a small rectangular house near the inner bridge-abutment suggested a guardhouse.

Of great value is the well-illustrated catalogue of finds. A large assemblage of weapons, tools, house fittings and horse furniture has been produced. The influence of north Germany can be seen in the metalwork, particularly in the bronze cooking-pots. The coarser local pottery, too, is associated with more sophisticated wares including imported Rhenish stoneware. A separate account of the geological and pollen-analytical investigations by Svend Jørgensen has an English summary as does the discussion of the bone material by Ulrik Møhl. The latter is especially interesting for the variety of animals, birds and fish found on the site. Among the fish were the bones of cod, haddock and porpoise. Two aspects of the life of the inhabitants can be found from the bone material; first, the day-to-day life reflected in the bones of domestic animals and the contact with the sea; the second, the great emphasis on hunting for sport, which in turn indicates the comparatively high social level of its occupants.

Naesholm is less of a castle than a defended manor house, an outpost of royal authority. As the author states, the domestic buildings could easily be associated with those of a Danish manor of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. It seems therefore inappropriate for La Cour to place the little tower or the earthwork defences so high in the range of military architecture and quite misleading to draw on Pembroke Castle as a parallel for the enclosing by means of a ditch of the small inner ward within the area of the mound. Naesholm is in an entirely different class. The motte-like earthwork is perhaps less of a survival from eleventh- and twelfth-century forms than the result of the use of a natural feature in a marshy site. The masonry tower is a simple and small building, externally c. 37 ft. square and internally only 12 ft. square. The plan of the tower is compared with plans of other square towers in Denmark, and in size it is not unlike the tower keep found in the smaller English castles such as Ascot Doilly, Lydford or Kenfig (Glamorgan). The English examples belong to the twelfth century but it is interesting to note that the tower of Naesholm is closest in size to that of Ascot Doilly, a castle built during the Anarchy. Naesholm, too, was built in similar disturbed conditions owing to the disintegration of central authority. Such towers must have had a purely local significance providing a strong place for the storage of documents and valuables in an administrative centre, a watch tower and fighting-platform, but not a keep of last resort which could withstand a siege.

It is unfortunate that in a fully-excavated site such as this there are few large-scale plans of the houses and other buildings. The reader has only the general site plan for much of this basic information. Nevertheless much attention has been paid to the nature of the building-materials as well as to the design of the houses. The use of brick and beaten straw-tempered clay is described. The herberg house type is fully considered with elevation drawings to support the main description. It is largely due to the complete uncovering of the castle area, shown in the layout and form of the various buildings within it, that Naesholm is important.

A. D. SAUNDERS
Reviews


Contemporary maps are rarely used by medieval archaeologists and historians. This is partly because they are on such a small scale and partly because they are so distorted, not being based, of course, on accurate survey. Nevertheless medieval maps have a considerable interest in the light they throw on what the map-maker himself thought was important, as well as on the limitations in his knowledge. We are therefore particularly fortunate that in the seventh issue of their series of early maps the Royal Geographical Society has reproduced 20 maps of the British Isles covering the period from late Saxon to Elizabethan times. They provide an opportunity of following cartographical interests and gradually improving ability over a period of 600 years, from the grotesque world map of the eleventh century to the very accomplished map of the British Isles at the beginning of Saxton's county atlas.

In order to produce this fine series of reproductions at such a low cost two big sacrifices have had to be made. First, the plates are all in black and white, and colours, so important in manuscript maps (compare the facsimile of the Gough map that has recently been published), are absent. Second, the size of the plates has made it impossible to reproduce on an adequate scale such large-scale originals as the Gough map or Mercator's sheets. On the whole the reductions are sensible, but in one or two, such as the Pinelli-Walkenaer chart, it is so severe that the lettering on the map cannot be read. The reader will find that a magnifying glass is a useful aid when using the plates.

The first five maps are of monastic, or at all events ecclesiastical, origin. The eleventh-century map and that of Giraldus Cambrensis of c. 1200 show the British Isles on a small scale with very few place and river names. Interestingly enough both show Iceland north of Ireland. The place names are of interest in the first, especially the 'Suthbryttas' on the south side of the Channel. The British Isles are monstrously distorted in the world map at Hereford Cathedral, but the fascinating representation of the Emperor Augustus issuing a medieval writ to the three surveyors in the corner of the plate is very illuminating about the pedigree of this type of circular world map.

Pls. 4 and 5 (wrongly numbered in the notes) represent the work of Matthew Paris. The curious 'Scema Britannie' showing Ermine Street, Watling Street, the Icknield Way and Fosse Way converging on Dunstable gives an insight into medieval thinking on map-making, and shows the part played by roads as a skeletal basis for the map, as we see more clearly in the Gough map a century later. The other map by Paris is a highly original and fascinating piece of work, giving a vivid glimpse of how England seemed to a monk at St. Albans in the mid thirteenth century. The map is constructed around an artificial axis from Dover to Newcastle, and among the mass of rich detail the depiction of the Antonine and Hadrian's walls is particularly noteworthy.

The Gough map is shown at a very reduced scale from the old Ordnance Survey zincograph in pl. 6. This (probably official) map is by far the most noteworthy production of British medieval cartography, but as the recently issued facsimile has been reviewed at length by the Archaeology Officer of the Ordnance Survey in Med. Archaeol., iv, 177 f., there is no need to discuss it here.

With pls. 7 and 9 we are confronted with something very different. They are sea charts of Italian origin, intended for practical use and based on actual measurements, or rather compass bearings. Details are confined to coastal towns while the sheets are covered with lines radiating from several points, 'loxodromes'. An interesting point is that on the south and east of both England and Ireland the coastline is shown in great detail, but the west and north are virtually ignored. The explanation no doubt is that the seamen for whom these charts were made were mainly engaged in carrying merchandise to and from these coasts.

Pls. 10–14 illustrate maps of the Renaissance, and for the first time some of these
are woodcuts or copper engravings instead of manuscripts. The most curious feature is the influence of Ptolemy arising from the revival of classical learning. The map of the British Isles from Ptolemy’s *Geographia* reproduced in pl. 11 shows us Roman Britain, although it was published in 1513! Several technical improvements appeared in the second quarter of the sixteenth century; the indication of latitude and longitude and early attempts at a projection, and, most important, a scale. These improvements were due to foreign cartography, but the continuing influences of the Gough map on outline are evident in the map of c. 1540 (pl. 12).

With pls. 16–20 we have left the medieval for the modern world. The period 1560-80 was one of intensive cartographical effort. Nowell and Lluyd were working in Britain and one of them probably provided the material for Mercator’s map of the British Isles published in eight sheets in 1564. When Saxton embarked on his county surveys in about 1573 a good deal of spadework had already been done. The last plate illustrates the general map of England and Wales that prefaces his county atlas of 1579. Slight errors and distortion remain but on the whole a reliable picture of the shape of the country has been achieved.

The author of the introduction and notes was also responsible for the selection of maps for reproduction. He is to be congratulated on a work that will be of interest and value to geographer, historian and archaeologist alike.

M. W. THOMPSON

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Professor Fitchen’s book is to be welcomed as a new approach to a subject on which there has been little serious study. It is one of which writers who have sought to appreciate the structural problems involved in high gothic building have always been aware but have left as a subject of speculation rather than study, appreciating the miracle and wondering at the means. This has been due largely to the scarcity of contemporary documentary material in the form of direct description or incidental illustration in illuminated manuscripts. The evidence is so slight that the author here manages to dismiss it in the first eight pages of his considerable volume, before discussing and evaluating the speculations of his predecessors. It is by gathering this latter material together, widely quoted in extensive footnotes, that Fitchen serves us best.

The title, The Construction of Gothic Cathedrals, is misleading. The book is confined strictly to a consideration of the means employed in the erection of the high vault in (mostly) French cathedrals with a discussion of the falsework problems facing the medieval mason and carpenter. Fitchen’s argument is close and ingenious; having discussed the development of the vault form, on a structural rather than a chronological basis, which, unfortunately, is rarely related to actual dated examples, he considers the two main elements of the vault which call for support during erection, the vault web and the rib.

In dealing with the web he examines and discards the merits of the cerce or expanding frame suggested by Viollet-le-Duc and devises, himself, a simpler and more effective form of frame to support the planked surface on which the web might have been laid. The discussion is developed to great length, following each aspect down to its final constructional detail, effectively proving that here is, indeed, a practical solution to the problem of falsework erection and removal. The ribs and their centering are treated in a similar manner with, again, a convincing and practical answer. In his final chapter the author discards his own solutions, as argued in the chapter on Gothic Formwork, and propounds yet another. It is impossible not to be impressed by the care and thought that form the basis for his solutions to these fascinating problems, but this does not make them any the less his own rather than those of the medieval architects for whose practices no new evidence is put forward.
A footnote quotes Willis as saying in 1842 that 'most of the facts required are of such a nature that they are only to be derived from the existing buildings'. This is still true. The available written evidence is inadequate and a great deal of field research is necessary before sufficient data can be accumulated for the construction of a working theory. As Willis further remarks, the gathering of all the evidence is clearly beyond the ability of any one man. A more limited objective, the careful study of the structural techniques used in one particular building could, perhaps, produce some solid advance; preferably the study of a ruined building which would be the more likely to display the vital internal evidence. An examination of mortar changes, for instance, might well prove or disprove the fundamental assumption that the rib was erected before the vault web. Even Viollet-le-Duc makes this assumption, for which there appears to be no actual proof. Again, is it physically possible to erect the re-entrant web above the tas-de-charge with all the ribs in position? In a French sexpartite vault it would be difficult, in an elaborate English lierne vault, almost impossible, and in a fan vault quite impossible. The proof of such a fundamental assumption becomes essential if the subsequent speculation is not to be idle.

This is not the only point. In medieval buildings erector and designer were the same man, who, in making his design, must have been fully aware of the difficulties inherent in the erection of the high vault. Those who could conceive such structures would have been well capable of anticipating and allowing for the structural conditions resulting from and during erection. A structural analysis, from this point of view, of at least one or two buildings would be of great value. Fitchen himself recognizes and goes to some pains to overcome the best known of those erectional problems, the absorption of the thrust of the flying buttress while the counteracting vault was yet unbuilt. He points out the difficulties of seating a suitable temporary strut (or tension member) against the narrow shafted pier between clerestory windows. The fact that such a strut was not allowed for may be evidence that it was unnecessary and that the building was so designed as to be stable on its own before the vault was built. Only a clear analysis of the stresses involved would prove the point. It is one, however, that calls for proof before basing any theory on the contrary assumption.

It is to be hoped that Fitchen's well-produced book will provoke further study of these and kindred problems on which there has been all too little careful research.

P. A. Faulkner


Topography is not a recognized branch of academic learning, but it is a necessary tool both for the archaeologist and for those who concern themselves with the history of architecture, trades or local government. It is as much the failure to envisage towns as actual places as any defect of scholarship that makes Tait's book on The Medieval Borough so unsatisfactory an introduction to urban history, and it is precisely its judicious combination of topographical and constitutional knowledge that makes Sir Francis Hill's Medieval Lincoln a model of its kind. While recognizing that topography by itself is not history, we must therefore be grateful to those who have concerned themselves with this despised but indispensable form of inquiry.

Among urban topographers the Rev. H. E. Salter (d. 1951) must take a high place. Between 1904 and 1942 he edited for the Oxford Historical Society no fewer than 36 volumes, totalling some 15,000 pages of print, all of which contributed something to the history and topography of Oxford. There were some who thought that Anthony Wood had said the last word on Oxford topography in the seventeenth century, but Salter knew better, and it is largely due to him that Oxford's unrivalled sources of local history have been so largely made available in print. Though a master of editorial
method, he was (as Mr. Pantin points out in the admirable memoir with which he has preaced the present volume) 'constitutionally averse to generalizing', and his lectures on *Medieval Oxford* hardly do justice to his immense knowledge of the city. Much more valuable was the *Map of Medieval Oxford* which he published in 1934. Based on a lifetime's study of Oxford documents, this was a masterpiece of topographical reconstruction that far exceeds both in detail and in accuracy any comparable plan of any other medieval English town. But (although indexed) the map had no supporting text: this existed only in the form of an unpublished *Survey of Oxford* which Salter bequeathed to the Bodleian Library. The *Survey* gives the history of every tenement, street by street, and constitutes a complete topographical dictionary of the medieval city. It is arranged by wards which quarter the city, and it is the text of the north-east and south-east wards that comprises the volume under review.

The manuscript has been printed exactly as Salter left it, and no attempt has been made to pursue those 'unresolved queries and loose ends' to which Salter himself, 'with characteristic frankness', drew attention by interjections such as 'I do not know the reference for this' (p. 95), 'I doubt it' (p. 92), or even 'I think this is all wrong' (p. 49). To have attempted to solve these problems would have been a formidable task which might well have delayed publication indefinitely, and Mr. Pantin was undoubtedly right to leave the text as it was, and to make it available to local historians as soon as possible. For (as he observes) this is not intended as 'a book to end all books' on the subject of Oxford topography. It will be used, as Salter himself intended, as 'a guide and starting-point for further work'. To this end Pantin has supplemented it by small-scale but perfectly legible reproductions both of the appropriate portions of Loggan's bird's-eye view of Oxford in the seventeenth century, and of Salter's own map, and has provided an invaluable list of 'concordance maps' which enable the one to be related to the other with the minimum of difficulty. Thus it is possible to locate a tenement on the map, to see at a glance what it looked like in 1675, and then turn to Salter's record of its ownership from the fourteenth, thirteenth, or even (when the documentation permits) the twelfth century up to the seventeenth or eighteenth. It is this combination of visual and historical record that gives Salter's *Survey* its unique value, and makes its publication so notable an achievement.

H. M. COLVIN


Professor Jordan's notable survey of charitable giving in England between 1480 and 1660, based on evidence relating to ten counties, has already resulted in two volumes. The first, *Philanthropy in England 1480-1660*, was concerned with the methods used in the survey and with the general conclusions reached; the second, the *Charities of London*, dealt with the contribution of the capital. Now in this third volume we are given the detailed findings for a single county. All familiar with the survey will realize how thorough has been the search for evidence, and how immense is the mass of material that has been collected. The data for Kent is here summarized, after close analysis on the lines laid down in the first volume, in two tables, the one showing decade by decade for the county as a whole total donations for the poor, for social rehabilitation, for municipal betterments, for education, and for religious needs, respectively; the other showing total donations during the whole period for each of these purposes, parish by parish. A descriptive commentary considers both how the Kentish material illustrates the author's general conclusions, and in what respect the Kentish pattern is a peculiar one.

One of the distinctive features that emerges most clearly is, as might be expected, the high proportion (over 40 per cent) of Kent's charitable funds which were given by
Londoners. Many of these Londoners were sons of Kent, like Sir Andrew Judd, a native of Tonbridge who, after being apprenticed to a London skinner, became a prominent merchant, alderman, and sheriff of the city, and founded the now famous school in his home town. Others were men who, having made their money in business in the city, purchased manors in Kent in order to set up there as country gentry. Hence the relatively high total of Kent’s charitable benefactions, as compared with those of other counties, reflects not so much the intrinsic wealth of the shire, as is suggested, but rather its close involvement with the capital. In this respect the Kentish pattern is doubtless not unlike that of other counties immediately adjacent to London, but how, if at all, it differs from them is not apparent since Kent is the only one of such counties to be included in the survey.

The author’s general thesis is too well known to call for discussion here. But readers of his commentary on the Kent figures should perhaps be reminded, as indeed he reminds them in his preface, that not only in setting out his data, but also in drawing deductions from it, he has deliberately disregarded the price revolution of the sixteenth century. If this revolution is borne in mind, it is surely difficult to agree that, in Kent at least, ‘the philanthropic impulse . . . evoked a steadily and rapidly mounting response which reached a great climax of giving in the first generation of the seventeenth century’. Even in monetary terms the decadal average of charitable gifts appears to have been less in the reign of Elizabeth than in 1480–1540, though in the Stuart period it was considerably more, and if the fall in the value of money is taken into account, then neither of the later periods can compare with that of 1480–1540. And though it is true that in later periods a greater proportion of the whole went to the relief of the poor and less to specifically religious needs, yet in real terms, taking the decadal averages, donors of pre-Reformation times gave quite as much for the poor as did their Elizabethan successors, and much more for education than either Elizabethan or early Stuart donors. The problem of poverty had indeed greatly increased in the later sixteenth century, but not so the provision made by private charity towards its relief. Hence the imperative necessity for state action, particularly as the trade depressions of the latter half of the century swelled the ranks of the unemployed among England’s new industrial proletariat.

If not all the author’s general conclusions will find ready acceptance, the abundant and carefully documented evidence of specific bequests and donations which he gives in the course of his commentary will be of unquestioned value to historians and archaeologists. Much of this relates to the foundation of schools and almshouses, and to the building, repair, furnishing, and decoration of churches. It will be especially useful in assisting the precise dating of buildings. Wills, particularly the magnificent series at Somerset House of wills proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, have been all too little used for this purpose hitherto, but they have been consulted, and to very good effect, for this survey. Thus we can tell within a year or two, from bequests by one or more donors, when chapels, for example, were being built in the churches of Hunton and Pluckleigh, steeples in those of Deptford and Chartham, or new aisles in those of Crayford and Eynsford. These are merely a few out of many such instances, but they will indicate how rich is the storehouse here of materials for the history of building, as well as for that of charitable giving.

E. M. CARUS-WILSON


This study of the smaller house in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries uses documentary material, and in particular household inventories, parsonage visitations and estate surveys; but it also relates the inferences drawn from the documents to buildings seen on the ground. The format of the book is good and there are
well-drawn plans and diagrams and useful plates, although the reproduction of photographs could be better in a few instances.

It is a pioneer work in this field, as it is the first to survey the whole country using these particular sources. Admittedly inventories have already been used before for the purpose of throwing light on the smaller house in certain localities, but never on such a comprehensive scale as this, and throughout the book Barley gives facts which would be interesting to any social historian.

The advent of such a book is fortunate, for it is the habit of many investigators with an architectural training to belittle the value of documentary sources, without realizing that practically all stylistic dating depends, in the first instance, on documents, and that their work is only half done if they neglect them. There is an essential need for the scholar who can correlate examination of the house itself with a sympathetic use of contemporary sources, and Barley has made good use of the work of local experts; he has been able to correct quite a few misconceptions, such as the inability to realize that the cruck tradition carried on into relatively modern times. Moreover he has pointed out the existence of halls with one aisle only, and mistakes could have been avoided if this had been realized before. He is undoubtedly at his best when he relies on his own research.

There is a fair appraisal of the lesser man and his house and he gives a valuable account of the classes below the gentry. He lacks the bias of so many modern economic historians who force their thesis to fit their own preconceived ideas of the worthy peasant oppressed by the upper classes.

The essential discussion of the development of plans is kept to the fore throughout, and the analysis of the layout of houses and the number and use of particular rooms is valuable. There are useful deductions about the rows of cottages erected in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (p. 247), and the addition of oddments to the normal plan, in order to house relatives (p. 31) is a point often overlooked.

Many important facts are given about building-materials, and in particular the brick industry is very well described (pp. 188 and 205). One cannot stress too much the value of data about the earliest use of features and materials; for instance the earliest reference to pantiles is c. 1630 (p. 189), the earliest small houses built entirely of brick were erected in 1636/8 (p. 199 f.), and the earliest tumbled gable with a date on it is 1656. The use of the ovolo moulding in Devon houses c. 1588 (p. 112) is very early. Whereas some of these dates may be altered, perhaps because of the stimulus of this very book, such evidence is of the utmost importance.

The appendices are useful, and a building contract of 1729 (p. 272) is noteworthy because it shows clearly the different uses of oak and elm in the construction of a small house.

It is perhaps significant that most criticism can be levelled against the introductory part of the book. The conception of Highland and Lowland zones when applied to the smaller houses immediately leads to trouble, and one feels that Barley is aware of this for having already, in part II, avoided putting the midland counties such as Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and the west Midlands into the highland zone, in part III he also makes the limestone uplands a separate factor. The lowland zone is similarly subdivided and from the beginning East Anglia and Essex are treated as separate elements.

Quite a few questions arise about the conception here put forward and one is the suggestion that the south-east is advanced and passes its techniques on to the north and west; but the south-west and Devon are obviously more advanced at times. One wonders about the postulated migration of the aisled hall from the south-eastern counties (p. 31), especially when the earliest aisled timber hall remaining in England is at the bishop's palace at Hereford. Rather than this Hereford hall providing a date for the introduction of the aisled hall to the counties on the Welsh border, it could provide evidence for the reverse, that the aisled hall went thence to the south-east. Similarly if Guiseley rectory represents an aisled hall of the thirteenth century (p. 116), it can hard-
ly represent a tradition which comes from the south-east, for it is as early as any of the Essex ones. With the evidence of recent excavations such as those at Yeavering and Cheddar, one could argue that the aisled hall arrived in certain areas with the Saxons.

It is necessary to draw East Anglia from the lowland zone, for the statement that ‘medieval roofs in south-east England have no ridge beam’ (p. 21) cannot apply there; a ridge beam is the regular practice in virtually all the hammer-beam roofs in Norfolk and Suffolk and is common in Cambridge. Perhaps L. F. Salzman helps here when he suggests that the use of a ridge-piece is a later improvement (Building in England, down to 1540, p. 212).

One also queries the accepted impression that the cruck type of construction embodies a technique which started high up the social scale and ‘eventually became something suitable for barns and cottages’ (p. 22). As the earliest dated crucks are nearly all in barns and the earliest documentary reference to one so far is in a kitchen at Harlech is it not possible that they rose in the social scale and not the reverse?

When the architecture of certain areas is explained by the highland- and lowland-zone conception, peculiar situations can arise. For instance ‘York builders had thus adopted building techniques such as the framed building and the jetty and used them in houses of traditional plan, the new practices of the lowland zone are absorbed in the north without breaking the essential continuity of highland culture’ (p. 119). But there is no evidence for any other techniques (such as the use of crucks) in York, and the box-frame and jetties in such houses as those in Lady Row, Goodramgate, of c. 1320 are some of the oldest examples of such usage in England. It can hardly be said that the York carpenters are absorbing lowland-zone practices, and the argument is like that about the bishop’s palace at Hereford.

A few further comments arise. Perhaps in the first chapter of part 1 the discussion of the first-floor hall looms rather large, for such a hall is probably of stone and with a defensive connotation. In fact where there is documentary evidence (see for instance Farrer, Yorkshire Charters) it appears that the stone house was a rarity and not the rule in the twelfth century, and the timber houses probably had ground-floor halls.

It is said that Tiptoft’s manor in Wimbish, Essex, is to be securely dated 1348/67 (p. 21), but this is doubtful, for the date given rests on the assumption that Sir John Tiptoft owned the manor between these dates. Sir John Wauton, who died on the 31st December 1346/7, only held the manor of Wimbish for life and it reverted to the overlord Sir John FitzWalter, who apparently allowed Sir John Wauton’s descendants to continue to hold it. When Wauton’s widow married Sir John Tiptoft, the Tiptofts had no interest in the manor other than a tenement called ‘Cymays’ (Calendar of Inquisitions viii, Edward iii, no. 681, p. 505), perhaps amounting to one-tenth of a knight’s fee (Feudal Aids, ii, 178) and could hardly have built the capital house. There is a more probable date which would accord with c. 1330, assigned to the house by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, on the strength of the mouldings. On the 6th October, 1315, Sir Robert FitzWalter, who held the manor of the Crown, obtained a licence to convey Wimbish to himself and his third wife Alice, obviously as an endowment for her (Calendar of Patent Rolls, 6 Edward ii, cited by The Complete Peerage, v, 474), and it is much more likely that the house was built between 1315 and Alice’s death in 1325, after which date Wauton’s life tenure began.

A statement that in the Cotswolds medieval timber houses were perhaps always exceptional may prove to be wrong, for most of the medieval houses, except some in Burford, appear to have been timber-framed, particularly in Winchcomb, where there are several early houses.

Anyone who has worked on family history would distrust the theory (p. 129) that ‘much of the population of each village moved elsewhere in a generation or so, and the enduring families are most exceptional’. The reverse seems more likely, and the movement was often delayed until c. 1800. Likewise the great rebuilding was by no means a general phenomenon and the phrase means nothing, for instance, in York.
These criticisms are very few compared with the great number of constructive ideas in this pioneer work, valuable to all students of the smaller English house.

E. A. Gee

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It gives us much pleasure, as we go to press, to be able to welcome this first volume of Folk Life, the organ of the Society for Folk Life Studies which was founded in 1961 to further the study of traditional ways of life in Great Britain and Ireland. The acting editor is J. Geraint Jenkins and the president of the Society, who contributes a foreword, explaining the genesis of the project, is Dr. Iorwerth C. Peate, Curator of the Welsh Folk Museum at St. Fagan’s.

Articles in this first volume include ‘Geography and Folk Life’ by R. H. Buchanan of Queen’s University, Belfast; ‘The Countryman’s Smock’ by Anne Buck, Curator of the Gallery of English Costume, Manchester; ‘“Knur and Spell” and allied games’ by Frank Atkinson, Director of the Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle; ‘The hand-craftsman in the wool textile trade’ by Hugo Lemon of the Wool Industries Research Association; and ‘Aspects of oral tradition and belief in an industrial region’ by Donald McKelvie of Swinton Teachers’ Training College. There are also book reviews and a section of notes and comments.

The initiation of a new journal and the collection of contents for its first volume is always a difficult task (his experto crede) and those concerned are to be congratulated on the contents of this present venture which, as will be seen, cover a wide range of topics and augur well for its success now and in the future. There are a number of plates and text figures, nicely reproduced though they are not (as they should be) numbered consecutively through the volume, nor is a list of them given. We hope that this will be remedied in future volumes and that the contents will also be listed on one of the text pages and not merely, as now, on the cover, which is apt to be cast away when such a journal is bound in libraries.

The printers, Gee & Sons of Denbigh, have on the whole produced a nice-looking volume, but the alignment of the letters at times is not as good as it should be.

D. B. Harden

The following publications have also been received:
