

## BOOK REVIEWS

Edited by NEIL CHRISTIE

*Kingdom, Civitas, and Country. The Evolution of Territorial Identity in the English Landscape.* By Stephen Rippon. 18 × 25 cm. xxii + 438 pp, 122 b&w pls and figs, 33 tables. Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2018. ISBN 978-0-19-875937-9. Price £85.00 hb.

To what extent do the documented kingdoms of Anglo-Saxon England build on much older precedents? Focusing on a block of eastern England between the River Thames and the Wash, Stephen Rippon sets out to show that the ancestry of these early medieval territorial configurations, and in some cases the boundaries that delineate them, can be traced back to the shadowy recesses of the Iron Age. This is certainly not the first time that this level of continuity has been proposed, but what sets this book apart from previous investigations of this theme is the huge quantity of archaeological information marshalled in support of the argument, ranging from settlements and burials to a spectrum of portable artefacts, from high status gold coinage to the humble loom-weight. Like its lineal predecessor – *The Fields of Britannia* – this study is built on the shoulders of ‘Big Data’ and one of the most impressive features of the book is the considerable care taken by Rippon to ensure that the distributional patterns that carry forward the analysis are free from modern-day bias, chronological conflations and other distorting influences.

Rippon develops his argument over 13 chapters, with the analysis being contained in three chronological blocks: two chapters on the Iron Age (material culture and settlement patterns); three on the Romano-British period (urban and religious landscapes; elite settlements; material culture) and five on the early medieval period (documentary evidence; Anglo-Saxon colonisation; regional identities in the fifth to sixth centuries; the native British, regionality in the seventh to tenth centuries; and the boundaries of kingdoms). Within each of these periods, the analysis highlights a strong conformity between the distribution of selected archaeological categories and the three topographic provinces of eastern England – the northern Thames basin, the south-east Midlands, and East Anglia – which map fairly accurately onto the inferred extents of major Iron Age, Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon territorial units. Of these three regions, East Anglia stands out for its comparative insularity, with the boundary between the northern Thames basin and the south-east Midlands displaying a greater level of permeability in relation to certain periods and cultural traits. Throughout, Rippon draws attention to the long-term persistence of specific types of place (e.g. shrines and places of religious cult) and territorial boundaries, both of which show a predilection for liminal locations and topographic ‘edgelands’.

Mapping distributional patterns represents one thing, interpreting them quite another. To what extent

do regional expressions in material culture represent ethnic affiliations as opposed to, say, patterns of trade or the supply networks of production centres? Although there are points in the argument where one feels that a deeper level of engagement was needed, Rippon is not afraid to confront challenging questions such as these, informed, on the one hand, by theoretical perspectives on ethnicity and cultural interaction, and on the other, by some deft distributional modelling of pottery industries. Chapter 10 (‘The Native British’), for example, contains some particularly thought-provoking discussion on the issue of ethnicity, more particularly on how the uncritical use of the label ‘Anglo-Saxon’ has blinded archaeologists to recognising potential British survivals. Here Rippon shows that if we take care to evaluate the data on its own terms, then some of the variation associated with settlements, burials and pottery dated to the fifth century can be plausibly assigned to this ‘invisible’ cultural category. The fact that these variants cluster in the northern Thames basin – a region otherwise characterised by dearth of furnished inhumation burials and *Grübenhauser* – would seem to add credence to the idea that this area may have formed a British enclave, underpinned by a distinct ethnopolitical identity. Irrespective of whether one accepts this particular argument, unblinking our eyes in this way has important implications for recognising regional subtleties in the interactions between native British and immigrant Germanic communities.

As one would expect from OUP, the book is produced to a very high standard, the GIS-generated mapping being particularly clear and accomplished. Beyond the printed page, there is a very useful on-line archive of appendices for those wishing to drill down and explore the nuances of the data. Overall, I’d heartily recommend this book as an impressive illustration of the power of ‘Big Data’ to generate sophisticated and regionally-nuanced narratives of the making of the English landscape.

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*Anglo-Saxon Crops and Weeds: A Case Study in Quantitative Archaeobotany.* (Access Archaeology). By Mark McKerracher. 21 × 28 cm. viii + 204 pp, 53 colour and b&w pls and figs, 33 tables. Oxford: Archaeopress, 2019. ISBN 978-1-78969-192-4. Price: £35.00 pb.

A positive outcome of the expansion in developer-funded archaeology over recent years has been an increase in the amount of palaeoenvironmental data available to us, including charred plant remains. This book is one of two recent studies by Mark McKerracher, the other

– *Farming Transformed in the Anglo-Saxon England* – providing the big picture, while *Anglo-Saxon Crops and Weeds* outlines the methodologies used in his analysis of plant macrofossils. This latter book presents the detailed results of a set of quantitative analyses with the aim of understanding how crop husbandry developed across two study areas between the seventh and ninth centuries AD. Chapter 1 provides an excellent introduction to the research issues, while Chapter 2 discusses the datasets from the case study areas (Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex; and Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire). Chapter 3 provides an extremely useful discussion of the crop species found in Anglo-Saxon England, while Chapter 4 introduces the archaeological contexts that have produced assemblages of charred plant macrofossils and the types of crop processing activities that led to their deposition. Chapter 5 outlines the key method used, which is simply to determine whether a cereal type is present within an assemblage or not. The author does acknowledge that this a problematic approach, yet we are told, for example, that oats were ‘practically as prevalent as free-threshing wheat in the Early Saxon period’ (p. 94): this is true, but it gives the impression that oats were far more important than they really were (other studies clearly show that a quantification of the actual proportion of oats and wheat within grain assemblages reveals that oats are always a very small component of assemblages, whereas free-threshing wheat is usually the largest component). Another problem with the analysis is that the sites are not disaggregated by type, and while the majority were agricultural in character – rural settlements whose communities’ primary means of subsistence was farming – there were others that were purely consumers of food (such as Ipswich). Figure 29, for example, shows the claylands of southern Suffolk and northern Essex as the region where rye was most frequent – which seems very strange as it is a cereal type that is in fact most commonly associated with light soils. The problem is that all of the data from this *pays* actually come from the *emporium* at Ipswich as opposed to actual rural settlement on the claylands to the west (Table 20): does this suggest that Ipswich was drawing its cereals from the Sandlings just to the east? All in all, it would have been better if sites such as Ipswich had been treated separately from rural settlements.

Despite these methodological issues, some fascinating patterns do emerge, including a diversity of arable regimes and an expansion of cultivation onto heavier soils, with the ‘stirrings of agricultural development’ coming in the seventh century and the main intensification in the eighth. The potential for studying weed seed assemblages is also explored and these suggest an expansion in the cultivation of more nitrogen-rich soils that may indicate the greater application of manure. Overall, this is an important methodological study that, along with McKerracher’s *Farming Transformed in the Anglo-Saxon England*, should be a must-read for anyone interested in the early medieval landscape.

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***Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture, Volume XIII: Derbyshire and Staffordshire.*** By Jane Hawkes and Philip C. Sidebottom. 23 × 29 cm. xx + 553 pp, 716 colour and b&w pls and figs, 3 tables. Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press & The British Academy, 2018. ISBN 978-0-19-726621-2. Price: £100.00 hb.

This volume of the *Corpus* largely follows the format established in Volume 1, although there are changes in sequence and detail – geology in *Durham and Northumberland* was accorded around a third of a page of text, but runs to over six pages in this volume, while the historical background to the sculptured stones, 2.5 pages in volume 1, extends to 12.5 pages for *Derbyshire and Staffordshire*. Are we commensurately wiser and, if so, in what areas of research? The strength of these volumes has always been in bringing together all the detail of pre-Conquest sculptured stones scattered across a county or group of counties and success is confirmed by the fact that this is the thirteenth volume, with only the south-east Midlands and East Anglia to be done. But – and there has to be a but – sculptured stones are not buildings. The designs they carry can be considered stylistically, but many other aspects present problems: they may have been commissioned from a source distant from their siting, are seldom in a demonstrably original context and are often fragmentary and likely to have suffered post-deposition movement; and there are difficulties establishing their absolute chronology and duration of currency. Some of these problems may be better answered by archaeology than by art-historical approaches (cf *East Midlands Heritage: An Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands*, 2012, Research Objective 6D). In these respects the problems the sculptured stones continue to present are strikingly similar to those associated with prehistoric decorated stones, so-called ‘rock art’; a conversation among stone enthusiasts might be entertaining, even fruitful.

This volume is a significant achievement and a welcome addition. Yet, despite the expanded consideration of geology and topography, one cannot help thinking that the evidence is not always being fully enough considered. ‘Regional Geology’, for example, is often offered, as here, as a standalone contribution, but would benefit from a more rounded consideration. This, plus some other sections, has also suffered from somewhat patchy editing. For instance, Figure 5 shows the region’s solid geology in colour, while Figure 6 duplicates this, but with sculptured stone locations labelled and with dots to indicate geological type. Why not just have Figure 6? Why repeat three rock types in a second key which identifies the geological identity of each stone, and why is Millstone Grit shown as dark yellow on the map and in its main key, but incidences of stones in that material occur as dots in a fetching Farrow and Ball shade of pink? Presenting a tabulated list of rock types and incidences of sculptured stone (including sculpture type represented – cross-shaft, cross-head, etc) might help reveal patterns of exploitation and distribution otherwise masked within the text. In the discussion of rock-types utilised, some initial indication of whether a particular rock-type was

utilised was needed, rather than having to wade through a half page column of text on the Mercia Mudstone Group before finding confirmation that these rocks 'are not suitable for carving and are not considered further in this account'.

Sidebottom offers useful discussion of 'Topography and Regional Distributions' and this chapter is supported by Figure 7, an outline topography map showing relief and – at last – river names. The rivers were potentially influential in the distribution of some monuments, but monuments are not shown on this map. In fact, to consider monuments in relation to geology, topography and rivers, which might seem one sensible line of enquiry, one must keep fingers marking Figures 2, 6 and 7.

The many remaining questions about these sculptured stones include their production and distribution – where were the stones carved? And was distribution by land and/or water? While Alstonefield has two fragments which are said to 'show rare evidence that they were fashioned on site' (p. 94), the catalogue suggests that these were actually re-dressed in connection with later use. Of the named rivers we are told that only the Trent was navigable to any extent 'at least as far as Repton' (20). The statement begs a number of questions: in the first place, navigable by what? Some indication of the size and weight of a 'typical' stone, perhaps a cross-shaft, would be useful to engender consideration of potentially usable craft, which presumably would range from rafts to small cargo vessels, in conjunction with environmental and documentary evidence for the condition of the rivers in the eighth to tenth centuries. And in terms of land transportation, while horse-carts might be a possibility, sleds are the perhaps more likely option – again, consideration of sculpture size and weight might clarify some of the variations in sculpture distribution (p. 22). Even if one accepts the questionable contention that 'the Roman road system continued in use through the Anglo-Saxon period' (34), Figure 14 shows that many stones are ten miles or more from such 'beaten' tracks.

Consideration of the distribution of sculptured stone pieces also needs an indication of the distribution and numbers of potential pre-Conquest settlements without sculptured stone associations – something that could have been included on Figure 7. It is interesting, for example, that few of the higher-altitude sculptured stones appear to have an ecclesiastical setting (p. 29); yet these stones are ecclesiastical in intent, so the lack of any associated or successor church must tell us something about the function of the site and its success or otherwise. The question is revisited in the Conclusion, where it is suggested that these stones may have been set up at estate centres or other prominent locations (p. 96). It should be possible to devise investigative programmes to research these further.

This review has concentrated on a limited number of those areas considered by this *Corpus* volume, principally those that the reviewer has from time-to-time encountered in 'everyday' archaeology. There is much useful material here, not least the discussions of the Historical Background (Barbara Yorke), Anglian Period Sculpture (Hawkes) and Scandinavian Period Sculpture (Sidebottom). That significant areas of enquiry

remain open should encourage deployment of further archaeological approaches to these inspiring sculptures.

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*The Land was Forever. 15,000 Years in North-East Scotland. Excavations on the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route/Balmedie–Tipperty.* By Kirsty Dingwall, Matt Ginnever, Richard Tipping, Jürgen van Wessel and Don Wilson. 22 × 30 cm. xvi + 360 pp. 285 colour and b&w pls and figs, 50 tables. Oxford & Philadelphia: Oxbow Books, 2018. ISBN 978-1-78570-988-3. Price: £40.00 hb.

This impressive volume details the results of large-scale archaeological investigations conducted during 2012–15 to accompany the construction of a bypass, running for nearly 60 km around the western periphery of Aberdeen, in north-east Scotland. While the authors detail evidence from nine main, multi-period sites ranging from the Upper Palaeolithic to post-medieval periods, features of medieval date are relatively scarce, suggesting that the region was perhaps less densely occupied in this period than in Prehistory.

At the site of Milltimber, a cereal-drying kiln attests Pictish agricultural activity in the fifth or sixth centuries AD, while a nearby enclosure contains ephemeral buildings of seventh-/eighth-century date. A post-built enclosure, dating to the ninth/tenth century completes an intriguing sequence, perhaps indicating the persistence of a modest farming settlement throughout the Pictish period. At Goval, a small, sub-rectangular building was burnt down in the seventh/eighth century; its unusual construction, using longitudinal timbers, evokes local parallels at the Pictish site of Rhynie (see M. Gondek & G. Noble, 2012: *Excavation of a Palisaded and Ditched Enclosure and Timber Buildings in Association with the Craw Stane, Rhynie Aberdeenshire*. Unpublished REAP Data Structure Report. Available online at: <http://reaparch.blogspot.co.uk/p/moreinformation.html>), suggesting a regional architectural style. Individually, these medieval features are relatively slight and unimposing, and it is to the credit of the authors that their rigorous programme of AMS-dating has revealed elements of a Pictish agricultural landscape that have been hitherto almost unknown.

Throughout the volume, the authors adopt an explicitly landscape-based perspective and much consideration is given to the influences of geomorphology, topography and climate on the development of human settlement patterns. In large measure, the absence of clear settlement traces of the early second millennium AD may be attributed to such factors; indeed, the area seems to have been substantially given over to forest for much of the medieval period. Overall, the volume marks a significant addition to the early landscape archaeology of the region.

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***Cille Pheadair. A Norse Farmstead and Pictish Burial Cairn in South Uist.*** (Sheffield Environmental and Archaeological Research Campaign in the Hebrides, Volume 7). By Mike Parker Pearson, Mark Brennand, Jacqui Mulville and Helen Smith. 22 × 30 cm. xvi + 632 pp, 311 colour and b&w pls and figs, 144 tables. Oxford & Haverton PA: Oxbow Books, 2018. ISBN 987-1-78570-851-0. Price: £35.00 hb.

This is the seventh of a monograph series reporting on fieldwork, both survey and excavation, carried out on the Outer Hebrides by the SEARCH project in the 1990s. At a time when excavation reports are frequently produced in digital form only, the commitment to producing a monograph series is admirable, and the quality of production here is excellent; there are copious illustrations and tables, produced at scales appropriate to the material and closely linked to the text, and it is particularly good to have all the relevant data in the body of the report, where they are easily accessible.

The volume reports on the excavation of a Pictish (early mediaeval) square burial cairn and a Norse (mediaeval) settlement site at Cille Pheadair (Kilpheder) in South Uist, between 1996 and 1998. The two excavation sites were exposed by coastal erosion, acting on the soft coastal machair landscape, and the erosion had destroyed any stratigraphic link between them, but radiocarbon dating demonstrated that the burial was over 150 years earlier than the start of the settlement, with no surviving evidence for continuous occupation of the site.

The cairn contained a female body in a long cist, with evidence of post-burial disturbance and a progressive and sequenced construction of the cairn over the cist. This was the first such square cairn found and excavated in the Outer Hebrides; they are more common in eastern and central Scotland. Since its excavation, however, others have been found, and although they remain uncommon, they were clearly a feature of the early mediaeval culture of the islands.

Cille Pheadair Norse settlement dated from the very end of the Viking Age, to well into the Middle Ages, with a calibrated radiocarbon range from AD 945 to 1245. It consisted of a single farmstead, fitting into an emerging pattern of scattered farmsteads during the Scandinavian period (AD 800–1266) in the Western Isles. The farm was founded on a greenfield site, cultivated prior to occupation, in the Late Viking Age, and continued in occupation until the thirteenth or fourteenth century. This volume contains a very useful and thoughtful consideration by Barbara Crawford of the historical context of the site, and the complex ethnic and legal situation which characterised the islands after the Treaty of Perth in AD 1266 transferred the archipelago from Norway to Scotland, though it does not address the full environmental and social complexity of this period, which may have had implications for the abandonment of the site.

The excavation evidence is admirably detailed, with the fine-grained sampling of the floors within the buildings, which allows for the clear identification of patterns of use, particularly impressive. Unfortunately, the bibliography is thin on Scandinavian sources and misses some key northern Scottish comparators (eg V.E. Turner & J. Bond, *Viking Unst: Excavation and Survey*

*in Northern Shetland 2006–2010*. Shetland Amenity Trust, 2013). Perhaps as a result, the interpretation of some of the features of the buildings is unconventional. Thus, in house 500 (p 105), raised areas along the long walls are identified as ‘a bench-like strip’, rather than the characteristic Scandinavian wall benches; in the reconstruction of this building in the final summary (p 589), the house is shown with box beds along the walls, which is unlikely at this early date; similarly, it is not entirely clear why the first structure on the site is interpreted as a ‘sandbank enclosure’ rather than a house (47–8), when its size (internally 5 × 15 m) and shape, and the inner and outer stone faces of the wall, would be unexceptional for a Viking-Age house. The excavator acknowledges he has questions about the internal stratigraphy of this first structure, the deposits within which ‘had the appearance, structure and fragmentation pattern of floors’ (73).

Despite these questions of interpretation, this important report is a welcome addition to the series of SEARCH monographs and a valuable contribution to the growing understanding of the neglected Scandinavian period in western Scotland.

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***A Medieval Manor House Rediscovered. Excavations at Longforth Farm, Wellington, Somerset.*** By Simon Flaherty, Phil Andrews and Matt Leivers. 21 × 30 cm. viii + 60 pp, 49 colour and b&w pls and figs, 6 tables. Salisbury: Wessex Archaeology Ltd, 2016. ISBN 9787-1-874350-85-9. Price: £7.50 pb.

Extensive excavations carried out in 2012 and 2013 revealed the remains of a large stone-built complex of medieval buildings near Longforth Farm on the eastern side of the medieval town of Wellington in Somerset. The name of this large manorial complex is not recorded but the documentary work by VCH Somerset Editor Mary Siraut (Ch.2) suggests that this site could have been a manor of the Bishop of Bath and Wells. Wessex Archaeology carried out the excavations as part of a planning requirement and this well-produced, popular-style publication was funded by Bloor Homes, a housing developer.

Excavations of over 1.5 ha revealed the extensive remains of a high-status medieval building complex dating from the late twelfth century through to the early fifteenth. Archaeological investigations of large manorial style complexes are relatively uncommon. In this case the excavations revealed the plans of a hall (12 × 7.5 m), a solar, service buildings, a possible chapel and ancillary buildings. The archaeologists from Wessex Archaeology are to be congratulated on piecing together a complex series of wall foundations and other features to produce a set of reconstruction drawings that show how the building complex may have functioned. The computer-generated full-colour visualisations by Karen Nichols present a very clear picture of the site and this type of analysis and interpretation must surely become the standard for use in both academic reports and wider publications.

Public engagement was a key part of this project and an open day proved to be extremely popular, with over 1400 people visiting the excavations. Recovered finds were relatively scarce, but the discovery of several decorated floor tiles, a cylindrical costrel and two Saintonge ware sherds confirms the manor's high status. This is a compact, but very readable report (and affordable) whose popular style neatly captures and explains the story of this important medieval site.

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***Industry and the Making of a Rural Landscape. Iron and Pottery Production at Churchills Farm, Hemyock, Devon.*** (British Archaeological Reports British Series 636). Edited by Chris Smart. 21 × 30 cm. xxii + 224 pp, 133 colour and b&w pls and figs, 27 tables. Oxford: BAR Publishing, 2018. ISBN 978-1-4073-1626-0. Price: £44.00 pb.

As a field officer in Devon 40 years ago, I was conscious of Hemyock only as one of many largely anonymous settlements in the east of the county, an area itself that attracted little attention archaeologically. With the excavations at Churchill's Farm on the village edge in 2008, that has now changed. The spectacular results included 12 pre-Conquest iron-smelting furnaces with large amounts of iron slag and 1.4 tonnes (around 53,000 sherds) of earlier sixteenth-century pottery waste, though not the kilns themselves. It was to English Heritage's credit that they funded the post-excavation research on these industrial residues, much of it highly scientific and costly, and that this research has now been published, with Chris Smart (of the University of Exeter) marshalling the various specialist reports in this impressive volume.

The scientific analyses are reported expansively. Tim Young's chapter on the iron industry provides pages of detailed descriptions, tabulated data, analytical plots (many with colour coding) and electron photomicrographs of the furnaces and residue. The chapter on the pottery industry with three main authors led by John Allan, and contributions by nine other specialists, provides extensive details on the pottery waste and the kiln furniture plus exhaustive information on scientific analyses applied to pottery sherds, all backed up by data tables and sample charts. Few readers are likely to work their way diligently through these, but embedded in Young's chapter is an overview of iron-smelting in the pre-Conquest era ranging widely across the British Isles and western Europe, while the pottery chapter incorporates significant sections on the kilns and kiln furniture, the value of combining different scientific techniques in analysis, a fascinating assessment of the decorated paving tiles by Laurence Keen, and a general assessment of the collection with a comparison of the better known production centre at Donyatt in Somerset.

Remarkably thorough, this represents a major contribution to our understanding of two rural industries

in the Middle Ages. For *MSR* readers, however, what will be less evident is any substantive consideration of the physical elements of settlement: Matt Tompkins examines the sometimes sparse documentary evidence from the medieval period, and Smart covers the historic landscape character of the greensand hills, but throughout the emphasis is on industrial activity within the rural landscape, even though Hemyock has a castle and a church with twelfth-century fabric, both less than 200 m away. Should we assume that pre-Conquest iron workers and the Tudor potters were itinerant workers or did they reside at the village at Hemyock, and was it thus exceptional? Tompkins touches on the nature of rural industry and settlement but only in a country-wide context.

The concluding discussion introduces other interesting yet disparate ideas: the likelihood of the pre-Conquest iron-smelting being controlled at royal centres; the importance of oats in the regional medieval economy; and the provision of fuel for these rural industries. If there is one gripe about this valuable volume, it is that with such a diverse set of contributions and concepts, the reader would have benefited from an effective summary, rather longer than the short half-page abstract that is offered.

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***Prehistoric and Early Medieval Landscapes at North Park Farm, Bletchingley, Surrey.*** (SpoilHeap Publications, Monograph 21). By Nick Marples and Rob Poulton. 21 × 30 cm. xiv + 196 pp, 129 colour and b&w pls and figs, 35 tables. Woking: Surrey County Archaeological Unit, 2019. ISBN 978-1-912331-10-9. Price: £20.00 pb.

This monograph – one supported by an excellent collection of images – brings together the results of excavations of diverse scale at the expanding North Park Farm sand quarry, located just north of Bletchingley in Surrey, undertaken at different points between 2001 and 2016 (stated thus on p. 1, though the summary on p. xii says 'between 1997 and 2014'). The 'North Park' was, in the Middle Ages, a deer park, imposed by c. AD 1200; its disparking came in the sixteenth century (discussed pp. 187–90). Beneath the deer park an extended history of activity and exploitation was traced, most prominently in the Mesolithic, marked by a substantial flint scatter, tree-throws and pits, gathered around a palaeochannel and valley hollow; there was also fair Bronze Age ritual and agricultural evidence (the volume understandably centres on these prehistoric data). An Iron Age hillfort to the north (the 'War Coppice') and then a Roman villa west at Pestell then seem to have left the quarry zone quiet except for agricultural use and for the presence of a drove-road (continuing as 'Green Lane'), while Early to Middle Anglo-Saxon activity included tree clearance, a well and possible tanning pits. More substantial/tangible historic-period exploitation comes from the eleventh and twelfth centuries (labelled 'early medieval' in the monograph and defined as AD 1000–1250): a working landscape is marked by regular field ditches, trackways

and road-side ditches (pp. 43–9), and eleven ‘activity areas’ (pp. 49–63, 184–5), such as possible barns and shelters, but most notably structures with charcoal-rich deposits indicative of industrial processes, in particular charcoal burning and ironworking (the charcoal, analysed on pp. 155–60, derives mainly from oak, blackthorn and hedge-trimmings); the ceramic specialists cite related evidence for at least 30 large cooking pots/cauldron-style jars (p. 146). The conclusions are for a set of work-sites across the excavation zones, linked to nearby manorial imposition and economic growth (p. 186); the industrial-style workings, however, came to an abrupt end when the deer park was established in the mid- to later twelfth century, with deliberate dismantling of structures and then levelling and infilling of features.

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***The Medieval Earthworks of South & South-East Leicestershire.*** (Leicestershire Fieldworkers Monograph no 4). By Robert F. Hartley. 21 × 30 cm. xvi + 218 pp, 2 colour, 24 b&w plates, 180 b&w figures, 4 tables. Leicester: Leicestershire Fieldworkers, 2018. ISBN 978-0-9548200-3-9. Price: £10.00 pb.

This volume presents the final part of Hartley’s work of surveying and mapping of the earthwork evidence of medieval settlement and agriculture in Leicestershire. More than reasonably priced and published in the occasional series of papers by the Leicestershire Fieldworkers, it concentrates on the areas on the south and east of the county. Each set of hachure drawings is accompanied by a narrative description of the location and its background.

Many of the illustrations cover those earthworks surrounding existing villages such as the Kilworths and Billesdon as well as those villages now classified as deserted, such as Great Stretton, Bittesby and, of personal interest, Stormsworth. The volume’s value – especially for scholars exploring medieval agricultural practice – also lies in the recording of features which are perhaps soon to disappear, notably in terms of ridge and furrow cultivation traces on wider area plans. Despite the size of some of the areas illustrated, the level of detail is consistent throughout: Tugby, for example, is split across two plans to maintain clarity.

Not limited to settlements and fields, Hartley reviews the evidence of water management, parks and estate layouts (Launde Abbey, Noseley, Stoughton Grange) – indeed, virtually anything identifiable from the medieval period which has left its mark on the landscape. We benefit from the addition of images from Nichols of some of the churches, great and not-so-great houses, some of which are no longer extant. As such, this publication will be useful to local historians, non-academics and students alike. Its value in the wider context of landscape studies serves as an example of what can be done at a local level and how it might be used in the wider study of medieval landscapes.

There is little, if anything, to criticise in this well-presented and thorough piece of work. The black and

white plans are clear and happily unencumbered with excessive detail. Key elements such as modern roads, churches and built areas are marked so that observers may easily locate the features illustrated when studying at ground-level; in addition, their simplicity and accuracy allow them to be easily incorporated into GIS analyses, or even overlaid onto existing plans or maps to add insight into readers’ own studies.

This work and its predecessors are exemplars of how this kind of work should be approached. There is no better conclusion to be offered other than those of Prof Chris Dyer in his introduction to the volume: ‘This publication and the others in the series have opened doors into exploring new dimensions of Leicestershire’s past’. Hence they certainly have a permanent place on my own bookshelves.

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***Barrow Old Hall and Twiss Green. Investigations of Two Sub-Manorial Estate Centres within the Townships of Bold and Culcheth in the Hundred of Warrington, 1982–87.*** (Archaeopress Archaeology). By Dan Garner, Jennifer Lewis and David Freke, edited by Jill Collens. 21 × 29 cm. vii + 106 pp, 93 colour and b&w pls and figs. Oxford: Archaeopress, 2018. ISBN 978-1-78491-968-9. Price: £30.00 pb.

The excavations reported in this slim, but rather expensive volume were carried out at two isolated medieval homestead sites which were probably in existence by the fourteenth century. They are located in what was once the Hundred of Warrington, Lancashire, in a part of England where the pattern of medieval settlement was predominantly dispersed. Like many other manorial and sub-manorial homesteads in the area, Barrow Old Hall and Twiss Green were furnished with moats, though Twiss Green provided clear evidence of pre-moat buildings; excavation also revealed the preserved lower elements of timber trestles and trestle-braces for the plank bridge giving access to the moat island (elements published here in commendable detail). There is very good coverage of the ceramic assemblage from Twiss Green, both its medieval and post-medieval components, the latter indicating that settlement within the moat may have ceased in the late seventeenth century.

Bringing to publication the archives of ‘old’ excavations is never an easy task, especially within tight funding constraints; it requires a mixture of fortitude and pragmatism. One result of this here, presumably, is the somewhat limited report on the medieval ceramic assemblage from Barrow Old Hall. There are also inconsistencies which probably result from several different efforts at interpretation – for example, the difficulty in matching the footprint of the Barrow Old Hall building on Figure 18 with that on Figure 19. There are useful chapters covering the documented history of settlement in the townships containing both these and other medieval homesteads, though the texts would have been easier to follow if they had been accompanied by full-page township maps (ones larger than those

in Figures 3 and 33), depicting estate and select field boundaries and locating relevant field-names.

The volume concludes with a short but very helpful chapter setting these excavation results in their wider context, taking into account several similar sites which have been (part-)excavated (and published) in the region. The plans of medieval buildings recovered from the Barrow Old Hall and Twiss Green are compared with those from these other sites, though it should be noted that the interpretation of the Barrow Old Hall building in Figure 92 is hugely speculative.

For researchers working on rural settlement in lowland north-west England, the evidence and interpretations presented here will readily fit into a very familiar pattern. It is, however, a pattern very different from those that can be observed in regions dominated by villages and open fields; and it is one that deserves much wider recognition.

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***Farmers, Consumers, Innovators. The World of Joan Thirsk.*** (Explorations in Local and Regional History, Volume 8). Edited by Richard Jones and Christopher Dyer. 17 × 24 cm. xii + 174 pp, 25 b&w pls and figs, 8 tables. Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press, 2017. ISBN 978-1-909291-56-0. Price: £16.99 pb.

Drawn from a celebratory conference held a year after Joan Thirsk's death in 2013, the papers in this collection pick up some, but by no means all, of her myriad interests in mainly post-medieval agricultural and cultural history. Sadly there's no place for alternative agriculture or new crops – both topics once again of considerable contemporary relevance – but among the 13 chapters are several of interest and relevance to readers of this journal.

Among Joan Thirsk's most enduring contributions was her definition of agricultural regions – essentially the *pays* of historical geographers – which in many ways foreshadowed the regions and sub-regions mapped through Historic Landscape Characterisation. Several contributors, notably the late David Hey, discuss the extent to which *pays* are defined by social and mental, as well as economic signatures, drawing on the evidence of surnames and genetics. The focus is very much on the sixteenth century and later, but it has great relevance for any consideration of regionality in medieval Britain.

Part II of *Farmers, Consumers, Innovators* focusses on agricultural themes, opening with a stimulating paper by Tom Williamson which assesses the importance of Thirsk's work on common fields, not least her seminal paper in *Past & Present* in 1964; this develops into an appraisal of Hall and Foard's work on open field and village origins in Northamptonshire and their idea of a 'Great Re-planning' of the countryside around the ninth century which saw the laying out of planned villages and fully-fledged open field systems. As he has argued in greater detail elsewhere (*Environment, Society and Landscape in Early Medieval England*, 2013), this is a model which Williamson contests, suggesting rather

that medieval villages generally do have a Saxon origin, expanding in the late Saxon period and beyond, outward onto arable strips whose boundaries they adopted – giving every appearance of laid-out plots. Williamson believes that the regularity of strip arrangements documented in many field systems is due to a re-allocation of strips in the eleventh or twelfth century (which seems to be supported by Richard Jones's work on manuring) as village resources – heavy ploughs, oxen and arable land itself – came of necessity to be shared to facilitate working heavy land in short periods of dryer weather.

Nicola Whyte's paper looks at enclosure in early modern Norfolk, 'the everyday processes and meanings of making (and unmaking) boundaries' in the common fields, giving a vivid glimpse into the past and all its complexities. Did the creation of essentially private closes mark the arrival of capitalism, the end of neighbourly co-operation and the recasting of social relations? Whyte agrees with others that enclosure meant different things at different times to different people, with attitudes towards private property and privacy being equally singular. Using court cases and the depositions of old men she examines how enclosure and changes to traditional agricultural practices were sometimes accepted and accommodated, and at others not. Not all villagers were neighbourly and observant of ancient custom (practising 'quietness', to use the seventeenth-century term): anyone who has read verbatim transcripts of disputes over land and property, or following low-level anti-social activity, will recognise that the past is not a different country, but in many ways one instantly recognisable today.

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***A New Dictionary of English Field-Names.*** (English Place-Name Society, Field-Name Studies No. 4). By Paul Cavill (with an Introduction by Rebecca Gregory). 16 × 24 cm. lii + 495 pp. Nottingham: English Place-Name Society, 2018. ISBN 978-0-904889-99-4. Price: £22.00 pb.

This volume has had a long gestation period. Initially the work of the field-name scholar John Field, it was conceived as a continuation of his 1972 book *English Field-Names: A Dictionary*. Following Field's death in 2000, the manuscript was placed into the hands of Paul Cavill, lately, of course, an MSRSG committee member. The increased output of field-name material contained within recent volumes from the English Place-Name Survey, alongside the digitisation of the entire survey, has significantly increased the volume of material available, and the new dictionary contains about 45,000 entries. Field-names are increasingly being seen as a crucial element in reconstructing past landscapes, as myriad recent publications attest. For scholars yet to realise their usefulness, Rebecca Gregory – a current MSRSG committee member – has written an outstanding introduction that guides the uninitiated on a range of matters, from how field-names were constructed, where to find them, how to record them and what they

can reveal about past landscapes. Of particular interest is a comprehensive historiography of recent work in field-name research. Far from being populated solely by the work of onomasts, this wide-ranging review acknowledges the multi-disciplinary nature of modern field-name scholarship and recognises important contributions to the discipline from archaeologists, geographers and historians. This review of recent scholarship is accompanied by a very useful eight-page bibliography.

The dictionary is first and foremost a reference book and although it makes no claim to be comprehensive, its coverage is nevertheless extensive enough for most scholars' needs. A volume like this is also the perfect treat for whiling away a rainy Sunday afternoon: open it on any page and the eye will be drawn (as mine was) to such delights as Mans Leg, Arse Butts and The Fuzzens. Who knew that the name Hesketh probably refers to a Viking race course? Or that Hornywink referenced 'land frequented by the peewit or lapwing'? As Margaret Gelling noted long ago, field-names can be extremely useful for landscape archaeologists and historians, and there are many entries that guide scholars to name forms that might have interesting connotations. Names with Bury or Berry might indicate ancient earthworks or else a medieval manor site; Mesne or Main could illuminate demesne lands; names incorporating Harbour or Harbrough can sometimes signpost the location of an army camp, derived from OE *here-beorg*. Conversely, names like Barrack Field, Great Barracks and Barrick Copse, which appear to be transparent are in fact nothing of the sort – this group is all derived from OE *bere-wīc*, 'barley farm'. This last point is one of the reasons why, for those new to this form of historical evidence, this volume is a must if those of us lacking the requisite linguistic skills are to avoid the many pitfalls that lie in wait for the unsuspecting researcher.

At the end of this *New Dictionary*, there is a glossary of elements found in English field-names. While useful, it would have been even more valuable if this had been cross-referenced with field-names in the dictionary, so that those wishing to look up names containing particular elements could have done so. This, however, is a very minor grumble, and Cavill and Gregory should be congratulated for producing a volume designed to embrace all those interested in studying the landscape, whatever their level of expertise. For landscape scholars of every stripe, this is a book that was worth waiting for.

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***Church and Settlement in Ireland.*** Edited by James Lyttleton and Matthew Stout. 16 × 24 cm. xxiv + 272 pp, 62 b&w pls and figs, 2 tables. Dublin: Four Courts Press, with the Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement and the American Society of Irish Medieval Studies, 2018. ISBN 978-1-84682-728-0. Price: £45.00 hb.

This collection of essays is part of the fruit of a conference in spring 2015, organised by the Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement and the American

Society of Irish Medieval Studies. The papers, which span a long time frame from the fifth to the nineteenth century, address a diverse range of issues related to landscape study. Much valuable new work is presented here and linked to current debate. I remember being told as a student that, once upon a time, someone counted the number of ringforts recorded on all of the 1st Edition Irish Ordnance Survey maps and emerged with the figure of 10,000. I don't think this feat is apocryphal, but in the days before computer databases, GIS and the recognition of the value of Big Data, it was enough to deter all but the brave from any kind of in-depth analysis of the Early Christian landscape. Now a greatly enhanced time-depth is possible as a result of the combination of new technologies, integrating survey, map regression analysis and the use of late or post-medieval documentation including place-names, with the more traditional lists of monuments, early medieval collections of saints' *vitae* and family genealogies which have hitherto been used to explain settlement patterns. The *Making Christian Landscapes* research initiative, supported by the Irish Heritage Council in 2008–10 has led the field here and two of the papers in this volume, by Tomás Ó'Carrigáin and Gill Boazman, arise directly from this, but others are informed by an appreciation of the significant value of detailed local landscape research in generating a bigger picture. The greatly expanded programme of 'Celtic Tiger' developer-led excavation has also contributed significantly.

Ó'Carrigáin and Boazman between them offer detailed landscape analyses of three separate regions, in each case drilling through the evidence for social and settlement distribution and hierarchy, with a view to identifying both process and change from the fifth century onwards. Complex territorial interactions between episcopal, monastic and secular lordship are also debated by Paul Mc Cotter, reviewing the reform of the Irish Church in the twelfth century. The sheer density of early church sites and their potential variety, mostly unrepresented by any obvious standing remains, emerges from this work.

Three studies focus on the location and landscape settings of later medieval orders: Anne-Julie Lafaye discusses the location of Irish mendicant friaries, focussed around the two case studies of Drogheda and Kilcrea; Tracy Collins assesses the marginalisation of nunnery sites in Ireland; and Geraldine Stout reviews the landscape of the Cistercian abbey of Mellifont before and after 1540. All are strongly grounded in solid research and make significant contributions to the field.

The collection concludes with two studies of post-medieval ecclesiastical landscapes. David Fleming offers a highly engaging paper on the real and reinvented history of 'mass rocks' in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, in which we learn that, in penal times, there were plenty of chapels and 'mass houses', as well as several operational friaries and convents. Primary sources for a range of places of worship of Irish Catholics exist but have been pretty well ignored by proponents of an uncritical nationalist heritage discourse, remediated in popular literature in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries – a timely reminder that 'fake news' is not an invention of our own day! This study is nicely complemented by Finbar McCormick's comparative review of mass houses and Presbyterian meeting houses,



in which the role of the pulpit is seen as a point of functional similarity.

One thread emerging from a number of contributions is the transitory nature of quite a lot of the material evidence for buildings in different periods – whether early Christian unenclosed settlements or churches, medieval and post-medieval house clusters, or mass houses. Such is a strong reminder of the frailty of ‘positivist’ approaches to landscapes, even fairly recent ones.

I would argue that a few papers in the collection sit rather oddly within the theme: James Schryver treads rather familiar ground in his review of the landscape of St Patrick’s Ireland in a piece that would have benefitted from a stronger critical and chronological framework; the study by Lahney Preston-Matto of fosterage in Early Christian Irish literature would have been better placed elsewhere; and Brian Ó Broin’s interesting comparative textual analysis of Irish saints’ *vitae* is also a bit out of scope.

The volume’s papers have all been carefully edited and many are well illustrated with original maps and figures. The editors are also to be celebrated for including both a functional index and a consolidated bibliography, which makes finding cited material so much simpler. Overall this is an impressive and useful collection, showcasing the healthy state of Irish historic landscape studies.

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***Tristernagh Priory, County Westmeath: Colonial Monasticism in Medieval Ireland.*** (Maynooth Studies in Local History: Number 137). By Tadhg O’Keeffe. 14 × 22 cm. 70 pp, 26 b/w pls and figs. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2018. ISBN 978-1-84582-718-1. Price: £9.95 pb.

This percipient book is an essay on the recurring use of religious houses as factors in colonisation, a situation not peculiar to Ireland, but is much more clearly seen there than perhaps anywhere else in Europe, where, for instance the Margraves of Brandenburg colonised Western Pomerania using Cistercian monasteries in the 1230s. Tadhg O’Keeffe has chosen his monastery well: an Augustinian house with reasonably good documentation in a surviving relict landscape, and with a church that was very well recorded in plan and elevation in 1779, incorporated into a post-suppression house, four years before it was largely and needlessly demolished.

We see how the Irish midlands were colonised by Angevin invaders from 1170, with Henry II granting a vast area here to Hugh de Lacy in 1172. This was subdivided into a series of baronies, one of which, centred on Kilixby, was granted to Geoffrey de Costentin who was unable to take it up immediately. His son eventually took up the grant in the early 1190s and by 1230 Kilixby, which already had a castle, had become a borough, its church had become parochial and a new Augustinian priory had been established between the borough and Lough Iron on a potentially earlier site – the classic development of a potentially insecure caput. De Costentin was a man who needed God on his side.

What is particularly clear is the very Englishness of the monastic foundation. In plan, elevation and scale the early thirteenth-century church of Tristernagh could easily be English, even to its octagonal crossing tower probably added a century later. O’Keeffe wonders why Cistercians were not settled here in preference to Austin canons; the answer is, looking at their earlier settlement of Wales, that they had a habit of going native and this was apparent by the early thirteenth century in Ireland too.

Without the intervention of Begari and Berengar (an Italian and a French Huguenot collecting ruins) in 1779 we would not have the evidence of the priory above ground, incomplete though it is. It allows a convincing modern reconstruction to be attempted, and the place of Tristernagh Priory to be established in western European monastic planning. This thoughtful essay should not end here – there are so many observations to be followed up on a reasonably compact site and within its well-preserved setting, including the site’s post-suppression development as an Ascendancy house.

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***Interpreting Transformations of People and Landscapes in Late Antiquity.*** Edited by Pilar Diarte-Blasco and Neil Christie. 22 × 29 cm. xvii + 218 pp, 82 colour and b&w pls and figs, 3 tables. Oxford & Haverton PA: Oxbow Books, 2018. ISBN 978-1-78925-034-3. Price: £55.00 hb.

This volume, emerging from conferences in Rome and Leicester during 2016, aims to compare the central and western Mediterranean (‘developed provinces’ – p. ix) to the far west of the Mediterranean and the north-west of Europe. It studies both cities and their territories and their transformation across the late antique and early medieval periods. In places the rural landscape without reference to cities comes through, and in those papers villas and their fate dominate, but other rural communities are also shown as important. In doing so the papers engage with the transformations themselves but also suggest their causes and a range of actors emerge – the Church and the ecclesiastical hierarchy, a waning civil nobility, new military aristocracies and the peasantry. The contributions provide much clarity on the state of recent work and the picture as it stands for each region; the specific processes within each region emerge, and generality is avoided.

In Western Europe most large regions are represented: Italy (four chapters, by Brogiolo, Goffredo & Volpe, Chavarria Arnau and one by Meneghini on Rome itself); the Spanish provinces, but particularly the interior and north (five contributions: Arce, Ariño, Diarte-Blasco, Olmo-Enciso, Vigil-Escalera Guirado); Britain and particularly the former *Britannia Prima* (five chapters: Collins, Rippon, Seaman, Tompkins, White); Gaul (two papers: Raynaud, Esmonde Cleary); and Germany (Heeren on the lower Rhine). There are, perhaps necessarily, some imbalances. Africa, a core region of the former Western Roman Empire, is not

included and most frontier regions of the Empire are not particularly represented, bar the useful papers by Collins on the region of Hadrian's Wall (with references to Noricum) and Heeren on the lower Rhine. It is, however, impossible to cover all regions of the West in detail in a volume like this with, relatively, small regions the focus for the most part (Arce's chapter aside, which looks at *Hispania* in general) without producing too vast a tome. Perhaps a concluding chapter drawing together some of the observations in the paper might have helped tackle the gaps, although such could run risk of being very general.

The chapters, as one would expect, critique works that impose an historical narrative – particularly invasion and warfare – albeit many of the scholars (many leaders in the field) suggest that even if warfare did not result in widespread, direct destruction it probably resulted in dislocation in power structures, elite control and settlement patterns among other elements (see, for example, Diarte-Blasco, Vigil-Escalera Guirado). Military aristocracies are put into focus as the main actors driving change in the (urban) landscape in some chapters (Brogiolo, Ariño), whereas Arce argues that the Church was the primary cause of the transformation of late antique society in *Hispania*. Soldiers appear as actors in Collins' and Heeren's detailed articles. Given the lack of direct evidence for civilian elites in the countryside in many regions, peasants, their settlements (and the relation of these to villa sites – on which, see, for example, Esmonde Cleary, plus others) and burials are the focus of many contributions.

Several of the authors engage with the issue of climatic change (including both Olmo-Enciso and Brogiolo) and whether that had major impacts on settlement and agriculture. Rippon, however, in discussing England from AD 300–600 (primarily focussed on areas north of London), critiques simplistic climate change models and the concept of the 'Late Antique Little Ice Age', elsewhere in the volume referred to as the 'Early Medieval Cold Episode' or variations thereof. This debate serves to highlight how increasingly a wide range of archaeological datasets need to be tackled when seeking to understand processes in and affecting the late antique landscape (and its populations).

This volume is full of interesting contributions and certainly provides much useful material for the examination of late antique settlement in Europe.

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***Treinta Años de Arqueología Medieval en España.*** (Access Archaeology). Edited by Juan Antonio Quirós Castillo. 21 × 28 cm. xii + 417 pp, 90 colour and b&w pls and figs, 3 tables. Oxford: Archaeopress Publishing Ltd, 2018. ISBN 978-1-78491-923-8. Price: £64.00 pb.

This informative volume brings together an array of archaeologists and academics to offer a reflective overview of how Medieval Archaeology has emerged

and evolved as a discipline in the Spanish peninsula, as viewed from diverse angles and themes. The well-produced publication was initially targeted to coincide with the 30th anniversary of the report generated following the first Medieval Archaeology Congress held Huesca (but, the editor reports, it was delayed through various factors); it features 16 papers by 19 authors, although more contributions were anticipated, notes the editor, and some themes were therefore not fully covered, such as on monasteries, peasants and food. The early section on geographic comparanda/ overviews ('Spanish Medieval Archaeology from a european [sic] perspective') seems most affected by these missing papers, since this comprises just three contributions, ranging from Sauro Gelichi's comparison between Italy and Spain, to Helena Hamerow's paper on places and spaces in early medieval Britain, and to Catarina Tente on Portugal. To these can be added the editor Quirós Castillo's own introductory chapter (in English) and critique of Spanish Medieval Archaeology from its roots to its future needs.

The volume otherwise centres on 12 reflective and summary papers (all in Spanish, but each with a short English abstract, and each briefly outlined in the Introduction), on themes ranging from early medieval urbanism and Islamic-period towns (chapters by Julia Sarabia-Bautista and Irene Montilla Torres), to Visigothic archaeologies (Alfonso Vigil-Escalera Guirado), standing buildings archaeology (María de los Ángeles Utrero Agudo), Jews in medieval Spain (Jorge Eiroa) and archaeozoological perspectives (Idoia Grau-Sologestoa & Marcos García-García). The first two papers in this main section labelled 'Trends and topics' offer broader geographical and temporal coverage (Alberto García Porras on research in al-Andalus; Carlos Tejerizo-García and the editor on research, trajectories and commercial/academic trends in north-west Spain). Each paper is generally sufficiently illustrated and gives outlines of the status and quality of research so far done, and with pointers for future directions.

While various of the above chapters touch on rural links, such as in the context of Visigothic-period burial grounds, in terms of landscapes and rural settlement – themes central to the (prolific) research of the volume editor – there are two specific contributions to highlight: first, an essay by Margarita Fernández Mier on archaeologies of landscapes and cultivated spaces, and, second, a compact discussion on definitions of and approaches to 'landscape' by José M<sup>a</sup> Martín Civantos. The former paper (valuably longer than most other contributions in the volume, and with an extended bibliography) is especially useful in coverage of the input of rescue archaeology to opening eyes to the range and spread of habitats and in outlining how techniques more widely have developed, learning from other countries, such as in geoarchaeology, field survey, ethnoarchaeology and also placename analysis. She includes a set of thematic considerations, drawing on diverse examples from the Balearics, Galicia and Catalonia especially, centred on 'hydraulic archaeology', villages, farms and field-systems, and desertion – combining to show, as she identifies in her abstract, how the diversity of work on rural or landscape archaeology in Spain 'is contributing to the

methodological renewal of medieval archaeology and is the most novel contribution of medieval Hispanic historiography today’.

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***Religion, Cults & Rituals in the Medieval Rural Environment.*** (Ruralia XI). Edited by Christiane Bis-Worch and Claudia Theune. 21 × 28 cm. 175 colour & b&w pls and figs, 8 tables. Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2017. ISBN 978-90-8890-486-8. Price: £60.00 pb.

This collection of 32 papers, from a conference in 2015, focuses ‘not on the Christianisation of rural society but rather on the relationship between the people and the religious sites where they practiced their beliefs whether they are Christian, Jewish, Muslim or pagan’. Overall the emphasis is on the Christian cultures of the Low Countries, Germany and northern France, though the contributions are wide-ranging over central to eastern Europe (plus one on the Near East and one on colonial America), and there are single contributions on Islam and Judaism.

Papers fall into four broad groups: ritual in the landscape; sacred sites and buildings in rural environments; modes of burial (notably burials in settlements and other non-standard locations); and vernacular ritual actions in houses, homesteads and fields. They constitute a quarry for fascinating data rather than an intellectually or thematically coherent work, and a more interventionist editorial policy would have tightened up the volume. Contributions are miscellaneous in character and length, ranging from substantial, well worked-out analyses to interim one-site reports; many are frustratingly brief, ending before points of wider interest are properly developed, and one cannot help feeling that some might have been cut to allow more space for the others. That said, there is much here that is of great interest.

The most original among the papers reveal some fundamental intellectual advances now in progress, which concentrate around two main themes. The first is a deepened understanding of the scope and physical remains of popular beliefs and rituals, expressed in deposits and marked symbols in the home, village and surrounding landscape. Early to high medieval ‘placed deposits’ in houses, as in studies here from Denmark and Hungary, are comparable to the Anglo-Saxon cases explored by Helena Hamerow and Clifford Sofield. After 1600 the material is much richer and more varied, and occurs both in houses (coins, written charms, shoes, mummified animals and so on) and in churches (as at Chur cathedral, where animal body-parts look like residues of glue-making and may have been conceived as ‘gluing’ the building together). The same goes for atropaic marks like daisy-wheels, hearts and crosses, illustrated here from examples across Continental Europe and in Dutch America, which seem remarkably international (Once again there is a very striking correspondence with the recent work on post-medieval English markings, which surprisingly is never mentioned here). Still more far-reaching is the recognition

in the wider late and post-medieval landscape of ritual sites and markings that, while not clerically sanctioned, were fully public and mainstream: the constructions and landmarks along the Compostela pilgrimage route, graffiti on the ‘Table des Bergers’ in the Auvergne, and coins left in the ‘Livs’ Offering Cave’ in Latvia. Papers on metal small-finds from the rural landscapes of Sweden (Elisabet Regner) and Brabant (Johan Verspay) are especially significant in their implications: they show how careful plotting of religious and magical objects (pilgrim badges, lead charms and crucifix images in the first case, amulets, reliquaries and even a chrismatory in the second) can put us on the track of evanescent rituals in the open air, across the whole spectrum from official processions to folk-magic. How fascinating it would be to apply these approaches to the vastly greater resources of England’s Portable Antiquities Scheme!

The second theme is the treatment of those dead (a great many more than one might suppose) who did not receive conventional churchyard burial. The forms taken by burial outside churchyards could be honorific, like the distinctive Iberian rock-cut graves that may have expressed the territorial claims of local lineages, or merciful, like the extraordinary pilgrimage site at Oberbüren in Switzerland where, after a miracle in 1485, stillborn babies were miraculously but fleetingly revived for baptism and seemly burial. More often, individuals of criminal life or potentially vampiric afterlife were disposed of in varied, sometimes bizarre, ways after execution or posthumous mutilation. Examples here from Hungary and Croatia (which incidentally might profitably be compared with the Wharram Percy deposit of fire-damaged bones currently being studied) illustrate deep ambiguities. Where did the boundaries lie between powerful, dangerous and noxious, and did they map onto the official doctrinal boundary between saved and damned? Why were undesirables sometimes buried within the core of the village, sometimes on the furthest margins of its territory? Should some of these cases be understood as a specific category of supernaturally-charged ‘special deposits’ – one comprising human remains – rather than burials in the normal sense?

The exciting prospect opened up by such papers is the breaching of boundaries in time, place and social class that are generally taken for granted. Rather than a gulf between ‘clerical’ and ‘folkloric’, there was a continuum from formal liturgies to popular practices that were open and acknowledged, even if hardly ever written about. Rather than confined to houses or villages, those practices extended out into fields and wider landscapes, where traces of them may yet be found. And rather than cut short by Reformation or even industrialisation, they were amazingly resilient: in 2015, a young farmer near Ribe in Denmark – where votive deposits from the eighth century onwards have been excavated – kept in his attic a naturally mummified calf, killed by lightning, on the grounds that lightning never strikes the same place twice (p. 339). If such recent practices, with their overt materiality, are only now being studied, how much must still fall below the radar of medievalists?

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***Quarrying in Cumbria.*** By David Johnson. 17 × 24 cm. 96 pp, 180 (unnumbered) colour and b&w pls and figs. Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2018. ISBN 978-1-4456-7246-5. Price: £14.99 pb.

The Lake District was inscribed on the World Heritage list in 2017 as a cultural landscape, whose key attributes relate to a unique natural landscape which has been shaped by a distinctive system of agro-pastoral agriculture and local industries. This book is concerned with the latter and is a successor to the author's *Quarrying in the Yorkshire Pennines: An Illustrated History* (2017), which is really the role this slim volume fulfils for Cumbria. More has been written about mining than quarrying in the area, but the landscape and the building materials used for settlements owe a great deal to the variety of rocks derived from this area of mainly ancient geology.

After a brief introduction come the photographs, mostly modern and in colour but with some historic b&w images, interspersed with some aerial views, maps and plans. They are arranged in chapters by topic, all with extended captions, and deal mainly with various types of rock obtained, particularly slate, granite, sandstone and limestone, with later chapters on quarry infrastructure, stone processing and the transport of materials in a mountainous landscape. It is a pity that some of the images are too small to be really effective, but for its size the book gives a good taster of an industry which was widespread in Cumbria and which affected the landscape on both a small and large scale.

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***Lime Kilns. History and Heritage.*** By David Johnson. 17 × 24 cm. 96 pp, 100 colour and b&w pls and figs. Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2018. ISBN 978-1-4456-8059-0. Price: £14.99 pb.

Lime kilns are probably the largest class of surviving field monument, even though many are now in a ruinous condition. The use of burnt lime for lime mortar, plaster and limewash goes back to the Roman period and even medieval low-status houses had lime mixed with cow dung and horsehair to strengthen walls. The importance given to the industry is illustrated by the number of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century artists who chose to include lime kilns in operation in their paintings, as this book points out, as their depictions can often be very atmospheric.

David Johnson is a recognised authority on lime kilns, particularly those of the Yorkshire Pennines. He deals here with the various types of kilns used from the medieval period onwards, including modern continuous kilns which are still in use. The geographical coverage is wide, drawing also on a few continental examples for comparison. Such was the importance of lime that kilns were not only situated in areas where limestone was found but along coasts and in ports and harbours in order to provide burnt lime where it was needed. The book is illustrated extensively with good colour images as well as a selection of plans and cross-sections of kiln types, but it is more than a picture book. The final section deals with lime kilns as heritage, in which the author illustrates the difference between the large number of ruinous structures, even though the sites might be listed, and those which have been conserved as important elements of the landscape. Quite a few of these are coastal kilns, such as those at Seahouses and Beadnell in Northumberland, but others are still associated with their original quarries, like the battery of kilns at Pant in Shropshire which was fed with stone from the nearby Llanymynech Quarry.

In sum, this is a very useful book.

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