REVIEWS

THE ANCIENT BURIAL MOUNDS OF ENGLAND. By L. V. GRINSELL. Pp. xviii–278. With 24 plates and 12 text-illustrations. Methuen, 2nd ed., 1953. Price 25s.

This is the second edition of a book, familiar to many, first published in 1936. Much work has been done on barrows since then, not least by the author himself, and this edition incorporates the results.

Apart from passing references the book deals with England only, and the second of its two parts is a topographical survey of specific regions covering most of the country and now including Exmoor and the Quantocks, the Isle of Wight, the Lake Countries and Northumbria.

The first part is general. It describes the categories into which burial-mounds are conventionally grouped, the evidence for reconstructing the ritual practised, and discusses local names and folklore. There is detailed advice for the beginner who wants to trace barrows and study them in all ways short of excavation. A chapter on barrow digging through the ages is interesting and agreeably amusing.

The book is an excellent introduction to this aspect of archaeology, but the thoroughness of its documentation, the notes on local museums and their contents, and the careful regional surveys, should be of very considerable value even to those who are already familiar with much of the subject matter.

In addition, there is woven into the chapters the story of men's reaction to barrows when their true origins were forgotten. It is of the greatest interest to see how on the one hand they challenged explanation by legend, and on the other were brought to serve the community in new rôles as boundary marks, meeting places, windmill steads, etc.

Some points of detail might be commented on. On p. 10 the varying scales of feet beneath the long barrows illustrated is liable to confuse. On p. 16 Howe Hill, Duggleby, is allowed only ten cremations, though the correct figure of 53 is given on p. 218, where also it might be added that three bone pins of the type now associated with the secondary Neolithic culture were found with the cremations; p. 73, the Presely hills are in north, not west, Pembrokeshire; p. 188, the undated barrow with square bank 'north of the Hardy Monument' has lately been found to be one of a group of three. There is a further apparent analogy near Leckhampton Camp, Cheltenham.

H. C. BOWEN.

ANTIQUITIES OF THE IRISH COUNTRYSIDE. By SEÁN P. Ó RÍORDÁIN. $8\frac{3}{8}$ x $5\frac{3}{8}$. Pp. xii–108. 88 half-tones and 5 text-figures. Distribution map end-papers. London: Methuen, 1953. Price 15s.

This is a third edition, revised and partly re-written, of a booklet with the same title first published eleven years ago and now out of print for some time. It is intended, primarily, to supply answers to the queries which 'the questioning man in the street' puts to the archaeologist regarding field monuments, and in this aim it succeeds. Indeed, it does much more: it presents to archaeologists the latest conclusions (some, necessarily, still tentative) on the development and dating of all types of these monuments, summarizing the results of more than a decade of excavation. It also directs attention to the gaps which remain to be filled in our knowledge of the distribution of monuments, and suggests how field workers may help in the completion of a survey.

Forts of all kinds, being the most numerous and most widely spread monuments, receive full treatment in the first and longest chapter. Megalithic tombs occupy almost as much space, and in the discussion of them Professor O Ríordáin states the outstanding problems impartially; he does not commit himself, for instance, to either the west-east devolution (degradation?)—recently propounded—or east-west evolution of the court-cairn, i.e. court-cairn to horned-cairn or *vice versa*. Souterrains, house sites, burial-mounds, stone circles, etc., and crannogs, all have their place, but the spectacular appearance of some hundreds of the latter in concentration around Lough Gara (Sligo-Roscommon) is

perhaps too recent to have received mention. To fulfil, more completely, the primary purpose of the book a few more reconstructions (of a fort or crannog, for instance) might have been included with advantage, in addition to that of a motte-and-bailey. This (Fig. 2) is somewhat misleading in that the main fosse shown is hardly adequate in dimension to provide the material for the heaped-up motte. Moreover, the fosses seem to be water-filled ; a condition which must have been rare. The numerous photographs are almost uniformly excellent and informative. Particularly good are the air-views of forts and the like, and the partial reconstruction of a *fulacht fiadh* (open-air cooking place). The short bibliography—' Suggestions for Further Reading '—is useful, and the end-paper distribution maps, with a special reference grid to accompany the adequate index, is readable and clear.

As a concise and handy ' field archaeology ' of Ireland it would be difficult to improve upon this well-produced booklet.

H. G. LEASK.

THE ANCIENT CITY OF ATHENS, ITS TOPOGRAPHY AND MONUMENTS. By IDA THALLON HILL. Pp. xii–258. 2 plates and 34 plans. Methuen, 1953, Price 25s.

This is not the *ideal* book on Athens : to produce that, as Mrs. Hill aptly says, would require the courage and wisdom of Athene herself. But for the present it is the only recent book on the topography and monuments of ancient Athens. It is therefore very welcome, and will be much used, even by those who are stimulated by it to picture that book that Athene has not written and consequently to find fault with the one that Mrs. Hill has. It is a reviewer's duty, however, to consider a book in relation to its avowed aim, in this case the modest one of selection and combination from the new literature on the subject. The last quarter of a century has filled many volumes (notably those of the journal *Hesperia*) with detailed accounts of new excavations and discussion of topographical and architectural problems ; and Mrs. Hill has accomplished a formidable task in digesting all this into 220 pages or so. To do more she does not claim ; but that does not mean that the book, while giving you (for example) the latest views on the planning of the Acropolis as a setting for the Parthenon, will send you to other works for a description of the temple itself. The older material is presented along with the new, though not necessarily in the same detail.

This raises a difficult problem of scale and unity. Modern archaeology is based on high-precision recording and a scientific austerity in interpretation. But how much of the recorded detail, how much austerity, should be retained in a work of this compass ? A six-inch map shows things that are omitted from the one-inch, and the one-inch is better for their omission : not better than the six-inch, but better for its own purpose. Surely it is the same with books. The reviewer finds himself in the perhaps unusual position (for a reviewer) of complaining that this book often includes too much. That makes for hard reading, and sometimes a lack of unity. Where references to the primary literature are so fully given, do we need quite so detailed a statement of evidence ? Need the length of a large temple here be recorded to the half millimetre ? The reader at times feels that his plate is overloaded. As to lack of unity, this is specially noticeable in respect of Chap. III, where the history of pottery styles, important in itself, makes rather arid reading (especially in the absence of illustration) and does not forward the whole. True, there is little else to carry us across from Mycenaean to Classical ; but pottery hardly comes under the heading of either topography or monuments. For the Bronze Age there is more to go on ; yet in Chap. II the detail of evidence seems to stand on the page like a barrier between us and the human city it represents. One wishes Mrs. Hill had been less detailed here, even if the alternative involves speculation.

The best chapters in the book, to which these criticisms are less applicable, are those on the Agora and the Acropolis, which are doubtless the parts of her subject nearest to the writer's heart. Indeed we are fortunate that this book has been undertaken by one who, in her long residence in Athens, has had unrivalled opportunities of communing

with the expert staff of the American excavations at the Agora, and with ' that benevolent triumvirate '. Dr. B. H. Hill, Mr. G. P. Stevens, and Professor W. B. Dinsmoor.

There are some defects of presentation : sentences sometimes straggle in syntax or punctuation ; needless paragraphing sometimes makes the text seem disjointed ; misprints, though perhaps not such as to mislead, are sufficiently numerous to irritate. There is a sad lack of references to guide the reader to the plans, which cannot always be adjacent to the relevant piece of text, though they are seldom far off. The plans themselves are admirable, though the contoured ones would be yet better if they showed the contour heights and the vertical interval. As there are only two plates, it is perhaps a pity that one is devoted to the equivalent of an oblique air-view of a model of the Acropolis : it reveals a jumble of roofs at the west end which were never meant to be seen, and indeed could not be seen.

These are matters that could be amended in a revised edition, and it would not be surprising if one is in due course called for. No other single book gives nearly so much up-to-date information on the subject, and it will be invaluable to students both on the spot in Athens and elsewhere. Digests of such material are all too rare nowadays, when the premium on specialisation makes them all the more desirable, yet produces so few who can or will undertake to write them. The more credit to Mrs. Hill.

F. H. STUBBINGS.

ROMAN GAUL. By OLWEN BROGAN. 8 x 5. Pp. x–250. 16 plates, 35 text-figures and a map. London : G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., 1953. Price 21s.

As the first book to give a concise account in English of Roman Gaul, this work has been eagerly awaited. In writing it Mrs. Brogan claims that it does not attempt to instruct the expert, but only to serve as an introduction to students and travellers who may wish to get a general picture of Roman Gaul, its history and chief monuments. With this in mind, in the first three chapters the background of pre-conquest Gaul is sketched briefly with its history during the conquest and up to the time of Diocletian. Two chapters are given to town-planning and buildings ; four to the countryside and natural resources, industries and commerce, art and religion. The last chapter describes Gaul in the later Empire, and the addition of an excellent bibliography, many illustrations and a map complete the picture. Mrs. Brogan has served her chosen readers well, and indeed has included much new material which will also be of value to the expert. In spite of the necessary compression of the historical material and the wealth of factual archaeological evidence quoted, there is a sprightliness of approach which soft-pedals the inevitable guide-book format and shows the Gallo-Romans as the recognisable ancestors of the French people we know to-day. The inclusion of some eighteen plans of towns and buildings should prove especially useful ; whilst the sculpture and other objects illustrated indicate the richness of the French material. It is obvious that much thought has gone to the selection, from so wide a field, of sites and objects for description and illustration, and the author is to be congratulated on having been courageous enough to choose lesser-known subjects, sometimes at the cost of omission of well-known sites. The monument at Igel and the Metz Aqueduct (Figs. 39a and 40), for example, are illustrated, whereas ' Les Antiques ' of St.-Remy-en-Provence and the Pont du Gard, perhaps among the most aesthetically satisfying monuments of Roman Gaul to the traveller, have not (for the small sketch of the Pont du Gard on p. 85 fails to convey anything of its immense grandeur). The author has kindly supplied an *erratum* slip which is inserted in copies now being sold and which is reproduced below. To it may be added two points for consideration in later editions. The Gergovia bowl of Fig. 24c is not referred to in the text. Whilst the use of classical place-names in the historical chapters and modern ones in the descriptive chapters has proved convenient, and whilst both are given in the index, this arrangement fails in respect of the section on Roman Roads in Chap. II. In the text the modern names are used : detailed reference to the map, which uses the classical names, can (unless one is familiar with both names) only be made by using the index, and this is not sufficiently

complete for all the correlations to be made. In this section the printing of both place-names would eliminate this difficulty. ' Roman Gaul ' has been considered here from the view-point of the readers named by its author. They are to be envied in that they at least have an authoritative, factual and well-produced book for their bookshelves or travel literature. The expert can scarcely expect to find his requirements on this subject covered in the space of a single volume and certainly not one of this size. But, exclusive of further editions of this work, which must surely be in demand, it would seem that one book in English in this field is not enough. What is perhaps most needed is a simplified and *cheaper* version that can be used as a school text-book. The blending of history, archaeology and geography which this book exemplifies is just what is wanted by present-day educational authorities. May we suggest to Mrs. Brogan that this is another gap which she is pre-eminently fitted to fill?

ERRATA

p. 28, a milestone of *Domitius* was found on the *Via Domitia* in 1949, near Sigean (Aude).
p. 37, line 31. The Urmitz camp is now believed to be post-Augustan.
p. 109, plan. *Delete phrase* ' gateway destroyed in 1858 '.
line 8. *For* ' early ' *read* ' late '.
line 9. *For* ' destroyed in 1858 ' *read* ' still visible in 1858 '.
p. 149, line 27. *For* ' Whitby ' *read* ' Whitstable '.
p. 224, line 24. *For* ' Metz ' *read* ' Tours '.
p. 242, line 25. *For* ' Langmaner ' *read* ' Langmauer '.

M. AYLWIN COTTON.

ROMAN EXETER (*Isca Dumnoniorum*) : EXCAVATIONS IN THE WAR-DAMAGED AREAS, 1945-1947. By AILEEN FOX. With contributions by Sir Ifor Williams, R. G. Goodchild, and others. 10 x 7½. Pp. xvi–104. 25 plates. Manchester University Press, for University College, Exeter, 1952. Price 30s.

Exeter is not unique amongst British cities in having wrung good out of the disaster of bombardment by conducting a campaign of enquiry into its origins, but none can yet claim to have produced a more coherent and attractive account of its activities. The city is fortunate in possessing Lady Fox, an Excavation Committee, a University College, and a Corporation progressive enough to facilitate research and contribute towards its cost. It is to their combined effort, aided by the specialists who have contributed to this report, that we owe the framework now established, if in part provisionally, for the history of the first city, *Isca Dumnoniorum*.

Lady Fox traces its origin, a decade or so after the conquest, as a civil settlement composed, she believes, of Romanised timber dwellings and native huts straggling along the main road to the Exe and apparently without a native precursor on the site. The remains of one pre-Flavian rectangular timber house were sufficiently complete to serve as a basis for discussion of the origin of the type, probably in the Belgic areas of Britain, and on the Continent. In the Flavian period this timbered domestic occupation in the centre of the city was swept away for administrative buildings in stone, represented by an open court with colonnade, probably belonging to the Forum, and some remains of a massive building which was perhaps part of the supposed Public Baths identified in 1932.

Initially, it seems, the city was undefended, but a bank and ditch were constructed in the 2nd century, probably under Hadrian or Antoninus Pius. Later, not before *c.* A.D. 200 and probably during the reign of Severus, a stone wall was added. That the Severan age was in *Isca* as elsewhere a peak period of building activity is suggested by the remains, both ascribed to that period, of a house with fragmentary geometrical mosaics, and of massive foundations which may also have belonged to the supposed Public Baths.

Structural remains of the later 3rd and 4th centuries eluded the excavators, a circumstance partly explained by medieval levelling, but Goodchild's coin list suggests that the city shared in the prosperity of the Constantinian epoch, and a sherd with a late chi-rho

graffito implies the existence of a Christian community in the late 4th century. Misuse and neglect of the Forum (?) area at this date is consistent with the story of civic decay familiar elsewhere.

What of the end of Roman culture in a city remote from the earliest Teutonic settlement and known for the distinctive grouping of its Celtic and Saxon church dedications? Lady Fox's view, based on the absence of Theodosian coins, which are known outside the city, that corporate town life was extinct by the end of the 4th century, is tenable only if it is accepted that such coins were already generally current in Britain by A.D. 400. One must, however, admit that the coin evidence, however it is read, does not suggest that the city continued to fulfil its functions as a city for more than half a century or so later. This is not to say that no sort of life can have survived there, or that there cannot have been a revival of a British city before the establishment of Saxon rule in the Exeter area apparently in the latter part of the 7th century if not sooner. The earliest post-Roman remains identified, which are described fully by Lady Fox, were the foundations of the probably 10th century church on the site of St. George's. Since even late Roman deposits have suffered from medieval levelling, hopes of an approach towards a solution of these problems must lie not so much in the soil of Exeter itself as in an accretion of knowledge, archaeological and otherwise, about the political condition of the surrounding area during the Dark Ages.

Amongst the lists of finds attention must be drawn to Lady Fox's description of the dated range of 1st century coarse pottery, largely native in character and wisely described as Iron Age C rather than Belgic. This native ware corresponds precisely with that in use amongst the Romanised Durotriges, and with its dated associations will be found of great value. The later pottery has had to be treated cursorily, presumably to keep the report as a whole within bounds of length and cost. This is regrettable, since the need for dated series of later wares is not less pressing.

The excavations described individually by Lady Fox are adequately illustrated with plans and sections, but the omission of a key map or plan of the whole makes the report sometimes awkward to follow. The occasion, indeed, demanded a plan showing the sum of our knowledge as it stands to-day, and on which the evidence for the position of streets, gates and the alignment of buildings would have been clearer. Goodchild's map, adequate for its purpose of marking remains found before 1942, does not fill this need.

Apart from the lack of an index, omissions and errors are few and of a minor, editorial character. Not all the half-tones are good, and the arrangement of plates is sometimes ingenious rather than happy. The excellence of the report, as a simple and popular narrative as much as a detailed record of a well-conceived campaign, is self-evident, and it will be disappointing if it does not stimulate enthusiasm in other towns with similar problems.

Much still remains to be done in Exeter itself. How much did the original settlement, founded so soon after the conquest on an apparently virgin site, owe to conscious Roman planning, and can the possibility of a brief legionary occupation be finally rejected? Were there pre-Flavian stone buildings? Our acceptance of the early settlement as a city—as already *Isca Dumnoniorum*, in fact—hangs on the answer to those questions. What was the plan of the later city? Were its standards of domestic luxury as relatively low as is suggested by the rarity and poverty of mosaics so far recorded? To what horizon do the Hellenistic coins belong? Can the ultimate fate of the city be tied down archaeologically with more precision? These are some of many questions that await answers. The broad outlines of the development and decline of *Isca* sketched in this volume require confirmation in areas of the city as yet untouched before they can be fully accepted. This is true, for instance, of the suggestions—for they amount to no more—that the Severan and Constantinian ages were periods of increased development and prosperity, and it is to be hoped that Isca will not yet be added without qualification to the list of cities showing this tendency. Fortunately there is every indication that those responsible for this volume regard it in the light of a beginning.

R. A. H. FARRAR.

BUILDING IN ENGLAND DOWN TO 1540. By L. F. SALZMAN. Pp. xvi, 629. 21 plates and 1 text-figure. Oxford, Clarendon Press. Price 50s.

For some time now interest has, for many people, centred not so much on the structures of the Middle Ages as on the men who built them and the methods employed. The personnel of the building and fitting trades now have an adequate bibliography, but the technique of building has been rather neglected. Strangely enough the small secular building, usually the orphan child of such studies, has two of the best pioneers in C. F. Innocent and S. O. Addy, and isolated larger buildings such as the Cambridge Colleges and Windsor Castle have been examined in great detail.

Within the field of building technique the stone-workers' craft has received more attention than others from W. R. Lethaby, D. Knoop, G. P. Jones, and J. H. Harvey. Similarly the glass-workers' art has a voluminous literature ; so far, although it is realised that all the craftsmen employed on a building were inter-dependent, yet very few authors have produced a handbook giving a comprehensive picture of building activity. Perhaps the pioneer in this field was the late F. B. Andrews, who, in his little book called *The Medieval Builder and His Methods* (Oxford University Press, 1925) suggested the vast field which has at last been surveyed in a detailed and scholarly work by Mr. L. F. Salzman.

The manuscript of *Building in England down to* 1540 had been completed as long ago as 1934, and, owing to difficulties about publishing explained in the preface, had been given to the Society of Antiquaries. It had already exerted a considerable influence however, as reference to the foot notes of many authorities on the medieval building trades will prove. The text, now published, has been supplemented by material discovered since 1934 and is thus up to date. The vast number of sources used ensure that examples given to illustrate particular points are not the usual hackneyed ones, and the known stature of the writer with regard to documentary research and its relationship to practical matters ensures that the work is first rate. The text is based on little known Record Office sources, whereas the appendices are derived from other fields, and there is hardly any duplication. The book contains the largest number of authentic medieval building contracts yet published. The appendices are invaluable for students of building construction ; the entries in Appendix A are pleasant to read and surprise one by the wealth of contemporary sources for the erection of early buildings ; those in Appendix B show all the business arrangements, requirements, etc., for the erection of a medieval structure.

The approach to the study of building technique has been to give details about the trade based on a logical sequence of building, so that the men themselves and their conditions of work come first, then the planning of the building, followed by information about foundations, the structure, material used, and so forth, and ultimately all the processes are worked out. Mr. Salzman never dates on stylistic evidence, as his mind is fixed wholly on documentary sources and their interpretation. Footnotes are detailed so that the reader can check any statement if so disposed. Like the text, the illustrations are confined strictly to the subject.

The book is essential as a reference volume, and the subject-index is invaluable as a glossary to help anyone handling a building account containing technical terms and peculiar tool names. Much detail about nails is typical of the thoroughness with which each subject is treated, and a determined effort has been made to clarify confused nomenclature.

Many particular points have been elucidated, from the responsibility for design to the relationship of wage levels to those laid down by the Statutes of Labourers. The account of louvres is the most detailed yet to hand. Particularly interesting is the discussion of the use of woods other than the ubiquitous oak, in which the question of chesnut is handled courageously ; the fact is that it is very difficult to tell oak from chesnut, except by analysis or examination with a microscope. Even when downright statements are made that a roof is chesnut, proof is seldom forthcoming. The impression that Baltic wood is necessarily soft wood is corrected, but on the other hand the use of deals is shown to be much earlier than is usually supposed. The volume is a mine of unexpected information and stimulates research by apt suggestions. For instance, no one yet has found an

example of the water-proof cement made of wax and pitch or resin, and someone might relate the origin of stone and its movement by water to the development of style. To pack so much knowledge into so small a space is an achievement, but although the type is small it is clear.

A few comments may be added. Oyster shells (p. 89) seem to have been employed as a damp course at Oxford and elsewhere, and salt (p. 102) was possibly used to harden and vitrify the backs of fireplaces. It would be interesting to know the building to which the account illustrated on Plate VIII refers. Is it Hampton Court?

Mr. Salzman's dry humour is already well known, and he is willing to shed romantic ideas to find the practical truth; 'if the British workman of the present day is not as good as he used to be, he probably never was'. He does not mince matters, which makes his discussion of sanitation revealing.

In conclusion, although well known already by many publications, Mr. Salzman's reputation is greatly enhanced by this monumental work which has been shaping for so many years.

E. A. GEE.

MONMOUTHSHIRE HOUSES: Part II, Sub-Medieval Houses, *c.* 1550–1610. By SIR CYRIL FOX and LORD RAGLAN. Pp. 135; 21 plates; 52 text figs. 3 maps. National Museum of Wales, 1953. Price 17s. 6d.

Anyone who studies the history of the smaller houses of Britain soon realises the paucity of published material on the subject. Disregarding the many superficial picture-books, there are a few really important works like those by C. F. Innocent, S. O. Addy and Dr. Iorwerth Peate. To these select few Vol. II of *Monmouthshire Houses* is a most welcome addition; and it is a reviewer's first duty to say that it is a very valuable addition of an entirely new kind to the literature of traditional architecture.

The book's importance and interest are manifold. It deals with that crucial period when the social developments of the Renaissance were rapidly changing the open medieval hall, with its basically communal life, into a house offering the greater privacy of several rooms on two or three storeys. For the first time this process as it affected smaller houses is described in detail, and the large number of buildings examined—165—guarantees the soundness of the authors' conclusions. From their laborious survey—how laborious, only those who have worked in this unexplored field of architectural history will know—a series of plan types has been drawn which shows the kind of house required by yeomen in the late 16th century, and which can be used by workers elsewhere as a basis for their own investigations.

The authors do not merely state the conclusions of their research, they demonstrate their method too. An archaeological technique applied to the study of small and often greatly altered buildings caused them to notice details often taken for granted by architectural historians. Thus they illustrate (p. 63) a dozen sorts of chamfer stop, a feature scarcely noticed in print before. But they go beyond its use for dating purposes to point out its wider potential significance, taken together with other details, for the study of craft organisation (p. 87). So we come to another aspect of the book, the authors' awareness of the social and economic implications of the houses they discuss. The general historian will be able to use this specialised research to show both the wonderful prosperity of late 16th-century Monmouthshire and the way in which new ideas took root in its remote, limited and highly conservative society.

Despite the inadequacy of comparable published material, Sir Cyril Fox and Lord Raglan try to unravel the various strands which made up the Monmouthshire regional style of building. The interaction of cultures produced a basic house plan which could be enlarged into either a modified long-house plan of the highland zone or a normal lowland form with a buttery wing. The sources of decorative detail can only be indicated more tentatively.

It is hard to present architectural evidence so that the reader is able to check the author's conclusions independently. This is one of the best attempts so far, and some apparently doubtful points may be resolved in the final volume. The history of the important house called Upper Wern-hir, for example, is not quite clear ; the plans suggest, contrary to the text, that service quarters are not an addition but an original feature since modified. Coldbrook (Llandenny parish) is said to be an addition to a medieval hall, yet the plan seems self-contained and unlike any other instance of ' alternate development '.

A striking feature is the complete absence in Monmouthshire of the two-room central chimney plan so widespread in England. This type is certainly found elsewhere quite early in the period, e.g. at Hawridge (Bucks.), dated 1571 ; the third volume will show whether it has spread into Wales, or if it is a regional type.

In short, this book ought to be read by everyone interested in vernacular architecture ; it will constantly be consulted by all workers in that field.

J. T. SMITH.

LOCAL RECORDS, THEIR NATURE AND CARE. By LILIAN J. REDSTONE, M.B.E., M.A., and FRANCIS W. STEER, F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S. for the Society of Local Archivists. G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., 1953. Price 25s.

It was the growth of an organised interest in national history in the early years of last century that led, after the necessary unnecessary delay, to the foundation of the Public Record Office. In our day attention has been increasingly turned to local history, and one result of this has been the formation of County and other Record Offices. The main object of this book, a symposium by members of the Society of Local Archivists, is to give information and advice to local Archivists and would-be local Archivists on their functions and the means of fulfilling them. Imbued with an admirable spirit the book gives valuable guidance, not only on the technical aspects of Archive Administration, but on the Archivist's relations with Local Authorities and with the Public.

A secondary object, but one of much wider appeal, is to inform both the potential Archivist and the Student of the kind of material he is likely to find in any type of repository. In a book of this size it is not possible to give a detailed survey of the jungle of English Record Repositories, but a useful attempt has been made to describe the fauna and their likely habitat. The chapter, for example, on Ecclesiastical Records provides an excellent succinct account of the formidable variety of episcopal, archidiaconal and capitular records. Any student about to begin a study of local history would do well to begin by studying the latter part of this book. The Society is to be congratulated on this volume, the forerunner, it is to be hoped, of many indispensable path-finding aids to the explorer of local history.

E. MERCER.

SCOTTISH CASTLES OF THE 16TH AND 17TH CENTURIES. By OLIVER HILL with an introduction by CHRISTOPHER HUSSEY. 13½ x 10. Pp. 280 (Plates 129–268). London : *Country Life*, 1953. Price £6 6s. 0d.

Much lies in the assertion that the 16th and 17th-century Scottish tower-houses are unknown except by their owners and a handful of enthusiasts, and it is time indeed that this was changed. Perhaps no better way to make them more familiar could be found than by the medium of photographs of the quality we have come to expect from *Country Life*. The still unrivalled work of D. MacGibbon and Thomas Ross on the *Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland* (1892) in five volumes was illustrated by engraving, and this of only medium quality, therefore the very beautiful photographs in the book under review are a most welcome supplement ; a few seem to have been reproduced from ancient negatives, but it is churlish to criticise where such splendid presentation is made of, for instance, the group of buildings : Graigevar, Crathes, Fraser,

and Midmar. The early castles, maybe, ' had no call to be bonny ', but these later towers, how they redeemed the time ! Some, in truth, contain no more room than a cottage, but they belie the fact with a fine flourish of turrets ; others do not tower overmuch to ' threaten the stars and outsoar the peaks of Parnassus ' but, at Old Cromarty at least, the laird Urquhart found solace in approaching nightly ' as near as the roof would let him, to the beautiful battlements and suburbs of heaven '.

The present work contains a short foreword, six pages on the ' Historical Background ' by Mr. Christopher Hussey, twelve pages on ' Origins and Characteristics ' followed by short descriptions, sometimes of no more than six lines, forming an inventory of fifty-seven tower-houses accompanied by twenty-seven plans to 1/48 scale of which only six are hatched to show the building sequence. The book ends with two long essays on ' Decoration and Equipment ' and ' Contemporary Life ', one hundred and forty plates, a historical chart, a short glossary, a bibliography, and an index, largely of names only. The compilation was inspired no doubt by the romance of these towers, a quality there for all to see, and the traditional craftmanship which they display so nobly for the delectation of those with a proper regard for folk-building. The discipline does not appear to have been to accompany the fine pictures by an accurate text, nor even to summarise the knowledge of the subject accumulated since the researches of MacGibbon and Ross.

The ' Historical Background ' has been adversely criticised, but it would seem something of an achievement to give a resumé of Scottish history from the 14th century to 1707 in some 3,000 words. The reader finishes faint but informed of the turmoil of Scottish affairs. A turmoil it is which both explains and conceals much in the history of architecture in Scotland. The extent of foreign influence is still uncharted and the depth of penetration of imported foreign styles, apparently with little sea change, remains to be plumbed. French features in *c.* 1500 at Linlithgow, direct French influence at Falkland where the courtyard-front of *c.* 1540 is a major Renaissance work earlier than anything of the sort in England, direct Italian influence at Crichton between 1581 and 1593 where the ' fair hewn facets ' of the courtyard walls derive untransmuted from north Italian palazzi, occurrences of the English mode before the Union of the Crowns, and German engravings translated in 1604 into stone sculptures upon the garden walls at Edzell ; these, at random, point the moral of Dr. Maitland Thomson's dictum, ' the very fact that the cohesion of Scotland was so imperfect makes the study of its history inadequate unless it includes the history of its component parts ', but the study of their significance, where observed, is not pursued in the present work.

If this dictum be the auld allies' way of saying ' Plus de détails, plus de détails, il n'y a d'originalité et de verité que dans les détails ', the following are appropriate criticisms. Terminology in the 16th and 17th centuries was such that any attempt at precise definitions is foolhardy, but the contemporary succinct and descriptive names for the buildings under discussion, ' towers ', ' tower-houses ', ' towers of fens ', would seem to offer sufficient choice to obviate the confusing use of the term ' castle ' for them ; it is a complete misapplication, if only in modern usage. In the 17th century, in summing up the status of castles, at a time when the building of towers of fens was well within living memory, Viscount Stair contests ' I see no ground to extend fortalices [by earlier definition, strongly defended castles in the feudal sense] to all houses, with battlements or with turrets, or rounds, which can only infer private safety against robbers or flying-parties—there being nothing more ordinary than to build houses with turrets upon the angles, without warrant, quarrel or suspicion ' (*Insts. of the Law of Scotland* (1681), Bk. II, Tit. III, lxv, lxvi). In Mr. Hill's inventory only Cawdor had the rights and privileges pertaining to a castle ; the remainder, in their different degrees, are typical of the laird's house in Scotland.

' Bartizan ' is not the term for a corner-turret ; no particular name for this adjunct seems to have existed until comparatively late when the simple and apt ' round ', or if unroofed ' open round ', came into use. Further, the description of the development of the ' fighting top ', from castle to tower-house, is incorrect. The whole subject is treated very fully in W. Mackay Mackenzie, *The Mediaeval Castle in Scotland* (1927), but this work is one of the many remarkable omissions from the bibliography. In this context, it may be

observed that throughout no reference is made to any of the publications of Dr. Douglas Simpson, surely almost an impossibility in any modern work on Scottish building.

Again, a chronological rather than a regional development is postulated for the L and Z plans, although they occur in either sequence, whereas a geographical distribution is demonstrable. By the same token the restriction of key-pattern corbelling to north-east Scotland is not observed.

In the matter of foreign influence in the country, that of France is historical fact, French masons were becoming familiar in Scotland in the first quarter of the 16th century, and before the end of the half century were holding official appointments. The Reformation of 1560 put a term to the close contact with France and, while no such abrupt term may be put to a style once adopted, it is clear that other influences should be sought in the second half of the century. William Schaw, Master of Works, for example, ' skilled in architecture ', travelled in other kingdoms, including Denmark, as well as in France. This was the period when the Scottish tower-houses saw their most remarkable development, and, whilst predominantly regional in interpretation, it is perhaps truer to put them in a European context, from which exceptionally England contracted out, except on the Border, rather than in a wholly French context.

It is profoundly unfortunate that in a publication of this standard the opportunity has been missed of providing accurate architectural accounts with reasoned analyses of building developments ; an equally attractive book, and a far more useful and instructive one, would have resulted from a meticulously careful survey of a strictly limited number of the most ' photogenic ' towers. One example selected from the inventory, less dramatic than some of the towers but second to none in beauty, illustrates the point : Fountainhall, a name by which incidentally it has not been known for a generation or more. The account says it is dated 1638, was built by Robert Pringle, and sold to Sir John Lauder, created in 1689 Lord Fountainhall. In fact, the house is called Penkaet, it was built in five distinct phases, the first before *c.* 1590 at latest, the last between 1638 and 1665 ; the builder was not Robert Pringle but probably in the main a Cockburn, and although it is in fact true that it was sold to Sir John Lauder, later Lord Fountainhall, it was bought in the name of Baillie John Lauder, his father, who obtained a baronetcy in 1688, thus also becoming Sir John Lauder. A part of the east wing of the house is dated 1638 and bears the initials R. P., for Robert Pringle, probably the builder of this small section only, and other initials in addition to those specified by Mr. Hill.

No accurate analytical account of Penkaet has been published. The development is involved and of considerable interest, but the significant fact is that a stair-wing (' jamb '), turret, and iron grilles to all the windows (not only to the lower windows as stated generally in ' Origins and Characteristics ') were added to a simple rectangular house without architectural pretension and plainly never intended to make any show of defence, for the ground floor is unvaulted and the walls are only some 3 ft. thick compared with 6 ft. to 8 ft. in most towers. The first addition, the jamb, is of *c.* 1590, perhaps even *c.* 1570 ; thus preserved at Penkaet is a 16th-century or late medieval hall-house of a type which on account of its slightness and simplicity has for the most part been destroyed or survives unrecognised. It may perhaps be recorded that a remarkable marriage settlement of 1665 exists in which the house (then named Woodhead) is described and certain rooms are settled on the prospective bride.

Only by the most careful study of the towers themselves and of the documentary evidence, which survives to a remarkable degree in Scotland, albeit locked away in private muniment-rooms and solicitors' offices, will the architectural history of this especial group of buildings be elucidated. The subject is inviting and the scope wide, for the number of tower-houses south of Forth and Clyde alone, still standing and retaining to a certain extent their original features, has been put at one hundred and eighty, with some sixty more much altered. The need is for a series of monographs of the kind indicated above devoted to different areas ; but the need is more than an academic one. Contrary to the impression conveyed by these fine *Country Life* photographs of selected places, the fact

is that many of the towers are in a parlous state of disrepair or in ruins ; so much so that we may iterate in a double sense the motto of the Scottish History Society, 'colligiti fragmenta ne pereant '.

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ENGLISH MEDIEVAL SCULPTURE. By ARTHUR GARDNER. 11 x 7½. Pp. viii–352. Ills. frontispiece and 683 in text. Cambridge : University Press, 1951. Price 55s.

This is a new and enlarged edition of the same author's *Handbook of English Medieval Sculpture*, first published in 1935 and reprinted in 1936, which itself was an abridged edition of his *Medieval Figure Sculpture in England* produced in collaboration with Professor E. S. Prior and long out of print. The text follows that of the *Handbook* with only slight supplementation and no fundamental changes in evaluation and dating ; the main difference is in the addition of some one hundred and ninety illustrations, mainly in the chapters on pre-Conquest sculpture and the Norman period, and in the sections on bronze and alabaster tombs and alabasters. The bronze tombs are illustrated by magnificent new photographs of the Royal effigies. The book provides a general survey of English medieval sculpture ; indeed, it is the only one covering the whole field, and one which we have come to regard with affection in its course through various editions. May we hope that the index in the next is not exclusively topographical.

MONASTIC SITES FROM THE AIR. By DAVID KNOWLES and J. K. S. ST. JOSEPH. 11 x 8½. Pp. xxviii–283. Ills. 138 in text, 4 figs., 1 map. Cambridge : University Press, 1952. Price 55s.

This is the first book issued of a series called *Cambridge Air Surveys* under the general editorship of Professor Knowles, Dr. St. Joseph and Dr. H. Godwin. The present work begins with an Introduction in which the plan of the buildings of the different monastic orders is discussed with the lucidity and scholarship expected of Professor Knowles, who also contributes the notes to the air-photographs reproduced in the book. The value of the application of air-photography to recording architecture has been disputed, but without question it is highest in regard to ruined monastic buildings. The plans produced by antiquaries of many English sites are in the main clear and readable, but only from air-photographs is an overall impression gained of the extent to which the buildings have survived. The precision of most of Dr. St. Joseph's photographs reproduced is very striking. The accompanying notes have been designed to explain the plates, to say what the site is, where the principal buildings lie, and to indicate the points of interest or singularity, historical and architectural notes and dates being reduced to a minimum. At the end of each entry is a reference to at least one account containing a good plan. The interest and accuracy of the text is sustained throughout. The book ends with a catalogue of air-photographs of religious houses in the collection under the care of the University Curator in Aerial Photography at Cambridge.

MEDIEVAL RELIGIOUS HOUSES; ENGLAND AND WALES. By DAVID KNOWLES and R. NEVILLE HADCOCK. 9 x 6. Pp. xxiii–387. 6 maps. London : Longmans, Green & Co., 1953. Price 42s.

This is a considerable enlargement of the handlist *The Religious Houses of Medieval England* compiled by Dom David Knowles and published in 1940. Those who were prevented by the exigencies of war from acquiring it then found that it had gone out of print almost immediately and looked in vain for copies in the second-hand market. It was an indispensable work of reference. Additions and corrections to the list were published in the *English Historical Review* in September, 1945, and in 1950 Mr. Hadcock, whose work on the Map of *Monastic Britain* published by the Ordnance Survey is well-known, came in to collaborate in this new edition, bringing, so to say, his files with him.

The new work supplants the old. It comprises lists of the houses arranged by orders, including the military orders; the rank, the net income in 1535, the date of foundation and dissolution, and the dependency of each is given. Hospitals and colleges have been added to the establishments listed previously, as well as a few smaller classes, such as that of the ancient Celtic monasteries that survived into the period. But the book will not be bought for reference only; many will want it for Professor Knowles' scholarly introductory chapters on the origins and development of the religious life in Great Britain.

WREN THE INCOMPARABLE. By MARTIN BRIGGS. 292 pp. 63 pls. and 31 figs. Allen & Unwin. Price 35s.

The title of this book is a fair indication of its intention and contents. Mr. Briggs aims at an account of a great architect rather than a critical estimate of his achievement. The account is remarkably complete; it includes full quotations from published sources, especially from the volumes of the Wren Society and from previous Lives of Wren. All the documented and many doubtful works are discussed. In the case of the latter the author seems averse from making any judgement of his own, but merely records the conflicting views of his predecessors. The arrangement of the book according to types of building, largely irrespective of chronological sequence, does not make it easier to trace from it the development of Wren's architectural style, and in spite of the fact that Mr. Briggs is the author of the only book in English on Baroque architecture he prefers, on the whole, to retain the older view of English 17th-century architecture as 'Later Renaissance'. The plates are numerous and on the whole well-chosen, though more original drawings could well have been included, and in many cases better advantage might have been made of the size of the page. The bibliography is inadequate, since it ignores all publications in periodicals.

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