

X.—REVIEWS

- 1.—*Map of Monastic Britain, North and South Sheets*, published by the Ordnance Survey, Chessington, Surrey, 1950, mounted and folded with explanatory text 7s. 6d. each; paper flat 2s. 6d. each.

This map which has been compiled by our member, Mr. R. Neville Hadcock, and drawn under the supervision of Mr. O. G. S. Crawford, adds one more to the series of national period maps which have now been published by the Ordnance Survey. It equals and in some respects surpasses the high standards of cartography which we have long since learnt to associate with the Ordnance Survey in general and with the name of Mr. Crawford in particular. Drawn to a scale of approximately ten miles to one inch and with the division between the two sheets running east and west from a point a little north of Scarborough to Ravenglass, they embrace the whole of the British Isles, with the exception of Ireland. Their purpose is to show the locality and nature of the various religious houses which existed from A.D. 1066 until the Reformation. The Norman Conquest provides a convenient initial date for the whole area covered by the map, but the varying progress of the Reformation in different parts of the British Isles has required the selection of three different terminal dates, 1540 for the south and midlands of England, 1547 for the north, and the second half of the sixteenth century for Scotland.

Each of the two sheets of the map is prefaced with an explanatory text appropriate to its area with brief historical notes on the various kinds of religious houses and a short bibliography, and each has a combined gazetteer with map

reference to the national grid system. The gazetteer contains some 2,200 names, an aggregate which is in itself a sufficient indication of the labour involved in its compilation, but the mere assembly of names has been only a small part of Mr. Hadcock's work. He set himself the task of presenting as fully as his medium allowed what is no less than a cartographical history of the monastic order in Britain. In order to achieve this task he has had to devise a reference system containing no fewer than 64 distinct symbols, each of which may be represented in three different sizes. It would be idle to pretend that a system so complex as this can enable the reader to detect at a glance the relative distribution of the different kinds of religious houses in the way that he can observe the distribution of villas on the map of Roman Britain or of pagan cemeteries on the map of Dark Age Britain, yet the comparison is hardly a fair one because of the much greater complexity of monastic Britain. Newcastle itself may serve as a good example of the amount of information conveyed. Here ten symbols and two figures indicate that the city contained one house of Augustinian canons, one house each of Austin, Carmelite and Dominican friars, one of Crutched friars, one of the lesser orders of friars, one of Benedictine nuns, one of Trinitarians, 12 hospices and four religious foundations of lesser importance. In addition we can learn that two of the friaries had ceased to exist before 1500 and that the Augustinian canons though moderately well endowed were less wealthy than the canons at Hexham or the Benedictines at Tynemouth. The more closely this map is studied the greater will be the admiration both for the ingenuity of Mr. Hadcock and the skill of the typographer. Moreover, the value of the whole map is greatly increased by the system of overprinting in black type on a background which shows the place-names and communications of modern Britain in grey. The traveller can thus see at once the relation of any particular monastic site to modern topography.

The south sheet of the map was originally printed and

ready for issue in 1939, but the whole stock was destroyed by enemy action. To quote from the Foreword: "This delay, regrettable in other respects, has given an opportunity for a complete overhaul of the map, and as it appears to-day it is virtually a second edition." There are no doubt still some errors to be corrected, some additions and alterations to be made. These will come to light as the map is used and studied by those who have particular local knowledge. Anyone who may discover such errors will be performing a valuable service if he sends his information either direct to Mr. Hadcock or to the Archæology Officer, Ordnance Survey, Chessington, Surrey, so that it may be used in a later edition. Meanwhile those who are interested in monastic studies will be glad to know that Mr. Hadcock is collaborating with Professor Knowles in a new and substantially enlarged version of Professor Knowles's work *The Religious Houses of Mediaeval England*, first published in 1939. It is hoped that this work, which will describe the various religious foundations and give particulars of all the houses named on the map, will be published in a few months. The Society may well take pride in this notable contribution to medieval studies by one of its own members.

PETER HUNTER BLAIR.

2.—*A History of Newcastle upon Tyne*, by R. J. Charleton.
5 in. × 7¼ in., 476 pp., frontis., Newcastle upon Tyne.
Harold Hill and Son Ltd., 1950, price 10s. 6d.

It is perhaps unfortunate that the purchaser of this reprint is not more clearly warned that it is an historical description of Newcastle as it existed in 1882. The innocent foreigner who takes it for his guide in "Festival Year" will have some surprises. In vain will he seek the counsel of Dr. Collingwood Bruce "who still continues to pursue his

labours", nor will he find in the Close the ancient civic Mansion House already "sadly the worse for wear". If he accepts the statement that the upper part of Pilgrim Street has "an air of seclusion and quietude . . . old-fashioned, sleepy, and respectable" he may find himself a patient at the Infirmary but *not* at Forth Banks!

It would be tedious to mention the many other places where the past tense should have replaced the present, the real interest of the book is as an historical record of Newcastle as it existed in 1882 coupled with an ample summary of its previous history. The older parts of the town are taken street by street, described as then existing, and given a running accompaniment of facts about their former appearance and the historical events connected with them. As a compendium of historical facts about Newcastle this book is never likely to be excelled and like the "sheep's heid" it contains "a hantle o' guid confused feeding".

There is a good historical introduction and excellent chapters on the Trade Guilds, on the Coal Trade, on Some Notable People of Newcastle, and also on Some Peculiar People of Newcastle; the latter not the least interesting part of the book. Charleton must have spent an immense amount of labour in compiling this history and it is to be hoped that some day it may be revised and brought up to date: even as it is the volume is very good value for its modest price.

H. L. HONEYMAN.

- 3.—*Newcastle upon Tyne. Its Growth and Achievement*, by S. Middlebrook, M.A. *Newcastle Journal and North Mail*, Kemsley House, Newcastle upon Tyne.

Mr. Middlebrook is to be congratulated on his valuable and authoritative book. To write the story of any town from its beginnings must so often be a thankless task, but

here the author has produced no mediocre work of history. It is written in a crisp, concise manner and is very readable. Too little has been known about the modern history of Newcastle upon Tyne and the documentary evidence of its more recent growth has been scanty enough. One has only to read through the list of the many acknowledgments made and authorities quoted to realize that the author has not been content with the more usual authorities, but must have made a thorough investigation into more unusual sources and documents.

Many of those Novocastrians who imagine that they know their city, will pause in their reading with the old (and so often true) "I never knew that". So often what "we know" is the remembrance of a childhood visit to the Black Gate, the Castle or Trinity House, and a vague idea as to the position of the town walls. There is now no need to plead ignorance, and we owe a great debt to Mr. Middlebrook for presenting to us many facts hitherto unknown to the man in the street.

The author logically enough begins at the beginning, when Hadrian's legions arrived in the North. These first chapters are possibly the least interesting, not that the matter is without value, far from that, the story of the "Wall" and of ancient Northumbria is still full of interest. However, one does feel that the earlier history of the North is known to the majority of us, and Mr. Middlebrook has wisely left us with whatever knowledge we may or may not possess.

With chapter five, "Newcastle upon Tyne in the later Middle Ages", the book comes more alive, and in consequence the writing is more vivid. Any suggestion of dullness disappears. Here we find the formation of the Guilds, the Borough Charter, description of the medieval town, its churches and inhabitants. The ecclesiastics, the monasteries of the Black and Grey Friars and the Nunnery of St. Bartholomew are all described. Of the commencement of coal mining, more might have been written, since it has played such a vital part in the history of the North—although in

subsequent chapters shipping and mining are much in evidence.

With Tudor times, the Civil War, and the later Stuarts comes not only the birth of modern England, but the birth of modern Newcastle. During this time of change the town found itself in much the same situation as the majority of English towns. Prosperity, however, was there and it is interesting to read of the leasing of coal mines, of the building of the merchants' houses and of the newer town. The author, unlike many historians, is not without a certain romantic streak and is able to make the period live. There are many descriptions of houses and the places where they stood. Possibly Newcastle was then at the height of its beauty, with its wealth of open spaces, gardens, fine buildings, and the colourful life of the Quayside. Sir William Bretherton was no doubt quite correct when he described the town as "Beyond all compare, the fairest and richest city in England, inferior for wealth and buildings to no city save London and Bristol". Alas that these glories should have faded into the morass of the Industrial Revolution.

To those who idealize the eighteenth century, and there are many to whom it appears as the "age of elegance" (dreaming no doubt of the glories of Paine and Adam), it would be well to remember that it was not entirely a time of "elegance". Parts of Newcastle must indeed have been far from fair, for the account runs that "the vacant ground at the head of Dog Loup Stairs was used as a common receptacle of filth", there was no municipal drainage nor cleansing department. The author writes at length of this period and his treatment of it is admirable, for the eighteenth century is too often judged on its artistic merits alone. There is something different here and one can feel the pulsating growth of a great industrial centre.

"Industrialism on Tyneside", and the following chapters will prove of great interest and enjoyment to those whose lives are lived on the banks of Tyne. How few really know when the "Works" or "Yards" were first started or any-

thing of the building of the great railway system around their town. Statistics have been gathered from almost every source, and one reads with amazement this wealth of documentary evidence. Nothing has been missed, and by the mid-nineteenth century the names in commerce are as familiar as they are to-day.

Public Health, Housing and Education have not been neglected. The stories of the founding of the various schools of Newcastle is written in a generous and unbiased manner. Sport and leisure are equally and adequately given their share in the story, and again facts and figures lose their dullness in Mr. Middlebrook's pages.

The book is well illustrated with fifty-seven plates from old engravings, maps, plans and photographs, many of which show unusual aspects of the city. It is to be hoped that it will have a wider field of distribution than only a local one. To too many people Newcastle is merely a hurried vision of smoke-encrusted buildings seen with tired eyes through the window of north- and southbound trains. Mr. Middlebrook's book will do much to dispel these ideas of the town being another dirty and drab industrial city.

One's only regret after reading it is the fact that the publishers should have allowed such a valuable book to be printed on such poor paper—its format is not worthy of the subject nor of its author—it deserved something much better.

W. RYLE ELLIOT.

- 4.—*The Infirmary, Newcastle upon Tyne, 1751-1951*, by W. E. Hume. Printed for private circulation by Andrew Reid & Co., Ltd. 1951.

Two centuries of the beneficent work of the Royal Victoria Infirmary is recorded by our member Dr. W. E. Hume for the Bicentenary Committee of the Infirmary. Dr.

Hume was an honorary physician of the Infirmary for nearly forty years—"himself not least but honoured of them all"—and is therefore peculiarly well fitted to write this interesting history. It need hardly be said that the book is written in a clear, readable, scholarly style and that its paper, type, illustration and general format are all excellent—though the present reviewer does not like the glitter of art paper for the printed text.

Dr. Hume begins at the beginning with an account of the small house in Gallowgate which, on 23rd May, 1751, was opened with great pomp and circumstance by the then Mayor. He then traces the history of the infirmary through its different buildings and additions on the Forth Banks to its present and final situation upon The Leazes. This historical account is illustrated by a plan of Newcastle upon Tyne in 1802, by views of the buildings in their various stages at the Forth, ending with an aerial view of the R.V.I. showing clearly its various buildings and its fine situation with ample room for further expansion when needed.

The life of such an institution consists not only nor chiefly in fine buildings skilfully planned, but much more in the work of the men who have given their learning and skill to curing or alleviating the ills of their fellow-men. To many, therefore, the most delightful part of this book will be the short biographies and portraits of many of the physicians and surgeons who for two hundred years have worked for the infirmary. These begin with Richard Lambert (1751-79), of whom no portrait is known, and end with James Rutherford Morrison (1888-1924).

Dr. Hume has gleaned well with much patient labour of research, the result is a worthy memorial for the bicentenary of the R.V.I.

C.H.H.B.

5.—*Scottish Border Country*, by F. R. Banks. B. T. Batsford Ltd. "Face of Britain Series." Illustrated. 1951. 12s. 6d.

According to *Chambers Etymological Dictionary* the word "scottish" is an adjective, its definition being "pertaining to Scotland, its people, or language". Modern novelists, like modern artists, are only too often apt to mislead their public by the titles of their works. The high sounding phrases on the dust covers must surely on occasions be drawn "out of a hat", and the almost unrecognizable group of trees becomes, in title, a psychological abstraction. The historian, or geographer, however, should have no cause for such subtle ambiguity, his way is clear, or ought to be. It is, therefore, strange to find a publication, especially in the "Face of Britain Series", a wolf in sheep's clothing. The "Border" Country, yes, but the "Scottish Border Country", no! Few Northumbrians would readily acquiesce to be called Scotsmen, but Mr. Banks may be among the many, and there are many, who believe that all north of Tyne are Scotsmen.

In his earlier chapters he makes a curious statement, curious to be found in a book with such a title. "Little may be said at this stage about the Scottish side of the Border . . . it has been more often visited, and more frequently described, and consequently is much better known." Why then write about it at all? Of the eighty-three illustrations (beginning with the famous view of Alnwick Castle painted in 1757 by Canaletto) only eighteen, and amongst these eighteen, four views of Berwick-on-Tweed, portray any place north of Tweed and the Border line.

Mr. Banks, however, writes in a gay and entertaining way, perhaps a trifle haphazard in his journeyings from place to place. He alternates from passages of sheer beauty, to a heavy and ponderous guide book manner. His peregrinations in the North will amuse the Northumbrian, too often does he go round in circles, and his distances between points have a delightful vagueness. Nevertheless, he invariably puts

us on the right road, and, lest we ignorant be caught out, is most careful to tell us the correct pronunciation of the common place-names.

This grand tour of the Scottish Border begins at Alnwick. His account of this town is entertaining, if sketchy, and from a purely "tourist" point of view entirely readable. Supposedly the average traveller cares little whether the castle is a "motte and bailey" type or not, nor whether the "crest" of the Percy family is a lion *rampant* or a lion *statant*, which it is, the lion *rampant* being the charge upon their shield. Do not suppose for one instant that the author does not know his Northumbrian history. He has obviously worked hard, and delved, but not deeply enough. He has, and this is only too plain, a great love and admiration for the North, a fact which softens many a literary blow.

There are delightful descriptions of Hulne Priory, and the great park at Chillingham. From Warkworth, a convenient starting point for the exploration of the Northumbrian coast, we indulge in a breezy guide book dash to Berwick. Ever reluctant to enter Scotland proper, we take the English side of Tweed to Norham. Here we are confused by the statement: "It was detached from the County of Northumberland and belonged to Durham Cathedral, thus forming a part of the County Palatine of Durham." It was not the prior and convent but the Bishop of Durham who as earl or lord palatine (not prince) with his council, governed the county of Norham which included the shires of Norham and Island. He appointed its sheriffs, justices, coroners and other officials and was responsible for the upkeep and defence of his castle of Norham.

At Flodden the memorial was placed on the most suitable site, to command a view-point of the battlefield. The giant stone reputed to have been set up at the place where the king was slain, stands about a mile north-north-west of the memorial itself.

Only at Carham Burn do we really arrive on the "Scottish" border, from here the road apparently climbs up to

Maxwell Heugh—at the end of the fifth mile it does. The actual description of the Scottish side is commonplace, with visits to the more obvious and recognized tourist centres. In these chapters, strangely enough, the author is at his driest and dreariest. It would seem that he really longed once more to recross the dividing line, and is if anything a little too unsure of his countryside. This is a pity, for although much has been written about these parts, the ground is far from exhausted.

Returning to the Cheviots, the Roman camps and Tyne-dale, the tension is eased, and the text consequently becomes more readable. He is here at home more than in any other part of the book. Perhaps he has spent more time amongst the hills than elsewhere. There is a leisureliness here, which is missing in the rest of the book, the quietness of the hills has not been without effect. The last chapters unfortunately have a guide book flavour and Mr. Banks tends to peter out a trifle lamely on the shores of the Solway.

As is usual with Messrs. Batsford's publications this book is beautifully produced. The dust cover by Brian Cook is excellent, and the illustrations beyond reproach. Easy to read and enjoyable provided that one does not care to dig too deeply, but why—oh why, the "Scottish" Border Country?

W. RYLE ELLIOT.

NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

Should another edition of this book be required, it would be desirable to correct the statement on page 22, that the Great Whin Sill forms "the Ottercaps, Simonside and moors of Rothbury Forest". These are all of the sedimentary rocks known as Fell Sandstone. It should also be noted that the *mottes* (e.g. the Mote Hills at Elsdon) of early Norman mound and bailey castles were not connected in any way nor at any time with Saxon moots.

C.H.H.B.