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HISTORIC TOWNS: *Maps and Plans of Towns and Cities in the British Isles with Historical Commentaries, from the earliest times to 1800.* General Editor, M. D. LOBEL. Vol. I, Lovel Johns-Cook, Hammond and Kell Organisation, 1969, Price £5.25.

The British Committee for Historical Towns have issued their first volume of maps of towns and cities in the British Isles. This international body has as its aim the production of atlases of towns in various European countries under the general direction of Professor Philippe Wolff of Toulouse University. It is an undertaking which has never been attempted before on this scale, and as the series progresses it will be possible to investigate the anatomy of towns with accuracy and on maps with a uniform scale.

This first volume is a world première to the series and contains accounts with plans of Banbury, Caernarvon, Glasgow, Gloucester, Hereford, Nottingham, Reading and Salisbury. We are fortunate in having a Berkshire town included in this inaugural production, Reading being written by Dr C. F. Slade.

The origin of places makes a fascinating study, there are many variations to be considered from the examples under review. Glasgow had a neolithic settlement followed later by occupation. Gloucester was firmly founded on the Roman town and Colonia of Glevum, Caernarvon had a Roman fortress at Segontium a mile away from the later Saxon borough. Only at Salisbury was an entirely new cathedral city founded after 1217 by removal from the wind-swept downhill of Old Sarum.

Banbury, Hereford and Nottingham owed their situation and growth to a strategical position and the building of a medieval castle. At Reading there had been a Saxon Royal vill but the town's progress stemmed undoubtedly from the foundation of the Abbey in 1121. This resulted in a shift of town centre from the western side of St Mary's Minster to a new market place close to the Abbey precincts.

This change had an effect on the layout of new streets but the development of other town plans is not always so clear. Many places show a confused street pattern originating from haphazard occupation from Saxon times onwards. Reading however, without ever possessing medieval walls, was sufficiently compact to be contained in the later 17th century Civil War ramparts.

The maps in the book have as their base the first well-surveyed plans of as near 1800 as possible, checked against the first 25 inch Ordnance survey; they form a reliable framework to which existing ground features and details from archaeological finds have been added. Information is also included from earlier plans and documents, from these a very detailed pattern of the medieval town emerges. The understanding of many early written records becomes easier and the success of the method and its accuracy has been proved by excavation at Hereford, Gloucester and Bristol carried out since these monographs were written.

These studies can be read with profit by all concerned in local government and planning as well as those interested in English town history and who enjoy fine map-making and book production. The Reading portion of the work may be purchased separately. F. M. UNDERHILL

THE FIRST HALL BOOK OF THE BOROUGH OF NEW WINDSOR, 1653-1725, by SHELAGH BOND, *Windsor Borough Historical Records Publications: Volume 1.* 1968, Pp. xlv+193. £1.75.

Berkshire is fortunate in the quantity of records of its ancient boroughs which survive; with the exception of Reading, the Royal Borough of New Windsor is the first to publish a full transcript of any of its records, an achievement which is no easy one in these days.

Though not the oldest borough in the Royal County, since Wallingford with its first charter

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granted by Henry II and with its fine series of records surviving from the early 13th century has first place and Reading has a charter of a slightly earlier date than Windsor, yet Windsor's records are of particular interest by virtue of its position in relation to the Castle.

Apart from a possibly rather higher proportion of freemen who were engaged in what might be described as the luxury trades than would be the case in another town of comparable size—and this is a point where exact comparison is difficult, in spite of the detailed analysis of occupations of burgesses in the Introduction—there is nothing to show that Windsor Corporation enjoyed any special relationship with the Crown. So far as possible, independence in carrying out its own affairs was the rule, with the presentation of loyal addresses on special occasions in the same way as other boroughs. Only the occasional dissident voice was raised, as in Queen Anne's reign, when on 12th September, 1706 the Hall Book states 'this Hall hath bin informed that some Members of this Corporacion have unadvisedly taken upon them to say That the Corporacion was not Two pence the better for the Queens coming to Windsor which words doe not agree with the gratefull Sense this Corporacon hath and ever shall have of her Majesties most gracious favor in Affording them soe much of her royall presence . . .' The dissident members, possibly disappointed tradesmen, then denied all disrespect and begged pardon. The Hall Book does not contain an entry on presentation of a loyal address to George I on his arrival from Hanover in September 1714. A draft, probably prepared by Charles Aldworth, one of the two Members for Windsor, was discarded because, as its endorsement states, 'they have already prepared another'. A copy of this and of the draft, is among the records of the Neville family now in the Berkshire Record Office. Nothing, it states, but the 'peacefull Accession' of George I could repair the loss which was sustained by the death of 'our late most Gracious Queen'.

It is interesting to see that the Hall Book contains several entries of the admission of

women to the freedom of the borough. The same treatment was accorded to women in the borough of Wokingham later in the 18th century.

The mention of the office of Deputy Mayor in March 1685/6, raises the question of his functions. This seems to be the first mention of the office and its later use appears infrequent. Its holder was Mayor in 1677 and again in 1688. It is unfortunate that an earlier volume, known as the Mayor's Book, dating from 1559, suffered the all too common fate of records, probably by being lent out many years ago, as it was in April 1658 when Thomas Merwin, who later became Mayor, borrowed it 'out of the halle' and perhaps forgot to return it.

The biographical notes on members of the Corporation are a most useful addition to the work and obviously involved a considerable amount of research. With this and the exhaustive treatment of the scope of the Hall Book in the Introduction Mrs Bond has set a high standard for the editors of future volumes in this very welcome series of publications by the Royal Borough.

A. GREEN

FOLIEJON PARK, *a short history, research by* W. J. MORRIS, *edited by* MARGARET CROSLAND (*Mining and Chemical Products Ltd.*) 1970, n.p., 78 pp., 5 ill.

Mr S. T. Hodge, Managing Director of the business firm that acquired Foliejon Park, Winkfield, in 1956, asked Mr Morris to investigate its history, and after Mr Hodge's death in an air disaster his firm undertook publication. The main facts about this estate in Windsor Forest were succinctly narrated by J. Hautenville-Cope and Nora Alexander in vol. iii of the *Victoria County History*, but Mr Morris adds illustrative detail and prints some original material of interest for the modern period.

The estate of 'Foliejon' was apparently the 'folie' or country retreat of John Droxford, Bishop of Bath and Wells, who obtained it from the Crown in 1302. The property passed back into the hands of the Crown in discharge of the bishop's debts, and until 1630 was a 'minor unit in the complex of manor houses and lodges

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belonging to the castle and forest of Windsor', serving *inter alia* as a home for the royal deer (there were 250 fallow deer in Foliejon in 1607) and as a source of timber for the royal works (supplying oak for both Eton College and Windsor Castle in 1441). Mr Morris provides ample biographical material concerning the subsequent owners of Foliejon, the families of Henn (1630-1710), Beauclerk (1743-1771), Towry (1771-1800) and Blane (1804-1915), and extracts from T. L. Blane's diary provide an agreeable picture of Victorian country life. A 'painted window' is ordered for Winkfield church; many days are spent in trying to make the stable clock work; trees are marked for felling; the first swarm of bees is put in the 'bee

house'; and the ancient well of St Hubert is reconstructed. In the present century, after passing into the hands of several racehorse owners, Foliejon reached its apogee as the war-time home of King Haakon of Norway, and 'virtually the capital of Norway in exile' from 1942 to 1945.

The value of this study would have been increased if it had been provided with a map and also with a systematic series of precise references to the original and printed sources on which it is based. Even so, Mr Morris and Miss Crosland are to be congratulated on a useful piece of work, and the owners of the estate on their enterprise in making it generally available.

MAURICE BOND