Reviews

CYRIL FOX: ARCHAEOLOGIST EXTRAORDINARY. By Charles Scott-Fox. 240 pp. 95 illustrations. Oxbow Books, Oxford, 2002. ISBN 1 84217 080 5. £25.00

Cyril Fox was one of the most influential archaeologists of the twentieth century, and this excellent biography of him is greatly to be welcomed. It is a work of filial piety written by Charles Scott-Fox, Cyril's eldest son by his second wife Aileen. The author wrote under a double handicap — first, he was born when his father was 51 years old, which meant that he had no personal experience of his father's early life; secondly, much of his father's art work and photographic record was not available as source material, since it had been destroyed shortly after his death. Christopher Chippendale observes in his preface that this biography was not written by a fellow archaeologist, but by a former naval officer turned hotelier, who looked at archaeology and its practitioners with a certain detachment.

Cyril Fox was born in 1882 at Chippenham, Wiltshire, the eldest of four children in a middle-class Victorian household. His father, Charles Fox, imparted to his son an interest in the countryside and its antiquities, but it was much later and by a circuitous route that Cyril embarked on an archaeological career. After attending a preparatory school, Cyril went to Christ's Hospital Newgate, the Blue Coat School in London, leaving at the age of sixteen. His father decided that an open-air occupation was best for him, so he and his brother were apprenticed to a market gardener, first at Lowestoft and later at Worthing.

At Worthing a chance meeting in a thunderstorm with an investigator from the Royal Commission on Bovine Tuberculosis, Dr Louis Cobbett, proved a turning point in young Cyril's career. Dr Cobbett was impressed by Cyril's knowledge of Downland antiquities and saw in him an individual of university calibre. To help him change direction he offered him a post in the Commission as a clerk, but Fox was unwilling to leave his far more lucrative horticultural occupation. Cobbett assured him there would be opportunities to improve his education and prospect, so Fox relented and began at the laboratories at Blythwood in 1903, remaining there for seven years until the Commission was wound up. Meanwhile, he also had time for his main interest — archaeology.

In 1907 Fox joined the Essex Yeomanry, a volunteer part-time force, as a trooper. This gave him proficiency in reading maps and assessing terrain from a military standpoint. It may be remarked that many archaeologists have profited from their exposure to military training. After all, much of history and archaeology is concerned with war.

On the demise of the Commission Dr Cobbett persuaded the University of Cambridge to continue research into animal-born diseases by setting up a new laboratory in its School of Agriculture and he invited Fox to become its Superintendent. Fox explored the surrounding area on his bicycle with the help and encouragement of Dr Cobbett, and his hobby crystallised into a serious study of the antiquities of the region.

With his service in the Yeomanry behind him, Fox naturally wanted to make some military contribution when war broke out. In 1914 he applied for a commission with the Cambridge University Officers' Training Corps and was gazetted 2nd Lieutenant. A bout of pneumonia restricted him to Home Service, so he continued to mix military and agricultural duties with archaeological research at Cambridge.

In 1914 another chance meeting was to change Fox's life on the domestic front. Through the good offices of his sister Babs he was invited to spend a holiday at Steyning vicarage in Sussex. There he fell in love with the vicar's daughter, Olive Congreve-Pridgeon, and the pair were married in Steyning church in 1916.

When Fox saw that his post with the Field Laboratories would soon come to an end, he was fired with ambition to take a degree at the university and specialise in archaeology. In October 1919 he entered Magdalene College, Cambridge as a Fellow Commoner, a status above that of undergraduate. British archaeology in those days had scarcely emerged from the antiquarian stage, a leisurely hobby of the well-to-do. Fox saw that great changes in approach were needed, particularly in recording stratigraphy and in relating finds and sites to time, local topography and the wider geography. He applied these principles in his own study, *The Archaeology of the Cambridge Region*, which he presented as a thesis in 1922 and published the following year. For this work he was awarded a Ph.D. It may seem odd that a person with no previous university training should go straight to a doctorate, but it indicated the high quality of his work and was made possible by a curious regulation applicable to mature students, called Regulation One. His research made a huge impression on the archaeological world and established him as an outstanding fieldworker, excavator and innovator. He was elected Kingsley Bye-Fellow of his college, Magdalene, and Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London.

Realising that there were no prospects of promotion at Cambridge, he began to look elsewhere. In 1924 he applied for the post of Keeper of Antiquities at the National Museum of Ireland in Dublin. At his interview he was told he had been selected. However, a constitutional difficulty arose between the Royal Irish Academy, which had conducted the interview, and the Minister of Education who had to ratify the appointment, and the whole effort came to nothing, much to Fox's annoyance.

However, another national museum was waiting in the wings to secure Dr Fox's services. At Cardiff, the National Museum of Wales, founded (on paper) in 1907, was now gradually taking physical shape, though only in 1922 was any part of it ready for the public to see. It happened that another energetic pioneer in archaeology, Mortimer Wheeler, had become Keeper of Archaeology there in 1920 and he was well aware of Fox's qualities. When Wheeler was promoted Director in 1924, he determined to secure Fox as his successor in the Archaeology Department. There is more than one version of what exactly happened, but Dr Fox was eventually appointed Keeper of Archaeology at the National Museum of Wales and, in parallel, Lecturer in Archaeology in the University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire. In addition, Wheeler persuaded the Board of Celtic Studies of the University of Wales to award Fox a special grant for the study of that enigmatic earthwork, so significant to the Welsh, Offa's Dyke.

Fox moved with his wife and two daughters to Cardiff ready to begin his new post in January 1925. It was a complex and potentially frustrating assignment — masses of specimens to sort, displays to arrange, lectures to prepare not only for the College, but also for numerous societies and organisations in Wales, who expected a pastoral service from their national institution; there were excavations to conduct, and on top of everything, the survey of Offa's Dyke.

From now on the story will be more familiar to Cambrians, especially from the pages of *Archaeologia Cambrensis*. Volume II of the *Index (1901–1960)* contains no less than 90 citations of Fox's work and activities, and indeed this Journal proved indispensable in making his achievements known. Academics were profoundly influenced not just by the huge amount of new archaeological information which he brought to light, but by the insight with which he studied his finds and by the overarching theories and generalisations which followed. His first major work of synthesis was *The Personality of Britain* (1932). This expounded a quite new way of looking at the prehistory and history of Britain by recognising the dominant influences of geology, soil, elevation, climate and geography on early man. Britain comprised two main zones: Highland and Lowland, divided diagonally by the line of the Fosse Way. New influences, cultural and military, tended to arrive from the east — the European mainland — though the Irish Sea played its part at times. 'Invasion and replacement' was the characteristic of the east of Britain, and ëfusion and continuity' of the west. This gave a meaningful pattern to many apparently fortuitous

episodes of the past. Since Fox's time it has been realised that this was an oversimplification, but at that time it broke the mould of old ideas and led to new thinking. The thesis was based on distribution maps, many of them prepared by a talented amateur archaeologist, Lily F. Chitty of Shropshire, who at the time received less than due credit for her contribution.

The urge to find a synthesis affected all Fox's work. Having published reports on his field survey of Offa's Dyke annually in *Archaeologia Cambrensis* from 1926 to 1931, Fox gave a reasoned conspectus of the Mercian frontier in *The Boundary Line of Cymru* (1941). He wrote *Pattern and Purpose* (1959), which found unifying ideas among the abstract designs on Iron Age artefacts classed as 'Celtic Art'. His excavations of Bronze Age burials were brought together in *Life and Death in the Bronze Age* (1959). He was prepared, unusually, to make an imaginative — but well-informed — guess at the kind of ceremonies which would have attended the laying to rest of some Bronze Age chieftain or Dark Age worthy. His report *A Find of the Early Iron Age from Llyn Cerrig Bach, Anglesey* (1946) was more than a simple description of specimens. Another achievement was his *Monmouthshire Houses*, with Lord Raglan.

Fox was a stout supporter of the Cambrian Archaeological Association. A few members will still remember his appearances at summer meetings and the infectious enthusiasm with which he expounded whatever was his current topic. His single-minded vision was so convincing that no other point of view seemed possible. His vivacity endeared him to the Welsh and he was quick to make contact with people in all walks of life, a facility which helped him greatly in his survey of Offa's Dyke, which entailed invading the land of many owners and tenants.

Fox played an energetic role in many archaeological organisations within Wales and beyond. His extramural activities took his attention away from museum work, and the dilemma became more serious when he stepped into Mortimer Wheeler's shoes as Director of the National Museum when the latter left Cardiff for the London Museum in 1926. More curatorial staff were appointed as time went on: V. E. Nash-Williams in 1922, W. F. 'Peter' Grimes in 1926 and Iorwerth C. Peate in 1927. The last-named would be given the oversight of a special category within the Archaeology Department — 'Welsh Bygones', later to be renamed 'Folk Life', the precursor of the Welsh Folk Museum. Fox was glad to rely on the administrative skills of Captain 'Archie' Lee, the Museum Secretary, during his frequent absences. The author gives a perceptive and entertaining account of the rivalries, intrigues and dissensions of the curatorial staff.

Personal tragedy struck Fox in 1932, when his wife Olive was drowned in a bathing accident on a beach in Gower. It was a traumatic loss, and he found support from many quarters, and especially from Aileen Henderson of Kensington, a Cambridge graduate who had become deeply interested in archaeology. She filled the void, and the pair were married in 1933. Charles, the eldest of their three sons and author of this biography, was born in 1934. Aileen's life and career is described in her own autobiography, *Aileen — a Pioneering Archaeologist* (2000). Together the pair embarked on many archaeological investigations in Wales, and later, on Fox's retirement, in Devon.

Fox's ceaseless activity had taken its toll and by 1935, he suffered a serious illness, which prevented him from attending in person when recognition came in the form of a knighthood for services to archaeology. He was later honoured with a Fellowship of the British Academy. Though due for retirement in 1947, he stayed on for a year to complete the first phase of the Folk Museum project at St Fagans. He then retired to Exeter, where Aileen had accepted the post of lecturer in the University College.

Cyril Fox was a towering figure in the development of British archaeology — a pioneer in methodology, a versatile excavator, an original thinker and a superb draughtsman and calligrapher. He was equally at home among Bronze Age barrows or Welsh vernacular houses. He deserves the gratitude

of Wales for his success in developing its national museum, and also for inaugurating the Welsh Folk Museum.

Penarth DONALD MOORE

GLANMOR WILLIAMS: A LIFE. By Glanmor Williams. 207 pp. 18 illustrations. University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 2002. ISBN 0 7083 1745 6. £14.99.

Glanmor Williams' book prompts the question 'should historians simply be clinical observers and recorders of the historical process (as some might assert), or can they become involved in activities which will actually change the course of the history they observe?'. There is no doubt that the present narrative provides a resounding 'yes' to the second part of the question, without compromising the research itself. If the good works of a historian can change history, so be it. Here is one of the foremost academic historians of Wales who has not only added many volumes to our bookshelves, but also played an active part in organisations which change the way we live by offering new opportunities to the man and woman in the street. This autobiography gives a fascinating insight into the motivation of an individual, the interplay of personalities, the politics of institutions — and the accidents of fate — during the course of a truly remarkable career.

The author makes his basic identity clear in the first line of the book — *Bachgen bach a Ddowlais* — 'A little boy from Dowlais'. He looks back with nostalgia to his childhood and upbringing in a South Wales industrial community, poor in the material things of life, but rich in kindness and mutual support. He comments on the paradoxes of life in Dowlais during the 1920s and 1930s — first success and prosperity, then economic depression and poverty; straight-laced nonconformity co-existing with socialist principles; lifestyles ranging from puritanical to worldly; native Welsh and immigrant Irish working side by side — and more. The young Glanmor progressed through the state school system — first the infants school, then the junior school, and finally the grammar *school* at Cyfarthfa Castle in Merthyr Tydfil. His preferences and talents led him towards arts subjects, and after taking his Senior Certificate he so distinguished himself in the Higher Certificate examinations that he was awarded two studentships and one scholarship to maintain himself, should he go on to university. Access to financial support was crucial for practically all the boys and girls in Welsh grammar schools at that time if they wanted a university education. Failure to do well in examinations meant no maintenance grant (university *courses* were then funded by the state), and school-leavers would have to find employment locally, congenial or no. Few parents were sufficiently well off to finance their children's further education unaided. But there was a system of grants, however frugal, and the Welsh grammar schools succeeded in nurturing a huge number of bright pupils who went on to university and later prospered in school-teaching, academic life, the civil service and so on.

Though believing himself rather young at the age of just over seventeen to start at a university, Glanmor found that the conditions for staying another year at school were not attractive, and he proceeded at once to the University College of Wales at Aberystwyth. Once there, he found himself in a close and happy community where almost all the students resided away from home and were determined to make the most of their detached situation. He questions momentarily whether he did the right thing in going to Aberystwyth, but considers that it worked out well in the end, and he pithily remarks 'Dwelling on the might-have-beens serves no useful purpose'. This was 1937, two years before the outbreak of war.

The 'College by the Sea', founded in 1872, took intense pride in its historical pre-eminence on the Welsh university scene (tending to forget about St David's College, Lampeter, which had been founded

fifty years earlier). The author treats us to many anecdotes of student life, familiar to those who have passed under the Gothic archway of the Old College in Laura Place. Students basked in an atmosphere of relaxed emulation — at any rate until war came in the autumn of 1939.

At Aberystwyth Glanmor rediscovered his Welsh-language roots, latterly stunted by the anglicising influence of the grammar school; he developed his interest in historical research; he became president of the Students' Representative Council; and there he met his future wife, Fay Davies. Though having served in the Officers' Training Corps of the College, he discovered that he would not pass the medical examination for enlistment in the armed forces. So for his wartime service he had to choose some 'work of national importance', and opted for teaching, taking a training course, which gave him another year at Aberystwyth.

His student days over, he had to find his first job. On the point of seeking a post in England, he was persuaded to apply for one at Merthyr Intermediate School, the 'County School' which was the 'rival' of his old school, Cyfarthfa Grammar. His application was successful and he was thus able to live at his old home, as well as be conveniently near Fay. In spite of the distractions of teaching, he managed to begin some research of his own. Then he was alerted to a temporary lectureship in history going at the University College of Swansea. He describes his interview at Singleton Abbey and his surprise at being offered the post, which he accepted gratefully, and commenced work in 1945, just before the end of the war. Swansea was to be the defining element in his career.

Glanmor tells of his formidable problem in preparing his lectures for the first term, which caused his research to be put aside briefly. As time went on, he began to reorient his historical interests; he decided to leave the nineteenth century and concentrate on the later Middle Ages. He had in his schooldays been interested in religion, insofar that he had considered entering the Christian ministry. Now, with his wider knowledge of the European background, he felt more sympathy with the High Anglican and Roman Catholic points of view. The fruit of all this was a massive work on *The Welsh Church from Conquest to Reformation*, published by the University of Wales Press in 1962; for this he was awarded a D.Litt. There were other books, too — *Samuel Roberts, Llanbryn-mair* (1950), *Yr Esgob Richard Davies* (1953), *Owen Glendower* (1966), *Henry Tudor and Wales* (1985), *The Welsh and their Religion* (1991), to mention but a selection. He also undertook considerable editorial tasks, on for example, *The Glamorgan County History* and *The Welsh History Review*.

All the time the academic year brought its round of lecturing, tutoring, advising, attending committees and conducting college negotiations. The names of professors, lecturers and friends cited will stir many memories among readers. To Glanmor's great relief he secured a permanent lectureship at Swansea in 1946, eventually becoming senior lecturer, and in 1957 succeeding to the chair of history when his Professor, David Quinn, went to Liverpool. In that post he continued until retirement in 1982.

Glanmor Williams' account of university life may seem idyllic to some readers. He admits to doubts and difficulties, but in the end all was for the best in the best of all possible worlds. The 'angry young man' portrayed by Kingsley Amis in his novel *Lucky Jim* (inspired by a period at Swansea) is nowhere to be found. This must be due to the author's equable and charitable nature.

By now Professor Williams was firmly identified with Welsh history and with Swansea. His patent skill as chairman, negotiator and consultant made him a ready target for bodies outside the college seeking help or governance. At various dates he served as secretary to the History and Law Committee of the Board of Celtic Studies, member of the Historic Buildings Council for Wales, member and later chairman of both the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales and the Ancient Monuments Board for Wales, and also chairman of the Welsh Folk Museum Committee.

In Swansea he served as justice of the peace on the local bench, he became a director of a local building society, and he joined the executive committee of the Swansea Festival of Music and the Arts.

These were some of his 'calls from many quarters', but there were other impressive and tempting invitations, too. In 1965 he became chairman of the Broadcasting Council for Wales and a governor of the BBC — at a time when the BBC was venerated by all as an infallible national institution. Another chairmanship which fell to his lot was that of the British Library's Advisory Council; at the same time he became a member of the Public Record Office Advisory Council. Those who experienced his chairmanship appreciated the care and thought which he gave to the agenda of the day and the way in which he encouraged all members to speak their minds and reach a consensus.

Back in Wales, he was invited to chair the Pantyfedwen Trusts, dedicated to various good causes. There were invitations that he did *not* accept, to the principalship of St David's College, Lampeter, and later that of the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth (though he did become Vice-President of the College). His short experience of university administration at Swansea as Vice-Principal had convinced him that this was not his *metier*.

Many honours came his way, including Commander of the British Empire, Fellow of the British Academy, Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, President of the Cambrian Archaeological Association, Medal of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, and finally a knighthood.

In summing up his life, Glanmor Williams counts himself fortunate to have lived *when* he did and *where* he did. He pays frequent tributes to his wife Fay, who was forging her own parallel career (though less in the limelight) as well as bringing up two children; she quite clearly has given immense support and affection to her husband. This is a book which will fascinate and inspire — the story of a life which spanned some eighty years of the twentieth century and which still continues in the twenty-first.

Penarth DONALD MOORE

ARTEFACTS AND ARCHAEOLOGY. ASPECTS OF THE CELTIC AND ROMAN WORLD. Edited by Miranda Aldhouse-Green and Peter Webster. 192 × 253mm. xii + 276 pp. 71 illustrations. University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 2002. ISBN 0 7083 1752 9. Price £40.00.

This volume originated in a conference held at Cardiff to mark the retirement of Professor Bill Manning from the chair which he has held with such distinction. Contributions were limited to former pupils and university colleagues; not to have done so would surely have resulted in a Festschrift of unmanageable proportions for to many, never taught by him, including this reviewer, Bill remains one of the kindest and most approachable Romanists of our age, the *doyen* of Roman ironwork studies and a leading authority on Roman Wales (exemplified not only in his magisterial reports on his excavations at Usk but also for the wider public by *Roman Wales. A Pocket Guide* (2001).

Although the Cardiff 'Mafia' as it is jokingly described in the book casts its net fairly wide, and essays presented here include a paper on early faience technology in Egypt (by Paul Nicholson) and a fascinating Roman bronze handle from Bonn showing a garlanded *bucraneum* (Ralph Jackson), members of the school have retained a very proper commitment to the archaeology of Wales, and quite a high proportion of the papers here are concerned, in whole or in part, with Cambrian themes. They include some of the most enjoyable and important contributions to the volume.

Two concern the Iron Age. Miranda Aldhouse-Green gets the proceedings off to a wonderful start with a very wide ranging look at the magical and religious significance of iron in the Celtic and Mediterranean worlds, for the former drawing on such notable caches as those from Llyn Cerrig Bach and Capel Garmon. This is followed by a paper which begins by describing a couple of beads and a piece of a bangle carved from cannel coal, from Old Castle Down, near St Brides Major in the Vale of

Glamorgan. It is very probable that they were not stray finds but came from high status Silurian graves, for contiguous to where they were found warrior burials were recorded early in the nineteenth century.

Several of the papers on Roman Wales are of equal significance. With regard to military archaeology Evan Chapman discovers a probable *armamentarium* in the fortress at Caerleon and Peter Webster has looked at unpublished records of early twentieth-century work at Cardiff which adds to our knowledge of this remarkable third-century monument. The paper which struck the closest chord with this reviewer is one delightfully entitled 'Manning the defences' in which Peter Guest argues that the hollow, polygonal bastions of Caerwent, which run along the north and south sides of the enclosure only, were less defensive than symbols of civic consciousness. After a great many visits to this most evocative of Roman sites this seems entirely right to me.

On Roman small finds there is a wide variety of interesting themes ranging from mosaic glass at Llandovery (Jennifer Price) to zoomorphic seal-boxes, including one depicting a boar from Bill's own excavations at Usk (Richard Brewer). It would seem that these seal-boxes were not specifically made for the various legions but nevertheless the Usk seal-box may have been used by a member of *Legio XX*. A truly remarkable find is a hollow cast leg and part of an arm from Porthcasseg, Gwent discussed by Janet Webster. It might represent the figure of a *Lar* or a *Camillus*, appropriate to a household shrine. The discovery of a figurine of Mars nearby somewhat strengthens the case for a rural sanctuary. It is tragic that such important evidence lacks a proper archaeological context which only survey and excavation can bring.

There is much else to be found in these pages from ceramic studies to museology. Volumes such as this sometimes gather dust on library shelves, remembered if at all for one or two papers. This one will surely deserve a much happier fate. In fact there are only two criticisms to be made of what is otherwise a most delightful and well-edited tribute. The first is that Bill's ironwork interests are only really covered in Professor Aldhouse-Green's and Evan Chapman's contributions. It is also a pity that the volume lacks a bibliography of Bill's writings to date.

University of Oxford MARTIN HENIG

THE SECOND AUGUSTAN LEGION AND THE ROMAN MILITARY MACHINE. Edited by Richard J. Brewer. 205 × 268mm. xiv + 212 pp. 104 illustrations. National Museums & Galleries of Wales, Cardiff, 2002. ISBN 0 7200 0514 0. Price £29.99.

Few of Rome's legions can claim to have attracted as much scholarly writing as *Legio II Augusta*. This is in no small way due to the late George Boon's novel idea of instituting a series of annual lectures to address specific aspects of the legion and its history on September 23rd, the unit's 'birthday', the first being delivered in 1987, the last in 1996. Each lecture was designed to 'contain the fruits of the speaker's latest research . . . and . . . thereafter be available in printed form' (p. xiii). The publication of the individual lectures by the NMGW followed rapidly, but inevitably many sold out, making the collection of the series all but impossible for many would-be purchasers. It is thus to Brewer's credit that a decision was taken to publish the series as a monograph, additionally allowing the ten contributors to update their papers. In the case of the late Professor Michael Jarrett's paper, 'Early Roman campaigns in Wales', Dr Peter Webster undertook that task. The lectures/papers are, moreover, now published in a more logical, re-ordered sequence with a short introduction by Richard Brewer.

Laurence Keppie's 'The origins and early history of II Augusta' is written with his customary mix of erudition and humour, the discussion further embracing the legion's emblems, title and history prior to

its transfer to Britain. Professor W. H. Manning's substantially updated paper concentrates on the legion's role as an agent of conquest prior to its transfer to Caerleon, *c.* AD 74. He notes that we are still no nearer determining its base prior to the building of the fortress at Exeter in the mid 50s, but the reviewer would disagree with his suggestion that, Colchester excepted, full-size legionary fortresses did not exist in Britain prior to the 50s. The Continental evidence would argue otherwise. For further discussion of this problem the reader should consult Mark Hassall's paper in R. J. Brewer (ed.) *Roman Fortresses and their Legions*. Jarrett's paper, too, has seen substantial revision, in a style and spirit of enquiry which he would have thoroughly approved of. There is some necessary overlap with Manning, but read in conjunction these two papers provide an overview of the Welsh scene prior to and during the course of the Flavian conquest.

David Breeze's 'The Second Augustan Legion in North Britain' revisits the evidence for the extensive use made of legionary soldiers in the context of fighting, building and garrisoning in the North, the epigraphic data being singularly important in this respect. The extensive use made of detachments is a harbinger for the much smaller late third/fourth-century legion discussed by Casey later in the volume. Professor M. Fulford's paper is wide-ranging, and basically addresses two issues; what functions the legion performed in southern Britain when action was confined to the North and the Continent, and what impact the legion had upon provincial society. He discusses, among other things, the issue of what happened to legionary veterans, the role of the legion as an industrial and economic catalyst, particularly in the context of military supply from the South to the North. The last is a particularly attractive thesis, as is his suggestion that in the late third century the legion was based on the fort at Cardiff where it could carry out the maritime element of its activities more effectively. Less convincing is his suggestion that the late Roman legion had a base at the Lydney temple.

Professor Anthony Birley's prosopographic paper, 'The officers of II Augusta in Britain', provides us with that Imperial dimension, reminding us how archetypally 'Roman' was the legion's officer corps, even if most of its men will have been British-born by the beginning of the third century. Professor Michael Speidel's 'Framework of an imperial legion' addresses issues which seem deceptively simple, but over which generations of scholars have argued. How precisely was the legion organised in the context of fighting? He argues convincingly that the *triplex acies* survived the first three centuries of the Empire and that, moreover, the legionaries were differently equipped and trained according to their place in the battle line. Only with the shrinkage in the size of the legion did *centuriae* vanish, emphasis now being placed upon the cohort, whilst equipment became more standardised. His paper is without doubt one of the most significant recent contributions to the study of the legion.

Professor Valerie Maxfield's paper 'Soldier & civilian: life beyond the ramparts' reminds us of the human and familial aspects of military life, close to as well as far removed from the fortress. She draws upon an exceedingly wide database, ranging geographically from northern Britain to Egypt. Here we are firmly in the realms of epigraphy, diplomas, writing-tablets, *papyri* and *ostraca* which illuminate such topics as soldiers' origins, correspondence, leave, retirement, food and supply in general. The result is a most informative, wide-ranging, illuminating discussion.

John Casey's paper reminds us how different the legion was in the late Roman world. Changes were already afoot towards its depletion from the second century, with the increasing tendency for legionary vexillations to serve away from the parent unit for extended periods, and for the vexillations to become small 'legions' in themselves. By the fourth century detachments of 'old' and 'new' (i.e. Diocletianic-style) legions were serving in the field army whilst the residue of the old legions were reduced to the status of *limitanei* — surely the fate of *II Augusta*. Casey's mastery of his subject makes this paper an invaluable introduction to the changes which effected the imperial army between the second and fourth century. Finally, Richard Reece's 'The Future of Roman Military Archaeology', written with a view to

provoking a re-assessment of the ways in which the army might be studied, examines current methodologies and interpretation. He suggests that the subject's parameters can be pushed outwards from the written evidence, and its limitations, to a more general study of material evidence associated with the army.

Collectively, the papers make an exceedingly valuable contribution to the study of Roman military archaeology in general, specifically to one of the British legions, and should be read in conjunction with George Boon's festschrift *Roman Legionary Fortresses and their Legions* (ed. R. J. Brewer). Profusely illustrated with line-drawings and maps, this excellent book retains the high quality that we have come to expect of National Museum publications.

University of Wales, Aberystwyth JEFFREY L. DAVIES

LOCAL SAINTS AND LOCAL CHURCHES IN THE EARLY MEDIEVAL WEST. Edited by Alan Thacker and Richard Sharpe. 160 × 240mm. xii + 581pp. 39 illustrations. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2002. ISBN 0 19 820394 2. Price £85.00.

Whilst many Welsh churches are dedicated to the universal saints of western Christendom, and others to monastic founders like Cadoc or David, many bear the names of obscure local saints, often only venerated in that particular church. Local enquiry may produce some folk traditions, but usually we have no real idea in which century these saints lived, what their claims to sanctity were, or whether they were priests, laymen or laywomen. This important book is the nearest we are likely to come to framing an answer to such questions.

The book derives from an Oxford conference of 1991. Of its fourteen chapters, only three deal directly with Wales, but one of its clearest lessons is that apparent differences between various branches of the early western Church are often more apparent than real. Chapters cover Ireland (Thomas Charles-Edwards and Pádraig Ó Riain); Cornwall (Oliver Padel); Scotland (Thomas Owen Clancy) and Anglo-Saxon England (Catherine Cubitt and John Blair). Others look further afield to Rome, Spain and early medieval France. Though most chapters contain material very relevant to the early Welsh Church, this review, for reasons of space, will concentrate on those dealing directly with Wales.

Richard Sharpe's substantial 'Martyrs and local saints in Late Antique Britain' covers the all-important transition between the late Roman Church and that of early medieval Britain. Dated references to Romano-British bishops and churchmen end with the Papal mission to Ireland in 431 and the visit or visits of Germanus of Auxerre. There is then a gap before we reach the evidence of Gildas. Sharpe uses a wide range of sources, documentary and archaeological, in a masterly review of the evidence and of the work of recent scholars. Older, now discarded, ideas such as the demise of British Christianity after 410 and its re-introduction from Gaul are discussed, together with more recent views, which see a greater degree of continuity from the Romano-British church. His survey, backed by very full footnotes, would, on its own, make an important book.

John Reuben Davies considers the identity and dates of persons commemorated in Welsh ecclesiastical place names and church dedications. Bowen's model of churches directly founded by an early saint or his immediate follower provided an invaluable geographic dimension, but the chronological dimension was already being challenged by Owen Chadwick in 1954, who saw for example Cadoc dedications as reflecting not the travels of Cadoc, but the later ecclesiastical influence of Llancarfan. Davies builds on this and suggests a possible chronology for the process. After an 'Age of the Saints' of *c.* 550–650 (which corresponds well with the main period of monastic expansion in Merovingian Gaul), *llan* names

combined with topographic features (e.g. Llandaff or Llanwern) are first in the field, followed *c.* 700 by *llan-* combined with the name of a local saint. However, the main period for dedications to monastic patrons was *c.* 850–950 when, under rulers like Rhodri Mawr or Hywel Dda, saints came to be seen as the patrons of kingdoms. Historical sources were then re-worked in a period of intellectual post-Viking renewal, and even more so in Anglo-Norman times, when English monasteries and the new Welsh bishoprics competed to asset-strip Welsh foundations. Gloucester acquired Llancarfan and much else, whilst Llandaff took over the assets of Llandeilo Fawr (and Llandough) for its new see. The resulting territorial disputes led to a re-writing of history, as in the Book of Llandaff and in saints 'Lives'. Thus Davies sees the association of Dubricius with Archenfield as a creation of twelfth-century Llandaff, though there is good evidence for an early territorial bishop of that name in south-east Wales.

Nancy Edwards's contribution 'Celtic saints and early medieval archaeology' is essential reading for anyone interested in the early Insular church. She analyses a large body of archaeological and textual evidence for the burial of Welsh saints and for secondary relics such as Gospel books, shrines and metalwork. In pre-Norman Wales there was a reluctance to disturb the burials of saints, who lay within their church ('*in pavimento ecclesie*') or in a grave chapel (*eglwys y bedd*). Only in Anglo-Norman times was there a move to translation to above ground stone or metalwork shrines.

John Blair's discussion and catalogue of local saint cults in Anglo-Saxon England shows them as numerous as in the Celtic West. Most were associated with the minsters, equivalent to Welsh *clas* churches, which preceded the growth of the parochial system in late Saxon times. Blair's conclusion is very relevant to Wales: 'The long-accepted contrasts between the English and 'Celtic' churches tend to crumble on close examination; understanding of the real diversities in insular religious culture has a long way still to go'. One only hopes that this essential book will in due course appear in a less expensive format, where it is more likely to reach the wide readership it deserves.

Caerphilly JEREMY K. KNIGHT

WHISPERING REEDS OR THE ANGLESEY CATAMUS INSCRIPTION STRIPT BARE. A DETECTIVE STORY. By Charles Thomas. 140 × 214mm. ix + 101 pp. 14 illustrations. Oxbow Books, Oxford, 2002. ISBN 1 84217 085 6. Price £12.95.

Most Cambrians will know Professor Charles Thomas as a pre-eminent authority on the late Roman and early medieval Church in these islands. Fewer perhaps will know that he is married to a distinguished writer of detective fiction and has an erudite knowledge of the writings of Dr J. H. Watson, the Sherlockian canon and of detective fiction in general. His latest work is cast, as the subtitle tells us, as a detective story. The Catamanus stone, from the church of Llangadwaladr near Aberffraw in Anglesey has, in the past, attracted particular attention as one of the tiny number of insular memorial stones which can be associated with known historical personages, and is therefore capable of providing chronological calibration for the series.

Part 1 of this small book is a characteristically fluent and perceptive account of our present knowledge of the stone and its context. As Sir John Edward Lloyd pointed out, the inscription was probably made not at the death of Cadfan in about 625, but by his grandson Cadwaladr (634–?*c.* 664), founder and eponym of the church. It was normal in western Christendom at this time for a church to be named after its founder (with no implication of sainthood) and Llangadwaladr and nearby Aberffraw are an example of the frequent pairings of high status secular and ecclesiastical sites in early medieval Wales and western Britain.

Thomas argues that the phrasing, with no *Hic Iacet* or equivalent phrase, better fits a later memorial than a contemporary tombstone (just as a modern statue base usually carries only the name of the commemorand, without the inclusion of 'in memory of'). The form of the stone suggests that it may have been set horizontally over Cadfan's grave within the new church, rather than in an upright, tombstone fashion. Its wording, with a series of superlatives, may be based on that of the Capel Bronwen stone (*Early Christian Monuments of Wales* 33) — a suggestion which frees the royal court of Gwynedd from the burden of Byzantine court ceremonial, just as David Howlett has laid the ghost of the Frenchman from Angers on the same stone.

The remainder of the book is more difficult, in every sense. The use by medieval writers of rhetorical tricks such as symmetrical phrases or repetition of a word in various forms is well known, as are the symbolic values attached to particular numbers on Biblical analogy (e.g. 33 represents the number of years of Christ's life). A recent study of Kilpeck has shown that even these apparently artless carvings depend on esoteric references to medieval bestiaries. The more elaborate forms of computation involving letters as numbers (A = 1 etc.), and texts in 'Biblical style' have been studied by David Howlett in a series of important books and articles. Clearly, there is not room in a review of this length for an adequate discussion, even if the reviewer had the necessary mathematical and crypto-analytical skills to separate coincidence from meaningful data. Briefly, Thomas claims that on internal evidence the author of the Cadfan inscription was a Bishop Issiu, who under the cover of a laudatory text revenged himself for an ancient wrong by incorporating a series of hidden derogatory and scatological references to Cadfan. He claims that the evidence adduced is too complex to be dismissed as coincidence, and would no doubt cite Holmes's dictum that 'when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth' (*The Sign of Four*). However, the sceptic, or the cautious, bearing in mind that we are dealing with six words and forty-eight letters, might recall that Holmes also spoke of the dangers of theorising on the basis of limited data.

Caerphilly JEREMY K. KNIGHT

MERCIA: THE ANGLO-SAXON KINGDOM OF CENTRAL ENGLAND. By Sarah Zaluckyj, with contributions by Marge Feryok and John Zaluckyj. 203 × 260mm. 308 pp. 180 illustrations. Logaston Press, Almeley, Herefordshire, 2001. ISBN. 1 873872 62 8. £14.95.

Early medieval historians in Wales and England have tended to remain on their own sides of Offa's dyke. To some extent, this is understandable, since such matters as early towns, pre-Norman church architecture, and pottery use find few echoes west of the dyke. Nevertheless, Welsh historians and archaeologists cannot afford to ignore a series of important books on our immediate neighbours in Mercia and Wessex which have appeared in recent years.

Mrs Zaluckyj's subject is not so much the Anglo-Saxon conquest and settlement as the historic kingdom of Mercia, from its beginnings under Penda in the first half of the seventh century to its final absorption into the kingdom of England under Edgar and Edward the Martyr. There is little on pagan Saxon cemeteries (the only grave goods illustrated are unprovenanced), but to make up for this there is a thorough survey of our present state of archaeological and historical knowledge, a very useful series of photographs of Mercian church architecture and sculpture, and a range of well-chosen illustrations ranging from reconstruction drawings to coins.

The initial chapter, dealing with the late and sub-Roman period, shows a less sure touch than the remainder of the book. It suffers from an old-fashioned Anglo-centric approach, a rather uncritical use

of some of the speculations of the late John Morris and a sometimes uneven use of the archaeological evidence. Villas did not suddenly appear in Britain in the early fourth century (though it is true that the flowering of large luxury villas is a striking and important phenomenon in late Roman Britain) and (to be pedantic) one did not undress in the *frigidarium* of a Roman bath-house — particularly during a Shropshire winter like the one on page 8!

With the beginnings of English settlement in the West Midlands, the author is on firmer ground. Groups like the Stoppingas, the kin of Stoppa, around Wootton Wawen near Stratford-on-Avon, were tribal units which came to form the proto-kingdoms seen in the document known as the Tribal Hidage. This process is not without relevance for Wales, where *cantrefi* named after traditional eponymous founders may in some cases preserve the names of genuine kin-group ancestors, as with the 'sons of Cunedda' or the seven cantrefs of Glywysing. By the end of the sixth century the first Mercian kings were emerging.

After considering the early kings of Mercia up to the Christian conversion under Wulfhere around AD 657–60 and the evidence for pagan cults, the author moves on to Christian Mercia, including possible surviving British churches attested by the place-name element *ecles* (Eccles) and the sub-kingdoms of the Magonsaetan in Herefordshire and southern Shropshire and of the Hwicce. The Magonsaetan probably originated, as Bede implies, as the Hwicce west of Severn. They were either the 'dwellers around *Magnis*' (i.e. Kenchester), or the people of a surviving British entity in the half-hundred or commote of Maund north of Hereford. They were ruled by Merewalh, 'Illustrious Welshman', a name obviously given him by his Saxon kinsfolk of the ruling Mercian house. The use of archaeological and topographic evidence, backed up by a generous ration of photographs and plans, is seen in the book's survey of the centres of the Magonsaetan at Leominster Priory (*Llanllieni*) and Hereford. The former was possibly an early Welsh monastery, founded or re-founded by Merewalh in *c.* 660, whose early monastic enclosure may survive. There were, however, problems in siting bishoprics at pre-existing monasteries (which explains why Gloucester was never an episcopal see before Henry VIII's time) and the sub-king Mildfrith's new cathedral for the Magonsaetan was sited at Hereford, a probable Mercian *villa regalis*. There is an interesting discussion of the relationship of the new cathedral with St Guthlac's Minster, now under Castle Green (though the citing of Iolo Morgannwg for its foundation by Geraint ap Erbin in the sixth century is unfortunate). It was however normal for a Saxon town to have two minsters, as for example at Gloucester or Shrewsbury.

The Hwicce of Worcestershire and Gloucestershire, east of the Severn, the later diocese of Worcester, retained their sub-kings until the end of the eighth century. Zaluckyj gives a valuable summary of recent work on the Droitwich salt industry, where there is archaeological evidence of production from sub-Roman or early Anglo-Saxon times onwards. Worcester itself has also seen important new work. Of its churches, St Helens may represent an early minster in the Roman small town, preceding the foundation of the see in 680, and recent archaeological discoveries show that this is work still in progress.

An historical survey of the kings of the age of Mercian supremacy, from Aethelred (675–704) to Offa (757–796), is followed by a chapter on Offa's Dyke. Assuming that the traditional attribution is correct, its political purpose was to protect Offa from frontier incidents in his rear which might jeopardise his main concerns in southern and eastern England. If a recent radiocarbon determination from near Oswestry is reliable, Wat's Dyke may be substantially earlier than Offa's, not later as once thought. Mrs Zaluckyj sees the true Offa's Dyke as the central section from Rushock Hill north of Kington in Herefordshire to Treuddyn in Flintshire, serving as a boundary between Mercia and Powys, rather than between England and Wales. This leaves the southern stretches in the Lower Wye and Beachley as enigmatic as ever. Equally problematic is the relationship of the dyke to the adjacent English settlements in the central sector around Welshpool and Kington, and to their parish boundaries. Were these villages

with English names really there by the eighth century, and left on the Welsh side of the dyke by its builders? Or were they, as one suspects, later than the active period of the dyke's use as a frontier? Mrs Zaluckyj discusses whether their parish boundaries existed by the eighth century and preceded the dyke. However, as she points out, the main phase of parish formation was in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Montgomery provides a cautionary tale. The impressive stretch of dyke between Montgomery and Chirbury, forming both the parish boundary and the Anglo-Welsh border, only acquired this function in 1223, when Montgomery parish was carved out of the Saxon minster parish of Chirbury. Generally, as the author points out, there was little correlation between dyke and parish boundaries.

The account of the urban centres of the period of Mercian supremacy includes a survey of archaeological evidence from Hereford and from related Mercian *burhs* like Tamworth. The book concludes with Mercia's political decline in the ninth century, and its eventual amalgamation with the new kingdom of the English. This is a book which anyone interested in early medieval Wales, who wants an account of what was happening on the other side of Offa's Dyke, will find most useful.

Caerphilly JEREMY K. KNIGHT

MERLIN AND WALES. A MAGICIAN'S LANDSCAPE. By Michael Dames. 174 × 247mm. 192 pp. 152 illustrations. Thames and Hudson, London, 2002. ISBN 0 500 510792. Price £18.95.

Michael Dames's enthusiasm for his subject leaps from every page, and this beautifully illustrated book exemplifies the genre of mystical ecology which has now become a growth industry. The book aims to achieve a 'poetic synthesis' between historical, traditional and archaeological sources by re-examining Merlin's pivotal role in the landscape of Wales. Unfortunately, the result reads like a synopsis for a sword and sorcery epic (in which Merlin represents the benevolent forces of ecological paganism) rather than sensible archaeological or historical analysis.

While Dames's 'poetic synthesis' can be charming, it is difficult to find his arguments convincing. The methodology lacks even a basic critical awareness of the techniques of modern history, archaeology or folklore. Rather it mixes narratives from different periods (often imprecisely recounted) and outmoded sources (such as Daniel Silvan Evans and William Owen Pughe's early dictionaries), with archaeological finds (usually taken out of context) and treats them as if they simply 'explain' one another. The core of his methodology is a neo-Frazerian approach which treats medieval narratives and modem folk customs as survivals of primitive mythic truth. The 'evidence' includes wild speculations on place-names that mix languages, and ignore the principles on which Welsh words are formed. This is done, in the author's own words 'to loosen the grip of linear logic and enable other understandings to emerge'. The logic is certainly not linear, but whether it contributes to an understanding of Merlin's role in Welsh tradition is open to doubt.

The first chapter outlines the historical sources for the Merlin story such as *Historia Brittonum* and the *Black Book of Carmarthen*. The argument bristles with extraordinary and unsupported statements. In relation to the discovery of a vessel in the pool on Dinas Emrys, the author states, 'Both cistern and pool are images of the feminine . . . symbols of the mother-archetype'. There is absolutely no hint as to how this relates to any aforementioned source. Dames assumes that Merlin and his sister were a deity pair and that Gwenddydd was an earth goddess, despite the fact that in the existing sources, she always plays a secondary role and not a supernatural one. A fundamental assumption in works of this kind is that sources, regardless of time and place of writing, can be quarried for nuggets of ancient mythology. Not only does he ignore the historical context, but details are not always accurate. Dames transfers the tale

of Eliodorus cited by Gerald of Wales (a twelfth-century tale about a 'real' person, typical of folk legends of this type) to Carmarthen (p. 28). Eliodorus becomes Merlin's playmate in a sacred ball game, and the (incorrectly reconstructed) identification of Merlin-Elidyr is then applied to an archaeological find (a Roman dodecahedron bronze structure found near St Peter's, Carmarthen). This, the author claims (p. 157), was part of a sacred ball game which by 'mouth-to mouth resuscitation . . . continued to rouse Caermyrddin's people to participate in the cosmic orchestra'.

Wild linguistic speculations abound. St Teulyddog is translated as *teulydd* (family) and *og* (young), completely ignoring the fact that while *og* means 'young' in Irish, in Welsh *-og* is a nominal ending. Elis Gruffudd's *Minkamws* becomes *mynci* ('collar') and *amwys* ('enigmatic'). A rather more convincing explanation might be *min* ('lip') and *com* ('crooked'), but this would not allow the author to imply a surviving link between a Tudor source and a Bronze Age gold pectoral found at Mold. The linguistic speculation attempts to restore the sun-myths which were so popular in the last century. For example, Dames creates *Ben-aur* (p. 30) 'gold-head' from a form which is better restored as *pen beirdd* ('chief of bards' or 'foremost of poets') and is a well-attested epithet for Myrddin. When the speculations become strained, even according to the criteria applied here, the author falls back on loaded questions whose speculative, and often unlikely answers, are then taken as the basis for further suggestion. For example, in trying to link the stoning of St Stephen with Merlin, he asks 'Is it a coincidence that Llanstephan is x miles from Dinas Emrys?' Well, frankly yes, it is a coincidence, an accident of geography rather than a cosmic plan. One might as well ask whether the author is concerned with goddesses simply because the word 'dames' forms a significant part of his surname.

What is missing here is a realistic sense of what *tradition* means in the context of archaeological and historical analysis. Early texts often provide better evidence for their time of composition than the ancient world they purport to describe. And, while material is transmitted through time and across genres, without clear and believable channels of transmission, it becomes a way of creating links without evidence. For all its eccentric charm, this is fiction and speculation trying hard to cross into the realm of archaeological and mythological scholarship. The appearance of such an oddity on Thames and Hudson's booklists is the true mystery here.

Cardiff University JULIETTE WOOD

HISTORY OF MERIONETH, VOLUME II, THE MIDDLE AGES. Edited by J. Beverley Smith and Llinos Beverley Smith. 220 × 282mm. xx + 751pp., 105 illustrations. 3 tables. University of Wales Press on behalf of the Merioneth Historical and Record Society, Cardiff, 2001. ISBN 0 7083 1709 X. Price £65.00.

Volume II of the Merioneth County History covers the Middle Ages but, in actuality, extends in coverage down to the seventeenth century. As some of its contributors point out, Merioneth was always regarded as one of the poorest of Welsh counties, or the 'roughest' as Giraldus Cambrensis put it. From the perspective of the Welsh princes as well as the English kings, it was also considered a 'lawless' area, keeping order being as big a challenge as exploiting its soils. Partly for these reasons, available data for the writing of its history during this period is fragmentary. The county undoubtedly has outstanding historic landscapes but their archaeological potential has still to be fully exploited. Documentary sources are limited, either because limited records were kept in the first place or because of non-survival. In such circumstances, producing a history of Merioneth during the Middle Ages makes great demands on the authors and their skill in making sense of or interpolating between a fragmented record. This reviewer

regards the comfortable way in which contributors coped with this challenge as a measure of the book's success.

Appropriately, the book opens with a particularly fine chapter by one of the editors, J. Beverley Smith, on the age of the princes from the tenth century AD down to the Edwardian conquest in 1283. It provides a critical assessment of the foundation myth surrounding Merioneth. The story about Meirion, a grandson of Cunedda and the supposed foundation-king of Merioneth, is seen as a late attempt to legitimise the wider domain of the rulers of Gwynedd. In reality, the kings of Merioneth maintained an independence throughout the ninth and tenth centuries AD, though this independence may have been qualified by their client status to the more powerful kings of Gwynedd. Smith rightly makes it clear that early kingship was always a competitive affair. Not only were the early kings of Merioneth involved in their own struggles with Gwynedd, but they were also caught up in the wider struggle between the kings of Gwynedd and Powys. Eventually, by the late twelfth century, the core of what was Merioneth became incorporated into the province of Gwynedd, with Penllyn and Edeirnion prised from Powys in the early thirteenth century. Though the sons of Mareddud ap Cynan recovered the kingship of Merioneth during the mid thirteenth century, it was a temporary assumption of kingship. Soon after, of course, the local politics of the Edwardian conquest, the county effectively falling to Edward I's troops with the capture of Castell y Bere castle in 1283. Smith's discussion captures the fluidity of the political processes that swept back and forth across Merioneth with clarity and insight. The Edwardian conquest not only gave definition to the bounds of Merioneth, it imposed a system of administration. This system is discussed in a chapter on government and society, 1283–1536, Again, there is good analysis here as well as description. The degree to which taxes were imposed to pay for the costs of the war is well drawn out, so too is the extent to which key administrative offices were given to household men or used to settle Crown debts. The discussion is strong on how disatisfaction over such burdens fed into the rebellion of Owain Glyndŵr in 1400, as well as on the particular rootedness and persistence of the rebellion in Merioneth. The routines of government were not restored until 1415 but disorder was not something that was to be easily administered out of existence, erupting again in the 1460s.

The book's middle chaptes deal with society, economy and religion. Thomas's work on the Merioneth coutryside is already well known. Like this previous work, his chapter is resourceful in the way it tries to make use of a wide range of data to build insights into the rural society, settlement and the economy. There is particulrly valuable new comment on the nature of the *gafael* and on the geography of bond and free settlements, comment that shows his skill at setting problems down in the landscape itself. His treatment of the *gwely* though, is not wholly consistent with other interpretations. Few people lived in Merioneth towns during the Middle Ages but their role as centres of administration, justice and trade imparted a much greater importance to them. This role, as well as their physical and burghal character, is depicted in a well-crafted chapter on towns. The church is dealt with across three chapters, the first reviewing the changes in organisation that led to the emergence of the parochial structure during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Its most significant conclusion is to question Colin Gresham's suggestion that parishes were formed towards the end of the twelfth century by the break-up of the territories attached to mother churches. Instead, a more complex transition is proposed, one in progress by AD 1100. Inevitably, the chapter dealing with monastic life is an essay largely about Cymer Abbey. The fact that abbeys like Basingwerk and Strata Marcella had land within the county is noted, but the bulk of the discussion explores the circumstances surrounding the foundation of the abbey, its endowment and economy, and its architecture. The third of the chapters dealing with the church looks at parish churches and their style. With thirty-two of the county's churches of medieval origin and most of them already built by 1300, its conclusion links in well with the discussion over when the parochial structure evolved. Sensibly, much of the detail is included in an inventory of sites at the end of the

chapter, so that the main text of the chapter flows well. Continuing the theme of what can be recovered by text-aided archaeology, the chapter on parish churches is followed by one on castles and another on houses. That on castles organises itself around two prime sources of distinctions: that between native and English castles and that between masonry and earthwork castles.

Examples of each are provided but, as one would expect, masonry castles like Castell y Bere and Harlech figure prominently in the discussion. The chapter on houses is very much weighted towards the later medieval period, the county having few pre-1430 domestic structures but an abundance of post-1430s examples. The social context for this was the growing accumulation of land and wealth by local families and the way they invested in new housing. As with all Peter Smith's work, this is a satisfyingly well-illustrated chapter. His use of maps in particular, makes one regret that other chapters did not also make more use of them.

The closing chapters of the book consist deals with the literary tradition of the county down to *c*. 1560, generously embracing the work of poets who were based in the county, those who visited it and those who simply made references to it in their work. This is a particularly long chapter, perhaps one that imbalances the book a little by its very length, but the author does set his discussion within the geographical and social contexts in which sagas, stories or poems were composed. This is especially true with the poets who received the patronage of the princes, those who wrote for the *uchelwyr* and those who wrote for Owain Glyndŵr. After a chapter on the heraldry of the county's major families, the book concludes with a chapter on government and society in the half century or so that followed the Act of Union (1536). With so much change to deal with, there is a sense of movement about this chapter. Trade is seen as developing, minerals are being exploited and the *ffridd* is being colonised. Successful families were rapidly accumulating larger landholding, aided by the income and prestige of new political offices and by favourable marriages. Some of the more successful families, like the Vaughans, Nannau and Salesbury families are reviewed in depth, with a backward glance at where they had come from genealogically, the point being made that those families who came to the fore in land and status after 1536 were longstanding families. This continuity is noted in a number of chapters but no contributor addresses the question of why this should have been so in a county that experienced so much social disorder.

The editors can be congratulated for bringing together a book of high quality, with chapters that are rich in detail and valuable observation. As with all county histories, it has had a long gestation. This does not mean that the text lacks freshness, for even long-composed chapters have clearly been revised to reflect recent work. However, there is a significant overlap of points between chapters. The medieval farm economy, for instance, is dealt with substantively in at least three chapters, the Nannau family grows in two places, literally if not actually, whilst poor Lewis Owen is murdered twice over. Yet the undoubted merit of so many chapters outweighs such problems. Finally, on the quality of the book's publication, the text is well printed but the binding, at least as regards the robustness of the spine, is inadequate for such a large book.

University of Wales, Aberystwyth R. A. DODGSHON

LUDLOW CASTLE: ITS HISTORY AND BUILDINGS. Edited by Ron Shoesmith and Andy Johnson. 204 × 260mm. ix + 260 pp. 131 illustrations. Logaston Press, Almeley, Herefordshire, 2000. ISBN 1 873827 51 2. Price £14.95.

This book is a very remarkable achievement. It takes the documentary, architectural, pictorial and, to a more limited extent, the archaeological evidence for Ludlow Castle and treats them with equal merit.

The two editors have combined the work of twenty-two different contributors to tell the story of the development of the castle and the history of its occupants, its role in the development of the town and the surrounding landscape. Following its use as the administrative centre for the Council of the Marches, Ludlow Castle had an important place in the governance of Wales and the border counties. In doing so, each part of the castle's history from its foundation to the present day is given due weight and the different parts of the castle's fabric are carefully analysed without undue emphasis on military innovation or architectural splendour. Perhaps the most remarkable feat of all is to have produced this substantial book with a number of fine colour illustrations for a very modest price, so opening it up to a wide audience.

Looking at the volume in more detail, the first three chapters provide an introduction, firstly to the geology, building stone and water supply of the castle, then to the town and castle themselves. The second part of the book concerns the history of the castle founded soon after the Conquest to the completion of the recent campaign of the consolidation and representation of the buildings. Given the very fluid nature of the Welsh borderlands and the rapid rise and disappearance of the Marcher families who were lords of Ludlow, the medieval history can become very complicated, but Bruce Coplestone-Crow, David Harding and Ralph Griffiths lead us carefully through these turbulent times. They provide the political context to the key events which were played out at Ludlow and show how this castle and lordship were only a part of a network of estates held by the different families which could extend across England into Wales and Ireland.

In 1461, Ludlow Castle and the earldom of March was merged with the Crown by Edward IV. Soon after, his son Edward, prince of Wales was established with his household and council at Ludlow Castle to take responsibility for Wales and Chester. This became a satellite court and training ground for princes, lawyers and other officials. From these beginnings the Council of the Marches was to be given legal powers matching those found in Westminster. These powers were to terminate in 1641 and the castle's decline began during the Civil War.

For me, two of the most interesting pieces are by David Whitehead on 'Symbolism and assimilation' and Anthony Streeten on 'Preservation and display'. Both touch upon the changing perceptions of the castle from the point of view of those who built it and later those who came to visit. They examine the need for defence, accommodation, ceremony and administration overlain by chivalric symbolism, romance, practical conservation and management.

The last part of the book reviews the structural evidence and follows a broadly chronological approach. The Norman defences with the unusual entrance tower are unravelled with care by Derek Renn and Peter White. The Round Chapel is a little gem of a building, carefully reassessed by Glyn Coppack who pushes its date into the 1130s, the far end of the range previously suggested. Rather oddly, the description and the analysis of the main domestic accommodation is divided into the Solar, Great Hall and Great Chamber, and Tudor Lodgings, each dealt with by a different author. The Solar has a comprehensive set of internal elevations, whilst the other two rely upon photographs, and there are sections where one needs to have the buildings in front of you to follow the detailed arguments being presented. The evolution of these buildings from the late thirteenth into the seventeenth centuries and how they were adapted to changing needs is well handled.

Other contributors describe the remaining buildings in the Inner and Outer Wards, each interesting structures in their own right. The last section deals with the Porter's Lodge, Prison and Stable Block which lie inside the outer gateway and this was the only area where substantial excavation in advance of their conversion into new visitor facilities has taken place. This has helped to elucidate the buildings' history and use, giving some impression of what lies to be revealed elsewhere in the castle.

Looking at the map of the major administrative and lordship divisions in Wales in Rees Davies' *The*

Age of Conquest (1991, 393) it is easy to see the difference between the larger royal counties and the jigsaw of Marcher estates. There is something of the map of Renaissance Italy about this, where the host of city states vied with some larger rural territories. Over the past fifty years a lot of attention has been given to the great royal fortresses in Wales. However, this book on Ludlow Castle will provide a model for the rest of us studying the castles and estates of the remarkably powerful and self-confident Marcher lords in the rest of Wales and the Borders.

Cadw, Cardiff RICK TURNER

THE MORTIMERS, LORDS OF THE MARCH. By Charles Hopkinson and Martin Speight. 157 × 234mm. xii + 226 pp. 87 illustrations. Logaston Press, Almeley, Herefordshire, 2002. ISBN 1 873827 53 9. Price £12.95.

If one family dominates the medieval Marches of Wales, it is the Mortimers, who occasionally occupied centre stage in national affairs but who were always a major force in local events. It is surprising that there has previously been no monograph devoted to this influential family. This gap has now been admirably supplied by a historical account which places this family in their political context. However, this is not a work restricted to personal histories, for it also examines the wider administrative and economic basis which fuelled the family's ambitions and supported their service to the king, his councils and warfare, particularly in Wales.

The authors provide an easily readable account of this family, usually presented in chapters of twenty pages and accompanied by appropriate photographs and manuscript illustrations. After setting the scene in the Norman Conquest, in the Anglo-Norman families and the especial feudal character of the Welsh Marches, three-quarters of this book concerns the Mortimers, both the main line of Wigmore and the lesser branches of Chirk, Chelmarsh and Richard's Castle.

The steady accumulation of land, offices and influence throughout the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries included expansion from Shropshire and Herefordshire into central Wales. In the mid-thirteenth century Roger Mortimer III emerges as a forceful personality, prominent in the Barons' War and in the Welsh campaigns of Edward I. The increased amount of royal record-keeping and monastic chronicle writing enables the authors to assess his character. They explore the major contribution he made in establishing the Mortimers in the first rank of baronial families with holdings in England, Wales and Ireland. Roger's grandson Roger IV occupied a central political role in the reign of Edward II. This is fully and judiciously examined in this volume. Roger's close relationship with queen Isabella is expressed discreetly and shrewdly, though the authors doubt the more lurid details given in the medieval equivalent of the tabloid press. From Roger's pinnacle of power as Earl of March and virtual governor of Wales, the family fortunes declined (1330–1425) or at least stabilised at the previous more modest level. However, the Mortimers as major landowners on the borders of Wales and in Ireland played important roles in the French wars and in Glyndŵr's revolt. Ironically, the Mortimer claims to the throne when attempting to oust the Lancastrian Henry IV only came to fruition sixty years later in the Yorkist Edward IV, with Mortimer blood from his grandmother.

These personal histories are told in a lively and persuasive fashion, but equally interesting are the two useful sections on estates and on castles. The chapter on estates and their management looks at land accumulation and organisation, paying particular attention to the way in which widows' dowers and royal wardship could deplete the viability of the estates over long periods of time. The chapter on castles examines the role of the Mortimers as builders and beautifiers until both Wigmore and Ludlow were

more palace than fortress. The boroughs dependent on the castles were both an additional defence and a source of profit to be exploited as fully as possible.

In general this book is clearly written, though occasionally the prose is over-elaborate with too many qualifying clauses. There are relatively few misprints and errors. Occasionally family relationships are muddled (p. 128) or a location is inaccurately given: Mold, Flintshire (p. 59) and Rindown, county Roscommon (pp. 84, 98). One caption (pp. 174–5) is inadequate: the view shows the main façade of Denbigh castle between the Kitchen Tower and the Red Tower. This comment on illustrations prompts the reviewer to welcome their frequency and their clarity of reproduction, especially the air photographs. In the chapter on castles they are a necessary accompaniment, but elsewhere the illustrations have an enlivening subsidiary role. The maps and family trees should have been listed on the contents page. Whereas the five pedigrees are placed appropriately throughout the volume, the five maps are less predictably inserted. The reader really needs more guidance about their occurrence, with further cross-references in the text. The footnotes provide full supporting evidence, but the index has various omissions.

The overall impression of this book is that it is well-conceived and well-produced. The authors have assessed 'the unattractive ambition, avarice and unscrupulousness which were the hallmarks of the Mortimers'. They have explained how these characteristics arose and expounded how they sustained the family over thirteen generations.

Cambridge LAWRENCE BUTLER

CHEPSTOW CASTLE. By Rick Turner. 210 × 256mm. 52 pp. 102 illustrations. Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments, Cardiff, 2002. ISBN 1 85760 113 0. Price £3.25

HARLECH CASTLE. By Arnold Taylor. 210 × 256mm. 32 pp. 51 illustrations. Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments, Cardiff, 2002. ISBN 1 85760 109 2. Price £3.25

KIDWELLY CASTLE. By John R Kenyon. 210 × 256mm. 48 pp. 87 illustrations. Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments, Cardiff, 2002. ISBN 1 85760 168 8. Price £3.25

In 1986 Cadw launched its new format (150 × 210 mm.) site guides with these three sites. The 1986 guides brought a new standard in production values to the heritage world. They were mostly illustrated in black and white with a sprinkling of colour illustrations, and they were especially notable for their fine 3D reconstruction drawings. The newly revised (2002) guidebooks have a much larger format and are now illustrated almost entirely in colour. This new large format also displays the fine reproductions of Terry Ball, Chris Jones-Jenkins and others to best advantage. The Chepstow guide now incorporates short guides by Jeremy Knight on the Bulwarks, an Iron Age camp at Chepstow, and the church ruins at the nearby deserted village of Runston.

The revised editions of all three guidebooks incorporate the latest research on these buildings, with Rick Turner replacing Jeremy Knight as the chief author of the revised Chepstow guide. In particular the account rolls for Kidwelly and Chepstow have been thoroughly re-evaluated. At Tintern Abbey the excavations in the inner court and much recent research on the history of the post-Dissolution period, including the site's restoration, has been incorporated. The recent re-discovery of the pulpitum screen, removed in the Victorian era, amongst the fragments of the stone-store is also of note. Chepstow Castle, in particular, has been the subject of major architectural re-evaluation over the last few years. Perhaps

the most remarkable discovery has been the dating by dendrochronology of the doors, formerly on the main gatehouse, to the twelfth century. Recent scholarly emphasis on castles as vehicles for aristocratic display is reflected in the re-evaluation of the earl's chamber as a gloriette, or private space designed to provide scenic views of the Wye cliffs. One minor complaint about the Chepstow guide is that William I's foundation of a castle at Cardiff in 1081 is listed under 'key dates' as if fact. There is no doubt that a mint was founded at Cardiff, but that it was located in a Norman castle as opposed to a Welsh *llys* remains a controversial interpretation.

All three guidebooks are beautifully illustrated and well written. They strive to place the buildings in historical context and are the result of sound scholarship. This level of guide is probably too dense to be actually useful in touring around the monuments except for the most meticulous visitor. However, such is the high standard of on-site interpretation that this is no longer an essential requirement. Nevertheless, both English Heritage and their French equivalent have gone for much shorter and less-wordy guides, though supplemented by substantial books for their key monuments. Examples of the latter include Glyn Coppack's *Fountains Abbey* and Jean Chapelot's *Le Château de Vincennes*. It remains to be seen how successfully the new Cadw guides will sell as part of Cadw's overall marketing strategy. However, this reviewer hopes that such fine, and wonderfully priced, works will find a market in an era where even museums often find it fashionable to deride scholarship and accuracy in favour of invented ghosts.

Leicester PAUL COURTNEY

PLACE-NAMES IN GLAMORGAN. By Gwynedd O. Pierce. 150 × 220mm. 240 pp. Merton Priory Press, Cardiff, 2002. ISBN 1 898937 57 5. Price £14.95.

Many Welsh historians will already be familiar with the invaluable contributions to place-name study which Professor Pierce has made over the past forty years, particularly *Place-names of Dinas Powys Hundred* (1968), and his notes in the second volume of the Glamorgan County History and in *Cardiff and its Region* (1960). *Place-names in Glamorgan* is a very welcome and important addition not least because so much of his analysis of individual Glamorgan place-names is relevant to place-name study in other parts of Wales.

Place-names in Glamorgan is not a formal survey of the county's place-names on the lines of *Dinas Powys*, but is partly based upon the author's own contributions to the series of articles 'Ditectif Geiriau' which appeared in the *Western Mail* between 1993 and 1998 to which he has added extracts from his own research published elsewhere. The series and the selections from it which appeared in *Ar Draws Gwlad* (1997) and *Ar Draws Gwlad 2* (1999) attracted considerable public interest, but their appeal was clearly restricted among the wider community by their exclusive use of the Welsh language. *Place-names in Glamorgan* makes up for this splendidly. The method of presentation — as Professor Pierce readily acknowledges — may be described as 'popular' but it is no less valuable for that and indeed there are some very positive advantages. The lack of any formal 'straightjacket' has permitted close, sometimes lengthy, analysis of more than 150 place-names, has enabled freer application of argument and has given opportunity to the drawing of many interesting comparisons: at a rough estimate up to a thousand other place-names and personal names are introduced into the discussion in this manner.

Professor Pierce's familiarity with a very wide range of historical sources and his extraordinary ability to interpret complex historical, linguistic and topographical evidence is remarkable. A good example of this is shown in his analysis of Y Fanhalog. The Ordnance Survey map spelling Fanhaulog might easily be interpreted as sloppy spelling for Y Fanheulog and thus translated as 'the sunny place' (*man, heulog*),

but Professor Pierce shows the true derivation from Y Fanhalog, a variant of Y Fanhadlog, 'place where broom is abundant'. Further confusion was introduced by late nineteenth-century historians misconstruing it as Y Fynachlog, 'the monastery', and mis-associating it with a distinct place-name, Mynachdy. Some of the most 'straightforward' place-names are shown to be false: Gwernycegin does not contain *cegin* 'kitchen' but a variant of *cain, cein(g)* 'ridge, back, hog's back', and Heol-y-march contains *ôl* 'path, track' not *heol* 'street, road' — not a great deal of difference in meaning but an important example of both the use of *ôl* and the ease with which place-name elements can be confused and misinterpreted.

Some minor additions can be made to a few place-names, yet even here they nearly always support his analysis and conclusions. In his discussion of Corntown, he decisively rejects the false Welsh form *Corntwn* in favour of *Cortwn* on the basis of a *triban* — this is also confirmed by Edward Lhuyd's reference *c.* 1700 to *Fynnon vair yng Hortwn*. Earlier spellings can be found for Llodrog alias St Wall (*St Wall* 1721), Pencisley (*Pen y Sysley* 1536) and Y Groes (*cross y brombil* 1676); the lost Llodre (*Llodrebrythe* 1569) must also be *y Llodrau-brith* 1778 (a Baptist meeting-house in the early eighteenth century) recorded as *Clothrebrith* 1813 and shown as *Llety-brith* on the Ordnance Survey one-inch scale map 1833 about a mile north of Sketty. There is, too, an earlier spelling for Llanyrnewydd (*Llan Enewir* 1556) and the reference to *Come Ynewir* here in 1522 adds the possibility of a lost river-name to his choice of the personal name, Ynewyr. His arguments are very persuasive: I am not sure that everyone at one time would have agreed with his derivation of Roath alias Y Rhath from a Welsh word *rhath* borrowed from Irish *ráth* 'fort'. Sir Ifor Williams had suggested that the river-name here Nant y Rhath (Roath Brook) might contain the same element found in *rhathu* 'to scrub (out), to scrape' indicating a 'river which scrapes and erodes its banks'. Professor Pierce, however, presents compelling evidence for such a fort (probably at Roath Court) described by Rice Merrick in 1578 as an 'old Pyle, compassed with a Mote'. Is this perhaps the castle of *Radf* (and bridge of *Rat*) from 1184–85?

Works of this high standard are rare in Wales where place-name research has until recent years been characterised by a lack of co-ordination and urgency — matters to which he himself drew attention in this same journal in 1995. If there is one matter of regret it must surely be that there are not more publications of this nature.

Glamorgan Record Office, Cardiff RICHARD MORGAN

WELSH OUTLAWS AND BANDITS. POLITICAL REBELLION AND LAWLESSNESS IN WALES, 1400–1603. By E. A Rees. 143 × 223mm. vii + 301 pp. Caterwen Press, Birmingham, 2001. ISBN 0 9540967 0 3. Price £15.00.

This is the first detailed study of outlaws and bandits in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Wales, and it is partly a contribution to the recovery of the often surprising social history of upland Wales. It is also a contribution to the growing literature on late-medieval and early modern banditry. The author teaches east European history in Florence and is very conscious of banditry's comparative dimension. In particular, Eric Hobsbawm's influential idea of the social bandit is unobtrusively examined against the Welsh evidence. In the end Professor Rees does not really think that Welsh bandits were a political phenomenon in the Hobsbawmian sense, or that the idea of the noble robber was well developed in Wales, but Welsh outlaws did belong to a characteristic phase of state formation.

Outlaws and bandits tend to flourish where the state is weak, especially in the aftermath of violent disorder. As Professor Rees shows, lawlessness in fifteenth-century Wales was intensified by judicial and administrative weakness after revolt and civil war. Cattle thief and robber could operate from the relative

safety of strategically sited retreats in the mountainous terrain of numerous quasi-independent lordships, and some bandits prudently maintained links with local power brokers. Banditry was gradually eliminated by the Tudor state, but the process took many decades. The judicial framework established by the Acts of Union intensified campaigns against outlaws that had been initiated by the Council in the Marches. For the most part the fugitive life of the outlaw was brief, and ended by capture, premature death, or occasionally by a pardon. However, ironically, the depleted ranks of the outlaws were continually replenished by the mid- and late-Tudor assizes: as the Great Sessions approached, a number of suspected felons would leave hurriedly for the woods before they were formally indicted. Nevertheless, falling gaol calendars and changing patterns of settlement and land use in the uplands effectively ended outlaw society in the early seventeenth century.

Professor Rees does his best to disentangle fact from outlaw fiction. Some infamous mid-sixteenth-century incidents have a mythic quality, and in a curious way echo exploits attributed to English robber heroes. The murder of Lewis Owen by the Gwylliaid Cochion Mawddwy was certainly historical fact; but evidence is lacking for the activities of Cardiganshire's Plant Mat, which included, according to a late tradition, the murder of a judge at Rhayader. More could have been said about the significance of Twm Siôn Cati, possibly the last of the gentlemen bandits, who remains a somewhat elusive historical figure. The development and transmission of the tales about Twm show that the idea of the gentleman robber and trickster continued to have an appeal in eighteenth-century Wales, in much the same way as the exploits of highwaymen were romanticised in England.

Professor Rees (acknowledging T. Gwynn Jones and others) is very informative about the poetic evidence relating to outlawry, and discusses the nuances of the vocabulary used to refer to outlaws and bandits. Minstrels on their travels sometimes encountered outlaws, and occasionally poets themselves seem to have fled to the woods. Some poets had more than a sneaking regard for outlaws who seemed to embody the aristocratic values of generosity and hospitality. The more prominent outlaws belonged to the *uchelwyr* class and were in effect gentlemen bandits. Rees instances Dafydd ap Siencyn, of aristocratic ancestry and a Lancastrian partisan, as a noble robber. If Sir John Wynne is to be believed, Dafydd dressed his followers in green — a detail that irresistibly recalls the reference in contemporary ballads to the Lincoln green livery worn by Robin Hood's outlaw fellowship. Actual outlaw behaviour may indeed have been influenced by late-medieval stories of outlaw heroes that helped provide a 'cultural script' of generosity, hospitality, bravery, and brotherhood. Rees notes (p. 90) that the traditions of Fulk Fitzwarin, Gamelyn and, of course, Robin Hood, among others, were current in Wales. Rees cites a revealing poem praising the outlaws who gave food and drink to minstrels at a place called Rhyd Goch. The poet celebrates the generosity of Robin Hood, and claims that outlaws stole from those who had plenty, including 'misers and forfeit Saxons'. However, by and large, as Rees shows, the poets praised their patrons as leaders of settled society who protected their neighbourhoods from predatory outlaws.

Late medieval and early modern banditry in Wales has some relevance for the archaeologist and landscape historian. The idea of the outlaw and robber (*gwylliaid*) was inseparable from perceptions of wildness that had complex landscape references. Some outlaw settlements may possibly have left archaeological traces. The mountain 'redoubts', as Rees calls them, deliberately exploited areas that were on the margins of adjoining lordships, but also included privileged enclaves like the sanctuary of Ysbyty Ifan, which presumably had well-defined boundaries. Occasional concerted campaigns against bandits certainly had an impact on the landscape. Leland describes how the woods of Cwm Ystwyth were felled to deprive outlaws of cover, and Carreg Cennen Castle was deliberately partially demolished when it became the haunt of robbers. There was not a strong tradition of defensible domestic architecture in Wales but the longhouse may have developed as a prudent response to the threat of persistent cattle rustling. In the house-and-byre range the best beasts could be kept permanently under the eye of the

farmer during the long winter nights when cattle thieves roamed the countryside.

Professor Rees doesn't claim to have written the last word on outlaws and bandits. In particular, as he acknowledges, the legal record remains to be thoroughly explored if we are to have a more systematic view of outlawry and test the sometimes self-serving remarks of Tudor administrators. However, this is an important contribution to a neglected and fascinating subject. The book is well produced by the appropriately named Caterwen ('great oak') Press, and romantic readers will appreciate the green cover etched with oak leaves and the frontispiece depicting bandits in Arcadia. The lively text is well referenced and supplied with a bibliography. The book should have been provided with an index of names and places, but then outlaws have always proved rather elusive.

Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales RICHARD SUGGETT

HUMPHREY LLWYD: CRONICA WALLIAE. Edited by Ieuan M. Williams. 145 × 225mm. xi + 290 pp. University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 2002. ISBN 0 7083 1638 7. Price £25.00.

Humphrey Llwyd (1547–68) is one of the most eminent figures among a small group of pioneer Welsh Renaissance scholars. Typical of the breed, he was an enthusiast and polymath: physician, antiquary, historian, mapmaker and topographer, with a passion for manuscripts and place-names, and a delight in the arts. A practical man, too, he served as Member of Parliament for East Grinstead and Denbigh. He had been born and bred in the Vale of Clwyd, that heartland of Welsh culture, the region of Wales more intensely aware than any other of the distinctively Welsh linguistic, literary and historical tradition. He migrated to Oxford University to complete his education and then, like a number of his compatriots, entered the scholarly household of a great Tudor aristocrat, in his case the earl of Arundel, and his brother-in-law, Lord Lumley, whose daughter he married. Of his published books, the best known was *Commentarioli Descriptionis Britannicae Fragmentum* (1572), translated by Thomas Twyne as *The Breviary of Britayne* (1578). A close friend and co-worker of that most celebrated European mapmaker, Abraham Ortelius, he unfortunately died before he could publish his most ambitious work, *Cronica Walliae*. This was a history of Wales from Cadwaladr the Blessed (d. 664) to Llywelyn the Last (d. 1282), which was not set forth in print until 2002.

Of the surviving manuscript copies of *Cronica Walliae*, two are now in the British Library, one in the Bodleian, and two in the National Library of Wales. The edition here under review is based essentially on National Library of Wales Llanstephan MS 177. It was from Llwyd's work that David Powel was later to take most of the text of his *Historie of Cambria* (1584), which remained the standard history of medieval Wales until Sir John Lloyd's masterpiece appeared in 1911. *Cronica Walliae* itself was derived very largely from the two original Welsh chronicles, *Brut y Tywysogyon* and *Brenhinedd y Saesson*. In addition, Llwyd went to some pains to glean valuable material concerning neighbouring peoples like the Anglo-Saxons, Irish, Scots, Scandinavians and Normans, whose interventions had such fateful consequences for the history of the Welsh. For this purpose Llwyd turned to a number of leading English chroniclers.

Balanced and scholarly an historian as Llwyd was, in general, there were times when he found it impossible to resist taking a side-swipe at those of whom he disapproved. That prime bugbear of all good Welsh antiquarians — *Polydore Vergil* — got short shrift for 'a notable error . . . which after his accustomed fashion, denieth the isle to be called Mona but Anglesea . . . because it is called in English Anglesea' (p. 64). Similarly, the Saxons and the Normans both come under the lash, the former having 'traitorously and cruelly slain the Britons and driven them out of their land' (p. 105), while the latter he

stigmatised as 'the cruellest people in the world' (p. 124). The history of Wales, as might be expected at this time, was almost exclusively the chronicle of the deeds — and misdeeds — of the kings, princes and *nobiles* of Wales. It is a tale full of sound and fury, battles and bloodshed, triumph and disaster, courage and cowardice. Some of the outstanding rulers come in for a meed of praise: 'Hywel Dda, the noblest and worthiest king oil Wales . . . a prince that loved peace and good order and feared God' (p. 99). Running through it all, despite defeat and disaster, was the persistent belief in that prophecy that the Welsh had an indefeasible right to be rulers of the whole island which God would one day return to them.

The book has been edited with meticulous care and exemplary clarity by the late Professor Ieuan M. Williams, and has been admirably prepared for, and seen through, the press by Professor J. Beverley Smith. When Professor Williams died in 2000, the cultural life of Wales suffered a grievous loss. He was not only an inspirational head of department but also an administrator with a long and enviable knowledge of book-publishing. He had worked in the field of Renaissance scholarship for fifty years and this excellent book was his most important contribution to our understanding of Tudor historiography. He had utterly refused to be daunted by years of debilitating and painful ill-health. *Cronica Walliae* stands as a fitting monument to this most amiable of men and his devoted wife and helpmeet, Gwen.

Swansea GLANMOR WILLIAMS

THE WELSH IN LONDON, 1500–2000. Edited by Emrys Jones. 157 × 234mm. xiii + 273 pp. 51 illustrations. University of Wales Press on behalf of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, Cardiff, 2001. ISBN 0 7083 1697 2. Price £14.99.

At long last we have a history of the Welsh in London which does justice to the inherent interest and importance of the subject, written by one of the leading urban geographers of our time, and which succeeds, in a most convincing manner, in providing a full and rounded account of its subject. It is written in a plain unfussy style, often with wit and humour. It is well illustrated and is altogether a pleasure to read. The author is reassuringly familiar with all the places he refers to, and he takes an infectious pleasure in the perambulations which his readers are invited to enjoy in his company. Though scholarly and fully annotated, the book will appeal equally to the curious reader and the well-informed scholar. Most certainly its appearance will be welcomed by the multitude of people who cherish rich memories of years spent in the metropolis as students, professional men, teachers, shopkeepers, craftsmen or ordinary workmen. For all such diverse groups of people the book will provide a context into which to fit their own particular experiences of the great city.

Professor Jones refers generously to the one book on the Welsh in London with which his own book can usefully be compared in terms of scholarship and readability, namely, *The History of the Cymmrodorion 1751–1951* by R. T. Jenkins and Helen Rammage (1953). Jenkins, in that classic study, examined the ways in which relatively small numbers of Welsh exiles — merchants, bankers, scholars, clergymen and gentlemen residing for the most part in the City — created institutions which provided Welsh people with a strong sense of identity based on pride in their language and history. He did this by brilliantly exploiting the advantages of having a well-defined theme and a coherent body of sources. Professor Jones, however, has to deal with a multi-faceted and enormously complex subject over a somewhat longer period of time, nothing less, indeed, than the story of the Welsh communities as a whole in London.

The Welsh in London is a composite book. Professor Jones provides the main narrative and conclusion leaving other scholars to deal with certain specific themes. Some of these are substantial contributions

in their own right. Thus, W. P. Griffith contributes a brilliant opening chapter on the Tudor period. This was the century that experienced the first relatively substantial and regular flow of immigrant Welsh people, and to the extent that they settled as families there was thus set down an enduring sub-stratum of Welsh people within the general population of London. Though numbers were small in relation to the whole, it was socially diverse with a high degree of professional, courtly, scholarly and ecclesiastical elites.

But the major part of the book is written by Professor Jones. He has chosen to keep fairly rigorously to a chronological presentation of his material though, obviously, he might have chosen instead to deal with it thematically under headings such as population movements, settlements, work, play, religion and education, and so on. In five chapters he traces in turn the transition from medieval times to the Renaissance, and then to the eighteenth century, which saw the establishment and growth of the immensely influential societies to which reference has already been made. It was also to see a significant growth in the numbers of Welsh people settling permanently in parishes outside the City.

Little is known about the social composition of these people. He correctly surmises that the gradations must have been very wide, at least as wide and as cruel as the gradations in the rural societies with which they were already familiar and from which most of them had come. The social distance between the well educated and the professional men at the top and the poverty of the immigrant labourers and artisans was not, of course, peculiar to the Welsh: it was a fact of life for the vast majority of newcomers, a conditioning force in the making of the new communities.

When we come to the nineteenth century the sources available to the historian are more numerous, diverse and rich, so that it becomes more or less possible to suggest answers to many such sociological questions. In particular, the series of decennial censuses, especially that of 1851, bring a new degree of accuracy in estimating the numbers of Welsh persons, their ages, family structures, occupations and, crucially, their locations. Together, these provide an immense amount of information, and for the first time it is possible to draw distribution maps of considerable complexity. The movement to parishes adjacent to the City had begun in the previous century, but by the mid-nineteenth century Welsh people were ubiquitous. This is the period which saw the milk trade become almost a Welsh monopoly, which managed to survive the transformation of the industry by the large retail organisations that were formed in the last decades of the century.

The census has nothing to tell us directly about the social life of the people, though a great deal can be inferred from occupations, family size and structure and residence, but by the second half of the century there was a huge increase in printed sources, newspapers and magazines and, crucially, the records of chapels and churches. There were also numerous societies not necessarily connected with religious organizations, many of them created by the Welsh people themselves. Professor Jones makes good use of these sources, and he is able with their aid to illuminate somewhat the social experience of the Welsh and their struggle to adapt to the life of the metropolis without sacrificing totally their identity, and to capitalise on its many possibilities to their own advantage. In this way we approach nearer to an understanding of the mentalities of the people.

Likewise, he has much to say about the nature of the continued migration during the nineteenth century. At first it had been people from the rural parts of Wales, individuals for the most part not necessarily aiming to settle, but by the second half of the century the industrial counties of south and north Wales were affected. Then, with the industrial depression of the inter-war period a steady flow turned into a veritable flood, bringing large numbers of unemployed men and women with totally different cultural experiences and different expectations.

Not the least of his achievements is to have brought together a number of experts in aspects of social life only touched upon in his chronological treatment of the subject. Of these, Rhidian Griffiths's study

of the religious life of the London Welsh is outstanding, a model of accurate research and lucid writing. Jeremy Segrott contributes a very perceptive essay on Welsh identities (note the plural), Hafina Clwyd writes knowledgeably about London Welsh writers, Wyn Thomas on music, Peter Lord on visual culture, Ivor James and Neil Mcintyre on medical men, and finally David Lewis Jones on some of the leading personalities. The book ends with a rather nostalgic perambulation of some of the more prominent locations and buildings associated with the Welsh. In many ways this last essay by Professor Jones illustrates very effectively the enormous changes that have taken place, and are still taking place, in the metropolis.

Aberystwyth IEUAN GWYNEDD JONES

THE COASTAL ARCHAEOLOGY OF WALES. Edited by Andrew Davidson. 207 × 295mm. xv + 160 pp. 81 illustrations. 17 tables. Council for British Archaeology, York, 2002. ISBN 1 902771 27 3. Price £19.95.

In an age of air travel and mass tourism people can travel the world without directly experiencing the sea. For British people, too, there is also now the land bridge of the Channel Tunnel to take them into the heart of Europe, leaving ferry traffic in decline. Air transport vies with bulk container ships and carriers to import and export goods and raw materials to and from our shores. Fewer fishing boats set out from British ports each day, and towns which used to be thriving seaside resorts at the end of the nineteenth century are sadly rundown; their promenades and piers sometimes in total ruin. In this situation the memory of the role that the sea played in the life of the British Isles, whether in protecting it from invasion, providing the medium for trade to and from its shores, or serving as a food resource, is in sharp decline. With that withering of the memory goes the decline of awareness in the coastline as a resource for understanding our heritage and of the multiplicity of activities which relate to the sea and the livings derived from it. At the same time rising sea levels and periods of increased storminess pose generalised threats to the historic environment. The appearance of *The Coastal Archaeology of Wales* is thus especially welcome, documenting in a most attractive way the nature and scope of the archaeological resource against a characterisation of the coastline of Wales and an evaluation of coastal management issues. The book concludes with a consideration of the potential of the archaeological resource and the priorities for future work.

The problem of coastal threats is that, unlike forestry or agriculture and the generalised effect of deep ploughing on archaeological monuments, it is not in our hands to arrest the indiscriminate action of the sea. Indeed, the management of the latter, in the form, for example, of the construction of coastal defences, can be extremely expensive. The historic resource, too, is problematic in so far as its strengths, which lie in their variety and complexity, are also its weaknesses. Even if improved defence was the preferred solution against erosion and eventual destruction, there are few individual sites or monuments of such importance that they warrant conservation at almost any cost. The historic resource has to be seen in the context of other needs for shoreline management such as the protection of people and housing, industrial plant, agricultural land, etc. Moreover, the variety of different types of monument through time makes the task of making the selection of adequate samples for preservation by record extremely difficult. The concept of group value has a particular resonance in determining policies and priorities in the coastal zone.

Already the policy of preservation by record in Wales has made an exceptional contribution to our understanding of the relationship between man and the sea since the Palaeolithic. Intensive fieldwork

along the southern coast of Wales has transformed our understanding of a range of subjects and issues. These include the relationship between early man and the natural 'submerged' forests which are a feature of this coastline, fishing, trade and harbours, represented both by finds of vessels and the remains of their cargoes, and by the evidence for hitherto unrecorded beaching sites or local berthing places. Much has been learned, particularly for the Roman and medieval periods of historic attempts to manage the sea through the construction of coastal defences and the drainage of salt marshes.

But this is only the beginning and much remains to be done, not least in the post-medieval period which 'contains the most archaeology, sometimes in overwhelming amounts' (p. 140). Here we have seen the greatest changes in the last few years in, for example, industry, military installations, the exploitation of natural resources (whether from the sea or the land), the organisation and management of ports and harbours, etc., etc. It is a long list! However, whereas the coastal archaeology of the last two or three hundred years can still be relatively easily identified, there are still periods, such as the early medieval, when we have only the slightest clue as to the nature of the archaeology we are searching for. Andrew Davidson and his contributors have done extraordinarily well in producing this beautifully illustrated report, drawing attention to the range and quality of the archaeology of the coastline of Wales, and how much will be lost of our maritime history if we do not continue with the policy of survey and preservation by record and, wherever possible, by appropriate protective measures. No Member of the Welsh Assembly should be without a copy.

University of Reading MICHAEL FULFORD

A HISTORY OF THE OLD PARISH OF HAWARDEN. By T. W. Pritchard. 204 × 273mm. 293 pp. 231 illustrations. Bridge Books, Wrexham, 2002. ISBN 1 872424 60 0. Price £19.99.

A History of the Old Parish of Hawarden is a substantial piece of work by T. W. Pritchard. It is not much short of 300 pages, well over two thirds of which contain illustrations, some of them having already appeared in print, many others unpublished until now. It is by no means a lightweight publication, but its slightly less than A4 format and soft cover give it an attractive look which might, and I hope will, tempt readers who have cut their local history teeth on booklets of old photographs.

The ancient parish of Hawarden contained in addition to the village that bears its name, the communities — some of them former townships, others not — of Broughton and Bretton, Ewloe, Mancot, Pentrobin, Mancot, Queensferry, Sandycroft, Saltney, Saltney Ferry, Shotton, Sealand and Garden City. Buckley is the only omission, formed from parts of Hawarden and Mold parishes. It is, I understand, to be the subject of the next book by this author. As he states in the acknowledgments, he has retired to Hawarden after a life in the Anglican church, a life which has already contributed substantially to published works of local and historical interest, including articles, booklets on parish churches such as Llanferres, Nercwys, and others, to more sustained pieces of research on the parishes of Ruabon and now Hawarden, not to mention the history of the Wynn and Williams-Wynn family of Wattstay and Wynnstay in Ruabon.

Both the author's parents were born in the ancient parish and his obvious knowledge and affection are born of long acquaintance with the place. He tells us his aim is to write a 'popular history' but his desire to acknowledge the help of other historians and the influence of his academic background has made this a popular history with comprehensive footnotes; it is only the lack of an index that prevents it being considered a more traditional parish history. As Sir William Gladstone points out in his foreword, Revd Pritchard's historian predecessors have been more numerous and respected than in many parishes,

reflecting Hawarden's significance, interest, and importance in history. The author on this occasion has 'woven the whole tapestry' acknowledging these histories but also incorporating other elements such as the development of industry, not always given as much prominence in those earlier works.

The book is divided partly along topographical lines, but it also has more general chapters addressing general historical periods, entitled 'Beginnings'; 'The seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries'; 'Coal mining and iron founding', and 'The making of the river settlements'. These general chapters are perhaps the most difficult to tackle with the inevitable complexities of the descent of families and estates to describe, as well as the challenge of placing them in the general historical context of national affairs. Some sections within the chapters deserve special mention, especially the treatment of the administrative machinery of the parish. What might have been a difficult subject to the newcomer is made easier, amongst other things, by reference to the eighteenth-century 'jobseekers' and to the parish as the 'benefit agency'. It might have been an idea to list these sub-sections on the contents page to indicate the wealth of variety of topics contained within the chapters.

Its scope is comprehensive, from the field patterns of the pre-industrial parish to the aircraft factory and the end of steel-making in Shotton in the 1990s. As well as the churches and chapels, we have the cinemas and working-men's institutes, the snooker halls, cricket clubs and rose queens. Although T. W. Pritchard's predecessors have paid much attention to the mother parish, I doubt if any one has give the former industrial settlements as fair a treatment as he has in this book. The chapters on Shotton and Queensferry are particularly interesting and comprehensive.

A word must be said also about the illustrations: drawings; maps; prints; and old photographs, the majority of which are from the collections at the Flintshire Record Office at the Old Rectory, Hawarden, a building whose history also features in the publication. They are another of the strengths of this excellent book.

Denbighshire Record Office, Ruthin KEVIN MATTHIAS