

## REVIEWS

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James Crow, *Book of Housesteads* (Batsford/English Heritage 1995), pp. 126, ill. 96 pls 12. Price £14.99 (limp). ISBN (cased) 0 7134 6081 4; (limp) 0 7134 6085 7.

The collaboration of Batsford and English Heritage has produced a stream of well-illustrated books on individual archaeological sites, categories of sites, and historical periods. This is a notable addition to the series, which has given Mr. Crow, author of the latest guide to Housesteads, the opportunity to expand his coverage of the site in illustration and in word. Some of the old photographs are of particular interest. This is both an excellent introduction to the site, and a thought-provoking survey for those who think they know Housesteads. The building and builders, the fort's anatomy in the second century, the name and garrisons, civilians, and the anatomy of the fort in the third and fourth centuries, are all covered. The final two chapters on the post-Roman history of the site and the process by which it became known and finally protected have a special interest.

Two interesting suggestions regarding the site may be picked out. The first concerns the enigmatic building XV, immediately north of the *via praetoria*, on the right as one enters the east gate. This he interprets as a store-house (79–81), securely dated A.D. 270, and by a process of elimination of other possibilities attributes to it a fragmentary inscription of the late third or early fourth century, *RIB* 1613, drawing attention to its rich ornament as unique in Britain (77f.). Later at the end of the first of two fascinating chapters on later Roman Housesteads he suggests building XV

was linked to the *annona militaris*, a system of taxation and distribution in kind operating from the third century. The argument is forceful, but more evidence is needed.

Another hypothesis concerns a building partly excavated by Bosanquet at the end of the nineteenth century. It was a small apsidal building, to the north of which lay a water tank with a stone cist inside it, aligned east–west. The author suggests, with due caution, the possibility that this is a church with a western apse, and a Christian burial close by. Apses are not uncommon in Roman buildings, so Mr. Crow's caution is justified; again it is something to bear in mind, particularly if further exploration becomes a possibility.

There is a difficulty here which becomes more pronounced as the author turns his attention to broader topics. Serious consideration of such possibilities requires treatment in a learned journal, where there is ample space and the possibility exists to cite parallels and discussions elsewhere in the footnotes. It cannot be done adequately in the Batsford–English Heritage format; it is not intended to be. This applies with peculiar force to two important questions raised by the author among many others. First, he questions whether the conventional view that the decision to place forts on the line of Hadrian's Wall was an afterthought is correct, arguing that forts would have been needed from the beginning. Yet he apparently accepts the well-known evidence that to build the forts required the dismantling or drastic modification of work already begun (20f.). Again, he questions spiritedly the view that the civil settlements were for the families of the soldiers, disputing whether any special arrangements for these would be made (72f.). Yet he finds no

space to discuss the evidence from elsewhere, notably the study by S. Sommer (cited though misspelt in the bibliography) that there are early indications that the civil settlement was allocated space from early on in fort planning and at Lauriacum was surveyed on the same lines as the legionary base. It is not clear whom he imagines living in the strip-houses and forming the *vicani* of Housesteads, a self-governing community, if veterans are excluded (72f.). In both cases a more extended discussion in a learned journal is clearly desirable.

This relates in turn to another stimulating discussion of "chalets", where he rejects any evidence for a massive reduction in the number of soldiers living in Housesteads in the third and fourth centuries. In denying there is clear evidence he is no doubt correct, but a discussion can hardly take place without citing the evidence frequently quoted for a general reduction in the establishment of units in the late period (92).

This is part of a certain weakness in the handling of written evidence, contrasting with the sure touch on the archaeological. The identifications of possible relatives of two commanders at Housesteads lacks the caution with which they are suggested in A. R. Birley, *People of Roman Britain*, the presumed source (61). In particular Aelius Modestus has a combination of names so common that any identification not backed up by closeness of date and social context must be suspect. It is not clear that *Brittunculi* refers to enemies of Rome, and not recruits (15, 76) and *Coria* is not yet certainly Corbridge (57). It is disappointing to find the old canard about inscriptions recording 'destruction through old age' concealing enemy action; Welsby, *AA* fifth series, viii, 89–94 (1980) places the burden of proof of this squarely on those who assert it (88). The interpretation of *c. l* attached to a unit, unique in the empire, as meaning "possessing Latin rights" is highly dubious (57). Anicius Ingenuus as a *medicus ordinarius* could well be a doctor of centurion rank, rather than a medical orderly (51). On a lower level *principia* is a plural noun, so *principiae* does not exist (47), and *intervallum*, not *intravallum*, is the correct

form (118). The translation of *ala* as "wing" is a clumsy literalism which is best discarded (27, 118).

There are a few printing errors, of which the dating of the possible re-use of the terraces, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries on 102, but twelfth and thirteenth centuries on illustration 48, and the excavation photograph, ill. 75, dated 1931 in the caption but 1932 in the text (40), are the most serious.

This is a most valuable and stimulating contribution to Wall studies, which deserves detailed study and regular updating. We also look forward to Mr. Crow having the opportunity to take up some of the important points he makes here and give them the full academic treatment they deserve.

BRIAN DOBSON

*The Desperate Faction? The Jacobites in North-East England, 1688–1745*, by Leo Gooch. 228pp., xiv prelims, bibliography, Appendix—Nominal Lists, map, illustrations. Hull University Press and Lampada Press, £11.95. ISBN 0 85958 636 7.

The circumstances of the 1715 and 1745 Risings have long been lost in the mists of romantic fiction surrounding the Jacobite cause. Several entrenched myths about the part played by Northumbrian families in the two Risings, and the 1715 in particular, are effectively demolished in this thorough study, based largely on unpublished source material, of the planning, the personalities, the strategy and progress of the campaign itself, and the effect of defeat on the Jacobite families involved.

Dr. Gooch first traces the origins, development and strength of the movement before bringing out the central but overlooked importance of the Northumbrian Jacobites in the strategy of the 1715 Rising. An Anglo-Franco-Scottish army was to form in Northumberland, seize Newcastle and so gain control of London's fuel supply, then sweep south to take the capital and place Prince James Edward on

the throne usurped from his father in 1688. The proceedings of the Northumbrian Jacobites have, however, been universally disparaged, and their leaders, Thomas Forster and the Earl of Derwentwater, have been made the scapegoats in history for the Rising.

While the Government had advance knowledge of many aspects of the planned Rising, the cause was by no means doomed when the small party, led by Derwentwater and his brother Charles, rode out from Dilston to meet Forster's men at Waterfalls Farm, near Greenriggs on 6 October. Dr. Gooch reveals that their campaign in Northumberland was not a succession of indecisive meanderings but followed a logical sequence of delaying tactics until the promised main Jacobite force could be assembled. From the author's research, we now know what was going on behind the scenes in the counsels of the Government and the Jacobite command, information which was totally lacking to those who had so gallantly raised the Stuart standard, and we can follow the tragic but inevitable course of events.

The Northumbrian Catholics were not, it appears, motivated by economic factors and, surprisingly, none of the landed families involved, apart from the Radcliffes, were ruined financially. In fact, many convicted rebels returned home to conduct a remarkably aggressive campaign to avoid the forfeiture of their estates, while others escaped abroad to continue their subversive activities. The fascinating story of this vexatious state of affairs between the two Risings is told here for the first time. The House of Hanover was not yet secure when the North once again figured in the Jacobite

Rising of 1745. However, though the military campaign threatened at one stage to be fought in the North East, no Northumbrian families were involved, except for the hapless Charles Radcliffe, convicted for his part in the 1715, who was captured at sea and executed following the second Rising. Dr. Gooch, indeed, shows how detached the Northumbrian families became in the succeeding years from their erstwhile attachment to the Stuart cause until it came to be of little more than sentimental and antiquarian interest.

Dr. Gooch convinces the reader that Northumbrian Jacobitism, particularly in the 1715 Rising, had a much greater significance than has hitherto been understood, and he thus restores the subject to national, Northumbrian and Catholic historiography. His book makes compulsive reading to all whose interest in the period has been stimulated by the dual anniversaries in 1995.

The book itself is well printed and produced and, in addition to the main text, it has a map of the North East, illustrations, a full bibliography, extensive notes and references, nominal lists of the Jacobite gentlemen and the three hundred or so "followers or servants", and a detailed index. Thus, Dr. Gooch happily combines an absorbing story for the uninitiated, a well documented study for the historian, and the tantalizing prospect of opportunities for further local research. Considering the high price of many academic books today, this book returns the reader with a rich reward for a modest outlay.

ROBIN GARD

