

## Reviews

THE MAKING OF WALES. By John Davies. 213 × 262 mm. 224 pp. 331 illustrations. The History Press, Stroud, Gloucestershire, 2009. ISBN 978 0 752452 41 8. Price £25.00.

This book was originally commissioned and published by Cadw in 1996; it was intended as an introduction to the historic landscape and the built environment of Wales and its success may be measured by the fact that it has now run to a second edition. The author begins on the Bloreng near Abergavenny, showing the reader how much of the history of Wales is reflected in the landscapes and building of northern Monmouthshire and describing the view as ‘a panorama of a palimpsest’. We are reminded that no fewer than thirty parishes are visible from this vantage point and that the sites range from prehistoric fortifications to the Blaenavon ironworking complex and Big Pit, relics of the coming of large-scale industry. We are also reminded that ‘the countryside is as much an artefact as is a town’ and the whole book may be seen as an account of the impact of human settlement on the country. It is not only the making of Wales which is examined here; it is also the makers, mute and inglorious as most of them must be. Those Mesolithic hunters who left their footprints in the mud at the mouth of the Usk are as much a part of our history as Owain Glyndŵr or David Lloyd George.

Sixteen chapters begin with Palaeolithic and Neolithic Wales and conclude with ‘The last twenty-five years: the making of Wales 1984–2009’. Each period in our history is described and supported with illustrations; these are particularly well chosen and it is fair to say that those in the second edition are even better than those in the first. One of the best things about this book is the effective use made by the author of aerial photography, underlining the way in which this has revolutionised the study of archaeology and topography. Those included here range from Tre’r Ceiri and Caernarfon with the Roman fort of Segontium at its centre to the eighteenth-century bell-pits on Halkyn Mountain, the mighty Penrhyn quarry and the oil refineries at Milford Haven. The coming of Christianity, the impact of the Norman invaders, the efforts of the princes of Gwynedd to create a Welsh principality and the emergence of the first towns are all described and illustrated, as is the development of housing at every level from the *plasty* to the cottage and the industrial terrace house, and the decline of heavy industry as well as its rise. Little, if anything, is forgotten.

Dr Davies is not afraid to express his own views; his comments on, for example, the civic vandalism that has wrought such havoc in our historic towns since the nineteenth century will strike a chord with many of the readers of this journal. In his later chapters he discusses the effect of continuing social change on the urban and rural environments and on the whole way of life, and in the final chapter of this second edition he considers the heightened awareness of our heritage over the last quarter-century and the work of such bodies as Cadw, the Royal Commission and the Welsh Archaeological Trusts. Discoveries and developments since the appearance of the first edition receive their due attention; the excavation of the Viking settlement at Llanbedr-goch in Anglesey and of the court complex at Rhosyr in the same county are included as are the Newport ship and the award of World Heritage status to Blaenavon. The nomination of the Pontcysyllte aqueduct is mentioned but the bid’s success came after publication.

Cadw has been fortunate in its author. John Davies’ particular field of study has been the nineteenth century but he has regularly shown himself to be at home in most periods of our history and to have something original and thought-provoking to say about them. This book is an excellent introduction to the Welsh landscape and environment and the illustrations, so well integrated with the text, are a joy. It is a worthy companion to Peter Lord’s three volumes on the visual history of Wales as a key to

understanding that history which goes beyond politics and economics but from which, in the last resort, they stem.

Bangor

TONY CARR

ANGLESEY. PAST LANDSCAPES OF THE COAST. Photography by Mick Sharp and Jean Williamson. Text by Frances Lynch. 250 × 226 mm. 134 pp. 149 illustrations. Windgather Press, Oxford, 2009. ISBN 978 1 905119 29 5. Price £20.00.

This book celebrates the coastal scenery and archaeology of Anglesey. It is available in both English and Welsh versions, and its publication was supported by the Isle of Anglesey Borough Council. Some 95 per cent of Anglesey's 201-kilometre coast was designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty over 40 years ago, and it remains the largest AONB in Wales, covering nearly one third of the island. Approximately 50 kilometres is also designated Heritage Coast, whilst the Anglesey Coast Path, a developing long-distance footpath, encourages access to a high proportion of the area.

Anglesey has an enormously varied coast. The basis of this variety is its geology, the importance of which is recognised in the designation of Anglesey as a GeoPark. It has been argued that the island has the greatest geodiversity for its size anywhere in Europe, and this diversity is in turn reflected in its scenery, its natural environment and its heritage. It is the last of these that is the subject of this book, though both geology and the natural environment make an appearance.

The book is arranged chronologically, and is in seven chapters covering early prehistory, later prehistory, Romans to Vikings, medieval, sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, nineteenth century and twentieth to twenty-first century. A further reading list is given at the end. All sites mentioned in the text are located on a map at the front of the volume by grid square and name.

Guidebooks which describe the Anglesey coast have appeared in many guises since Henry Glazebrook's pioneering work in the 1930s, which originally combined sailing directions and charts with historical notes and local tales. The work was republished in the 1960s as two separate volumes, a coastal pilot and a descriptive and historical text. A historical narrative of the island's relationship with the sea can be found in Aled Eames' magisterial *Ships and Seamen of Anglesey* published in 1973. The book under review is, however, neither guidebook nor history, but rather a combination of the two, which draws on the skills of two professional photographers who specialise in archaeological photography, and a professional archaeologist.

Mick Sharp and Jean Williamson have contributed to hundreds of archaeological works, including many of the Cadw guides, and they hold an extensive photographic library of archaeological subjects. Their experience and ability mean the photographs, as well as being aesthetically pleasing and providing a clear view of sites, also allow fresh insight and understanding. Interspersed with the colour photographs are occasional black and white images, a medium for which the photographers are well known, and which provide their own stark beauty. In addition to the photographs by Mick Sharp and Jean Williamson there are aerial photographs of a very high standard from David Longley (Gwynedd Archaeological Trust) and the RCAHMW as well as other occasional illustrations.

The information provided by the photographs and illustrations is enhanced by the accompanying text. Frances Lynch is a Past President of this association, and former lecturer in prehistory at Bangor University. Her knowledge of the archaeology of Anglesey is profound and extensive, and this shows in the high quality of the text and its wide-ranging subject matter. Each chapter is preceded by a short introduction of two pages or so, followed by lengthy and descriptive captions to each of the illustrations.

The layout of the book is in chronological order. This allows the reader to obtain a clear understanding of the development through time of the coastal landscape, and in general allows for a meaningful text. However, because many sites are multi-period it means several are illustrated more than once, though this helps understanding, as the two shots of Trwyn Du, Aberffraw, on pages 3 and 16 indicate, the first displaying the Mesolithic site in its wider context, the second a close view of the overlying barrow. On first reading it quickly becomes apparent that there is no cross-referencing of these duplications within the text. This could be irritating, and information on a specific site difficult to find were it not for an excellent index which allows mention of sites to be found quickly and easily within the text. The chronological order works best when combined with a thematic approach, as for example in the section on lighthouses and sea marks (pages 90–2) though it can also lead to minor difficulties, resulting in the copper industry at Parys Mountain being shoe-horned into the nineteenth-century industrial section, whereas its heyday was in the eighteenth century.

Inevitably there are minor omissions, and everyone will have a favourite site they feel should have been included. In the reviewer's case, for example, the delightful small church at Llanrhwydryn only gets a very distant shot and is not mentioned in the text. The west-coast dune systems do not, perhaps, get their full due; in particular, the Newborough dune system and its afforestation is one of the more significant of the coastal landscapes which is not included. The Marram grass industry is not mentioned. The Viking period is reduced to two pages, and the small earthwork at Trefadog might have usefully provided an illustration for this section. The enclosure of coastal estuaries is not mentioned, though this process dramatically changed the coastline in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, particularly the construction of the cob at Malltraeth to reclaim the Cefni estuary. However, the authors have done extremely well to fit in so many themes and sites, and have achieved a good balance between the well known and less well known.

Minor textual errors include 'Marron' for Marram grass (page 3) and 'Cildrwn' for Cildwrn (page 79). On page 112 Cafnan Mill is older than 1840 (though the machinery largely dates from then) and the statement 'unusually for Anglesey is water driven' is misleading given there were three to four times the number of water mills to wind mills on the island. These though are minor errors and do not detract from a book which is beautifully illustrated, well-written and informative. The mixture of text and illustration allows for both browsing and more serious reading, and it would be an unusual person who did not gain both new information and greater insight from this book.

Bangor

ANDREW DAVIDSON

THE BUILDINGS OF WALES. GWYNEDD. By Richard Haslam, Julian Orbach and Adam Voelcker. 122 × 222mm. xviii + 789 pp. 81 illustrations. Yale University Press, London, 2009. ISBN 978 0 300141 69 6. Price £29.99.

The last volume in the *Buildings of Wales* series has been eagerly awaited for some time and does not disappoint. Richard Haslam, Julian Orbach and Adam Voelcker have collaborated to produce an outstanding guide to *Gwynedd*. It is appropriate that Haslam, who began the series with his innovative *Powys* (1976), should have helped the series through to completion thirty years later. The wait has been worthwhile: the *Gwynedd* Pevsner is lively and intelligent, serving as an utterly reliable reference book and architectural guide for specialist and general reader alike. The Introduction and mini essays in the gazetteer (e.g. on Llandudno and Portmeirion) not only instruct but are a pleasure to read. The monuments are varied and full of interest, and Iain Wright's photographs of them are ravishing, as we have come to expect.

The guide covers the historic counties of Gwynedd: Anglesey, Caernarfonshire and Merioneth. This relatively small and largely upland region is crammed with monuments of national and international significance: Tre'r-ceiri, the earliest Welsh inscription at Tywyn, the Edwardian castles (now designated World Heritage Sites), Telford's roads and bridges, Parys Mountain, Penrhyn slate quarries, and so on. Moreover, some monuments concentrate historic memory of political conflicts in an unusual way: Penrhyn Castle, Penyberth (not mentioned because destroyed), and Trawsfynydd Nuclear Power Station, to name the most recent. The authors are aware of this, of course, but deal with the monuments in a measured and historical way that helps the reader view them architecturally as well as symbolically.

The guide has had the advantage of drawing on the RCAHMW's county *Inventories* and Cadw's guidebooks and community listings, but it has very many new things to say. Since the *Inventory* volumes were published, the last over forty years ago, there have been numerous losses, alterations, reordering of churches, as well as significant discoveries. Up-to-date overviews of different classes of monuments are provided by the authors with specialist contributions from Frances Lynch, John Kenyon, Judith Alfrey, and David Gwyn on prehistoric and Roman Gwynedd, castles, vernacular houses and farm buildings, and industrial Gwynedd. The guide is astonishingly up-to-date and includes several very recent discoveries, notably the Roman fort near Gwanas Fawr (page 564) and the apsidal church at Llwydfaen (page 531), both aerial discoveries by the RCAHMW. As regards new buildings, the new Snowdon summit building, 'Hafod Eryri', opened in 2009, is duly described and attributed.

In terms of accuracy, this volume appears well-nigh faultless, though a vigilant archivist complained to me that Lloyd George's death had been misdated by a year (!). I have noted occasional omissions rather than errors. Many complex sites are discussed here (e.g. Gwydir, Parc, Penybryn) and one can take issue with the emphases of some accounts, but this is part of the normal give and take of architectural history. Accurate dates and attributions, many presented here for the first time, form the backbone of the book. The index of architects and artists extends to a satisfying nine double-columned pages (though in my copy the first page of this index has been transposed with the first page of the equally impressive index of patrons and residents). In the face of so much richness I feel somewhat curmudgeonly recording my frustration that dates and attributions are not referenced, but I accept, albeit reluctantly, that it is the Pevsner house-style to dispense with references. I also find it difficult to understand why key articles on monuments are not noted in the relevant entries, as they have been, admittedly very haphazardly, in some other Pevsner volumes. The section on 'further reading' extends to several pages but there are inevitably omissions, including many articles from this journal, notably the classic paper by Hemp and Gresham on 'Park and the Unit System'. One cannot refer to everything, of course, but I found the absence of any reference to Coflein (the Royal Commission's on-line database) inexplicable; like most databases it may sometimes disappoint, but it is constantly improving and should be the first port-of-call for those wanting to view images and requiring further information.

As regards recent developments, it was gratifying to find that the tree-ring dates which have been obtained recently (not without a struggle) are usually cited (though readers are not told that they are regularly reported in the journal *Vernacular Architecture* and are available on Coflein). These dates have certainly transformed our understanding of domestic architecture. We now understand (as indeed Judith Alfrey tells us) that hall-houses began to be superseded by storeyed Snowdonian houses around the mid-sixteenth century. Y Garreg Fawr (re-erected at St Fagans and not mentioned here) and Cae Glas (1547/8), Llanfrothen, both date from just before the mid-century. Cruck-framed dwellings were still being built after 1550, for example at Nant Pasgan Mawr (1565/5), but as Snowdonian houses rather than hall-houses. This transition is astonishingly early; Snowdonia now appears to have been an innovative region in the shift from hall-house to storeyed house rather than a backwater. The predecessors of Snowdonian

houses are sometimes revealed by the discovery of crucks cut off flush at the wall face, as at Bishop Morgan's Tŷ-mawr, Wybrnant (page 485).

One may have reservations about particular aspects of the Pevsners, especially the lack of references in a reference book, but one has to emphasize that this volume is an extraordinary achievement that will have enduring value. The whole series for Wales is a triumph, of course, and I think it is correct to state that the Pevsners have broadened perceptions of what constitutes the heritage of Wales. The authors and publishers, and the Buildings Books Trust, are to be congratulated on a project that has required extraordinary dedication to see it through to a successful conclusion. But, of course, the work can never be finished; one learns that the Pevsner for *Powys* (1976) is now being revised.

Aberystwyth

RICHARD SUGGETT

HEARTH AND HOME. THE STORY OF THE WELSH HOUSE. By Paul R. Davis. 180 × 246 mm. xii + 126 pp. 125 illustrations. Logaston Press, Almeley, Herefordshire, 2009. ISBN 978 1 906663 08 7. Price £10.00.

This book sets out to consider the architectural and social character of the traditional Welsh house from 4000 BC to AD 1800. It clearly owes a great debt to Peter Smith and his *Houses of the Welsh Countryside*, and brings something of the territory mapped out in that magisterial work to a non-specialist readership. Smith's work is the source not only for its classification of house-types, but also for the style of presentation, which includes cutaway drawings and plans accompanied by perspective-modelling. It is a style that works well at conveying the disposition of spaces that lies behind the often-picturesque façades, and that is of the essence of architecture.

The book takes on an ambitious chronological span: it is helpful to bring the archaeological and the architectural into a single story, but it is a story that comes to an abrupt end in 1800. Here too, Davis follows Peter Smith, who thought that the nineteenth century 'saw the rapid decay of regional character' except in the houses of the poor. But the nineteenth century is deserving of a closer look: in Davis' 'rows of terraced houses and characterless dwellings' lie the remarkable survival of vernacular traditions, the adaptation of inherited architectural models to a complex society, and the distinctive character of swathes of the Welsh landscape, both rural and urban.

Davis works within a well-worn definition of traditional architecture—of buildings made by local craftsmen according to ideas and skills handed down unwritten from one generation to the next, using local materials in processes that ensured strong regional character. In practice, the scope of the book and its tight chronological structure have excluded detailed discussion on any of these points. The skills and techniques of building are touched on for timber-framing, but not for masonry, for example, and there is no clear picture of regional and local variety. The geographical distribution of building types and styles which lies at the heart of *Houses of the Welsh Countryside* is given no space here. The social and economic contexts of building are also implied rather than discussed. The book is clear about the social status of some of the houses it describes—the great houses of the gentry, and the cottages of the poor landless, but most are classified as 'the dwellings of the middle-classes', which is perhaps an anachronism for much of the period covered. In fact, these are generally the homes of well-to-do farmers, but in this book, the houses are perforce disconnected from their working contexts and from the sources of wealth that enabled their building. Nuances in the chronology of building between one area and another, or in scale between and within regions, which would reveal the shifting economic and social circumstances of building, are intricacies that cannot be explored in a book of this size.

These omissions are probably intentional rather than accidental. Although it introduces elements of taxonomy and architectural analysis (the discussion and illustration of some plan-types, for example), the book really belongs in a romantic tradition that celebrates the beauty of the vernacular rather than seeking to explain it. It nods in the direction of history, especially in its recognition that changes in the planning and design of houses are responses to changing circumstances and aspiration, but its chief effect is to assert the discreet charm of the traditional house. It does this with an infectious enthusiasm, and encourages its readers to indulge by providing information on houses that are open to the public. It breaks no new ground in the interpretation of Welsh vernacular buildings, but as a basic introduction to facets of the architectural heritage of rural Wales, it may serve a useful purpose.

Nantgarw, Cardiff

JUDITH ALFREY

LANDSCAPE ORIGINS OF THE WYE VALLEY. HOLME LACY TO BRIDSTOW. Edited by Heather Hurley. 206 × 260 mm. xii + 251 pp. 340 illustrations. 18 tables. Logaston Press, Almeley, Herefordshire, 2008. ISBN 978 1 904396 97 0. Price £15.00.

*Landscape Origins of the Wye Valley* represents both the volume name and the title of the project that originated it, a study set up by the River Wye Preservation Trust with funding from various bodies including the Heritage Lottery Fund, which brought together local enthusiasts and professional archaeologists in the form of Archenfield Archaeology. Over two years (2005 and 2006), many of the techniques familiar to landscape historians and archaeologists were brought to bear on twelve parishes adjoining the Wye between Hereford and Ross. The resulting paperback is attractive and richly illustrated—there is a hardly a page without at least one image, many of them in colour—and the bulk of the text is in the form of ten chapters from four authors. It is one of the quirks of the book that we learn more about the steering group members who developed the project, and the local volunteers who were involved in various aspects of the project than we do about the authors. In particular, Heather Hurley who edited the volume and wrote four and a half chapters of it is an anonymous presence yet, one senses, may have been a driving force behind the project.

Two introductory chapters cover the early history chronologically from the prehistoric era through to the medieval, touching on a wide range of sites but ending up with a discursive report on excavations at Gillow Farm. The chapters that follow extend the timeline from the later medieval through to the modern, are broadly thematic in character and are of an uneven nature. Thus there is a chapter which identifies and describes various types of medieval and later document, transcribing some of them, then briefly presents three farm histories largely through the medium of surviving documents, and finally treats the recent growth and development of five of the Wye-side villages as revealed by nineteenth-century maps and more recent aerial photographs. Next comes an excellent study of woods and trees by David Lovelace which makes full use of documents, maps and the field evidence. A chapter on buildings adopts an unusual approach, focusing on a comparison of those recorded by the English Royal Commission on Historical Monuments in 1931–32 for their Inventories, with what survives today—over a quarter have disappeared in the intervening seventy years, mainly, and perhaps not surprisingly, cottages and barns. There is a wide-ranging survey of rural industries, including the more obscure such as basket making and the bark trade; an inconclusive study of sunken roads and river crossings, displaying the interests of the late David Bick; a commentary on river and rail transport which starts by considering wharves found during fieldwork but tails off into transcribing ledger and day books; a consideration of how the landscape has evolved since the end of the seventeenth century as seen through the medium of

estate and other maps and aerial photographs; and finally a chapter on present-day agriculture in the study area.

What emerges is a compendium of topics that reflect the contributors' interests and abilities, yet illuminates only parts of the entire landscape. Absent are the more wide-ranging chapters that would complete the story of the landscape through the Middle Ages and into more recent times. Nowhere for instance is the issue of the medieval agrarian landscape addressed, while the ecclesiastical landscape is barely touched on. And in places the text is as much about the story of the project as of the landscape history of the Wye Valley. As an example, the Gillow Farm excavations are described in a dig-diary form over several pages, yet this obscures the explanation of what is evidently a curious and complex medieval site.

Irritating is the absence of plate numbers; such is the large number of illustrations scattered throughout the text that finding a relevant image can be frustrating. Take for example the Gillow Farm excavations described on page 32. Both the fine aerial image captured by Chris Musson and the geophysical survey plot show two adjacent enclosures, one large and sub-oval, the other smaller and near circular. There is no reference in the text to either, and the captions are brief. The reader is left to assume that it was probably the larger Roman-British enclosure that was trenched, but this is not confirmed until twelve pages later when it emerges that the smaller cropmark is a medieval feature. Conversely a brief discussion of Fawley Camp appears next to an aerial photograph simply captioned Cropmark at Fawley: it is not clear whether they are one and the same.

*Landscape Origins*, then, offers the records of a great deal of hard and enthusiastic work by a relatively small group of people. It is not a comprehensive study of a particular stretch of the Wye valley, rather a collection of essays that illustrate some of its many interesting traits.

Welshpool

BOB SILVESTER

THE STORY OF THE MILFORD HAVEN WATERWAY. By Sybil Edwards. 172 × 243 mm. viii + 216 pp. 140 illustrations. Logaston Press, Almeley, Herefordshire, 2009. ISBN 978 1 906663 10 0. Price £12.95.

This book is aimed at the general reader and concentrates on the recent history of the waterway, rather than the more distant past. Indeed, there would be little here to detain those with an exclusive interest in prehistory, as the period from the Palaeolithic to the coming of the Romans is dealt with in the first nine pages of the volume in a chapter titled 'Early days'. Much of this is concerned with recent research, including several pages devoted to the debate as to whether the Stonehenge bluestones were transported from Pembrokeshire via the Milford Haven waterway, or whether they were moved by natural agencies. The remaining three pages of the 'Early days' chapter rapidly summarize the Roman and the early medieval period. The following short chapter—'Norman arrival and royal visitors'—deals with the medieval period in an equally rapid form.

Following on from these introductory chapters individual towns and settlements on the waterway are dealt with separately: 'Pembroke', 'Haverfordwest', 'Pembroke Dock', 'Neyland', 'The villages', and Milford Haven town itself described after chapters on 'Pirates, smugglers, invasion and wreckers' and 'The Civil War'. The chapters on towns are the most informative of the book, particularly their more recent history. They emphasise the maritime influence on the formation and development (and decline) of these important, and somewhat unusual, Welsh towns. As with the earlier chapters the more recent history of these settlements is dealt with in more detail than earlier history. This is not so much a problem

with Milford Haven, which had its origins in the eighteenth century, and Neyland and Pembroke Dock, which were founded in the nineteenth century, but the history of two of the most important medieval maritime towns in Wales, Pembroke and Haverfordwest, is dealt with rather rapidly, and would have benefited by being fleshed out. Inevitably with chapters devoted to individual, but closely linked, settlements there is some repetition, and some of themes sit uncomfortably within chapters: the eighteenth and nineteenth-century defence of the waterway is described in the Pembroke Dock chapter, but would have been better separated out. Similarly, the subject of coal mining and the coal trade is spread throughout several chapters and could have usefully been consolidated, perhaps into a 'text box'. Indeed this layout style is only used twice in the volume, one for Haverfordwest's 'Guild of freemen' and the other for 'The *Great Eastern's* links with Milford Haven'. The latter is one of the most informative elements of the book, and includes a splendid, but rather small, reproduction of the *Great Eastern* stuck in the lock gate at Milford Haven in 1888. The book concludes by bringing the story up to date with a chapter on the oil and natural gas industry. Overall, the volume provides an informative read for those interested in the maritime history of Wales and the use of old photographs interspersed with modern photographs to illustrate the more recent history is one of the strengths of book.

Llandeilo

KEN MURPHY

A VIEW FROM THE WEST. THE NEOLITHIC OF THE IRISH SEA ZONE. By Vicki Cummings. 170 × 243 mm. ix + 219 pp. 104 illustrations. Oxbow Books, Oxford, 2009. ISBN 978 1 842173 62 6. Price £35.00.

As the title of this book half suggests, the subject area comprises the lands edging the Irish Sea, but the time period actually studied is only the earlier part of the Neolithic, not the whole, and, even that, primarily from the point of view of chambered tombs. The book starts with an introduction describing the study area, a chapter on the Mesolithic background, a run through the Neolithic for the region and then five subsequent chapters dealing with various aspects of the chambered tombs themselves. Much of it has a familiar ring from other publications by Cummings and some of her arguments are more convincing than others.

The general Mesolithic and Neolithic chapters are fairly run-of-the-mill overviews and largely derived from other sources. In this there is a problem as it assumes that those sources are correct. Thus we have somewhat inaccurate dates for Peterborough Ware (page 33) and a reference to the presence of beef fats in the Grooved Ware pottery from Walton (page 37). Despite the original Walton report being referenced, this latter statement is based on an error introduced by Petersen in 2003 and 2004 which leads me to conclude that some secondary referencing is at play here. There are also some strange statements made such as pottery allowed cooking over an open fire (page 37): so does this assume that pre-ceramic communities in Britain used ovens? I have also no idea why charcoal was needed to fire pots (page 39). When discussing Balbridie and Claish (page 53) there is the peculiar statement 'it is clear that some areas had houses'. Surely all areas that were settled would have had houses, if even of a flimsy nature; it's just that they are difficult to locate archaeologically. Absence of evidence is not evidence for absence.

Cummings is much more comfortable when on home territory dealing with chambered tombs, their construction, use and landscape setting. The treatment of the deposits within the tombs could have been taken further, however. For example at Pant y Saer, we are told that there were the remains of 54 individuals (page 116). But how much bone was represented? Are we dealing with complete or near-complete individuals or are we looking at token deposits comparable to the other elements of material culture encountered in these monuments? Indeed, I was struck by the similarity of some of the deposits



to those encountered in Neolithic pits which have, of late, received renewed attention, and such comparisons may help us to understand the nature of deposition at these sites. This whole section is rather repetitive and does not delve deeply enough into depositional patterns or comparable evidence.

When it comes to the landscape setting of these monuments, Cummings talks of vistas and views. A number of archaeologists have previously raised questions on some of the assumptions made here and elsewhere making the valid statement that much of what can and cannot be seen may well depend on environmental factors such as trees. Cummings addresses 'the tree problem' rather dismissively but not convincingly. You cannot see through a forest in winter (*contra* page 124) unless it is little more than a copse as anyone who has lived near deciduous woodland will know (branch density still obscures vision). Sightlines might be felled (page 124) but this would assume that you could see what you were sighting on. More environmental data needs to be presented if Cummings is to convince us and it is notable that the names of many who have been working on environmental data in Wales are absent from the bibliography. Indeed, Cummings undermines her own argument when, in discussing the Umeda of Papua New Guinea on the very next page, she states that 'they live in a forested environment and . . . struggle to perceive long distance views' (page 125).

Interpretation is one thing and differing interpretations of the same data are no strangers to archaeological discourse and I have no real problems with the interpretations that Cummings prefers whilst not necessarily agreeing with them myself. However, what I do find annoying is the poor standard of English of this book and its rather repetitive nature. So we have 'the first type of chambered tomb . . . are [sic] the 'Clyde' and court cairns' (page 65); 'Myself and Alasdair Whittle' (page 124); 'One of the key tenants of a post-processual approach' (page 125); 'The phrase phenomenology' (page 126); 'There was initial movements of people' (page 143); 'Prior to be turned' (page 150); 'The group that stand out the most are' (page 152), and so it goes on. We are not sure whether we are in the Preselis or Preselis (pages 129 and 142–3), there are many instances of missing articles or repeated prepositions, and on pages 43–4 we are told three times that the Preselis/Carn Meini is in south-west Wales. This is all unsatisfactory and detracts from the read.

I did not really find anything of real substance in this book. I read it during an overlong transfer at Schiphol Airport and I am afraid that, like the airport food, it passed the time but it is rather expensive and did not satisfy.

Bradford

ALEX GIBSON

BEACONS IN THE LANDSCAPE. THE HILLFORTS OF ENGLAND AND WALES. By Ian Brown. 185 × 245 mm. xii + 267 pp. 100 illustrations. Windgather Press, Oxford, 2009. ISBN 978 1 905119 22 6. Price £25.00.

It is some years since a substantial volume was last published about the hillforts of England and Wales, designed to appeal as much to the general reader as to the student or academic. The 1970s and early 1980s were arguably the heyday of books about hillforts, or 'hill-forts' as they still were then. Conference proceedings and dedicatory volumes (like Hill and Jesson's *The Iron Age and its Hill-forts* for Wheeler in 1971 and Guilbert's edited *Hill-fort Studies* for Hogg in 1981) jostled with quite remarkable intensive studies like Forde-Johnston's *Hillforts of the Iron Age in England and Wales* (1976) and definitive popular accounts including Hogg's *Hill-forts of Britain* (1975). While Iron Age studies have progressed enormously in the intervening three decades, it is fair to say that key sections of these latter two books, particularly the accounts of the field archaeology of these impressive earthwork monuments, have stood

the test of time. More recent publications, like Ralston's *Celtic Fortifications* (2006) have revisited the subject of European Iron Age defences in some detail, but there has been little attempt at synthesis of some of the more recent theoretical debates. This begs the question of where a new book about the English and Welsh hillforts should be pitched, and how should it tackle such a potentially broad and varied subject without getting bogged down in further descriptions of hundreds of different monuments.

In this respect, Brown's book is a welcome arrival, being more a work about the Iron Age of England and Wales as a whole than just its principal monuments. The book is divided into four parts, containing ten chapters. The first two parts deal with the archaeology of hillforts, with the third part tackling the social and economic background to the monuments. The final part draws together the many exciting new theories and questions which have exploded in the field of Iron Age studies in the last two decades.

The problems of getting mired in data, and being duty-bound to reference the considerable legacy of past studies of this monument type, are largely dealt with in the early chapters. Essentials such as 'definition and distribution' are succinctly dealt with, alongside an admirable summary of Iron Age studies, 'Great excavations' and developments in research priorities from the 1700s to the present day. With introductions complete, we find the meat of the book neatly broken up into a series of questions posed about aspects of hillfort archaeology, and facets of Iron Age society, largely without repetition of past studies. Rightly, an entire chapter is given over to a discussion of the proven and potential origins of hillforts in the enclosures of the preceding Neolithic and Bronze Age, drawing upon much useful research which has largely taken place since the 1970s. 'Enclosure' is next tackled, the chapter describing the field archaeology of the forts, their ramparts, ditches and gateways and their varied typologies. Refreshingly, the chapter does not rehearse old discussions of rampart height and ditch depth, and the varied strategies of military attack and siege, but instead discusses the nuances of site selection, questions of hillfort construction, continued maintenance and reconstruction, problems of annexes, guard chambers and evidence of burning. The following chapter on 'Hillfort Interiors' also pushes forward, acknowledging a history of earlier work but also introducing the reader to recent excavation evidence and research, as well as new ideas.

The central section of the book comprehensively discusses 'People', 'Economy', the subjects of belief and ritual, currency and the nature of Roman interaction. As such this becomes a more complete volume about the Iron Age, its society, trade and the start of written history, rather than one simply concerning itself with the hillforts as field monuments. But it is the final two chapters which are arguably the most valuable sections, dealing first with 'New theories, new questions' and finishing with a 'synthesis of ideas' about hillforts. Here the work of the preceding chapters is given greater depth with the integration of more recent research themes including monumentality, ritual and display. Ideas which were once experimental, or alien, to hillfort studies now form key elements in their study, and include the question of a ceremonial or ritual function for some highly unusual or remote hilltop enclosures, and the problems of interpreting variations in defensive architecture, and curious topographic positioning, at sites which have for so long been solely considered as places of defence or military refuge. In these chapters Brown reasserts his argument for hillforts as 'Beacons'—the title of the book—with a thesis that hillforts were sited on hilltops precisely to act as visible, high profile, dominating presences in the landscape to control people, trade and surrounding natural resources. This is woven into a wider narrative describing the likely existence of long-distance trade routes not only along ridgeways, but also utilizing valley through-routes and key navigable rivers (Brown discusses the Wye among others). The 'Beacons' argument is interesting, but throughout his book Brown has admirably demonstrated how rich and diverse the topic of hillforts is, and how very complex the interpretation of these varied monuments can be; there will probably never be a single unifying reason to explain the construction of every one.

The book is liberally illustrated with some well-chosen ground photographs of key sites, aerial views, maps, diagrams and artefact photographs. There are not too many plans but perhaps this is a good thing; plans certainly dominated many of the standard works of earlier decades, and one feels the photographs in this book were chosen more to convey a sense of the hillforts in their landscapes, and the experience of visiting the hillforts on the ground, rather than a purely divorced study of their plans and dimensions. Overall, Ian Brown has trodden a difficult path, producing a broad and comprehensive new book on the Iron Age of England and Wales, yet also a modern and thought-provoking re-working of an oft-discussed monument type. He is to be congratulated, not least for welcoming the Welsh Iron Age back into a fuller discussion of southern Britain. It is refreshing to see many of the more challenging ideas on the problems of the Iron Age, and the thorny issues of hillforts in general, migrating from the realms of specialist research into a more mainstream narrative. With its extensive bibliography, which will be mined for some of its more obscure references, this book forms an enjoyable and solid companion to the study of the Iron Age of England and Wales.

Aberystwyth

TOBY DRIVER

THE EARLY MEDIEVAL CHURCH IN WALES. David Petts. 170 × 247 mm. 224 pp. 91 illustrations. The History Press, Stroud, Gloucestershire, 2009. ISBN 978 0 752441 02 3. Price £18.99.

Over the last twenty years or so our understanding of the early medieval church in Wales has grown steadily. This has been facilitated by a multi-disciplinary approach combining a critical analysis of the sparse documentary sources alongside an increasing body of archaeological data together with judicious use of other evidence, such as place-names and church dedications. The Cadw 'Early Medieval Ecclesiastical Sites Project' has resulted in the identification of a hierarchy of sites, and the study of stone sculpture set in its broader context has likewise been informative. There have also been a series of important excavations, notably the churches at Capel Maelog and Pennant Melangell, and a growing number of cemeteries ranging from Llandough, located near Roman remains and associated with an important ecclesiastical site, to Tan Dderwen, one of many early burial grounds which were later abandoned in favour of churchyard burial elsewhere.

This book is aimed at a general readership. David Petts intends to cut through such popular myths as the 'Celtic Church' and the 'Age of the Saints' and instead, using a multi-disciplinary approach, attempts to reconstruct the story of the development of Christianity in Wales from its origins in Roman Britain to the Edwardian Conquest. He begins with an overview of how such myths concerning the early Welsh church emerged, the development of antiquarian studies and the growth of archaeological research. He then discusses the different types of evidence, both archaeological, concentrating on radiocarbon dating, ceramics and stone sculpture, all of which can aid the construction of a chronology, and documentary, comprising hagiography, annals, law codes, vernacular poetry, charters and the works of Gerald of Wales. He next considers church architecture, including the paucity of wooden buildings and the construction of the earliest surviving stone churches in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, their layout and internal fittings, and objects of worship, such as liturgical equipment, bells, crosiers and relics. Moving beyond the churches and their contents, he then discusses death and burial and the broader development of a Christian landscape. In the final chapter he attempts to bring all the evidence together to consider the chronological development of Christianity in Wales, its organisation and material culture, pointing out both regional differences and making broader comparisons with the Church in Anglo-Saxon England and elsewhere.

The coverage of the book, though wide-ranging, can be patchy, especially towards the end of the period, and what is included may seem idiosyncratic—was a special section devoted to ceramics really necessary considering that imported pottery is almost exclusively found on secular sites and there is no indigenous tradition until the late twelfth century? Given the difficulty of some of the evidence, much more use could have been made of detailed case-studies in order to illuminate particular points. Dr Petts is best when writing about the burial evidence with which he is most familiar, but at other times he seems on much less solid ground; at worst explanations appear rambling and garbled. However, the main problem with this volume is that it is slipshod; the blame for this lies both with the author and the publisher. The author's lack of a grasp of Latin and Welsh is obvious. Latin inscriptions, and the plurals and singulars of specialised terms are sometimes mangled; there are also factual errors: for example, the *Hisperica Famina* was not written by Isidore of Seville. Worse, there are not only similar mistakes in the Welsh but also misspellings of, and inconsistencies in, many of the names and place-names throughout. But other personal names are also sometimes incorrect, as are dates, and the typescript has clearly not seen the hand of a competent copy-editor or proof-reader. Referencing is full but too often inconsistent or incorrect and does not tally with the entries in the bibliography. For example, references are made in the text to the published volumes of the *Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones and Stone Sculpture in Wales*, but these works do not appear in the bibliography and in the note on page 8 one of the authors' names is misspelt. The illustrations are sometimes wrongly numbered in the text and captions have frequent typos; 18 and 19 show monuments at Llangaffo (Anglesey) not Llanfaglan (Caernarfonshire). The illustrations themselves are for the most part reasonably good, but a handful are very dark or rendered too large, too small or with parts cropped off. The map of known and probable *monasteria* on page 174 does not include the names of the sites, just dots, and in that on page 148 all the Ys in the place-names are rendered as Vs.

All in all this is a missed opportunity. A popular synthesis of recent work on the early medieval church in Wales is timely, but the numerous inaccuracies and other weaknesses of the volume under review significantly undermine its value.

Bangor

NANCY EDWARDS

**SAINTS' CULTS IN THE CELTIC WORLD.** Edited by Steve Boardman, John Reuben Davies and Eila Williamson. 160 × 240 mm. xiii + 217 pp. 1 illustration. 1 table. Boydell Press, Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2009. ISBN 978 1 843834 32 8. Price £50.00.

With this volume, Boydell & Brewer's *Studies in Celtic History* series returns to one of its key themes, Celtic hagiography and saints' cults. The latest in the series is a collection of essays based on the work of the AHRC-funded Survey of Dedications to Saints in Medieval Scotland. In spite of its title, therefore, the main focus is on Scotland (and Pictland). There are chapters on the cults of Andrew, Patrick and Palladius in Scotland and the gradual elevation of David of Scotland into a saint. This is in some ways a welcome development as too many studies of the 'Celtic' world have as their main focus the Ireland/Wales axis. Ireland naturally figures in Jonathan Wooding's study of St Brendan, but there is plenty on the spread of the saint's cult to the northern and western islands and the mainland of Scotland. There is also a clear awareness of the importance of the kingdoms of the North Britons, and several of the contributions consider cults which cross the border into Anglo-Saxon traditions. Fiona Edmonds discusses the cult of St Patrick in Northumbria based on the evidence of personal names, and Sally Crumplin tracks the movement of the cult of St Cuthbert in the opposite direction. There are also chapters

on major international cults: as well as the chapter on St Andrew, Eila Williamson traces the increasing popularity of the ‘Three Kings of Cologne’ in Scotland and Steve Boardman attempts to explain the surprising popularity of the English patron saint George north of the border.

St George was also popular in Wales—where his popularity is even more bizarre, since he was one of the dragon-slaying saints. Boardman’s explanation in terms of Scotland’s national aspirations to chivalry and crusading involvement may not work as well for Wales, though his reminder of the links between the cult of St George and Marian devotion may be more relevant for us. John Reuben Davies’s study of the cult of Kentigern/Mungo spends some time on the saint’s association with Llanelwy, finally concluding that it may derive from Geoffrey of Monmouth’s attempts to provide the see with a literary history out of whole cloth. (He points to the parallels with what happened at Llandaff, possibly a generation earlier.) Wales also features in Karen Jankulak’s demolition job on many of Doble and Bowen’s theories on adjacent dedications. While there is little else specifically on Wales, the approach and methodology is clearly relevant to the study of the Welsh saints.

The origins of the book, in a project geared to providing accurate data about church foundations and dedications, have led a number of the contributors to focus on the practicalities of establishing the history and geography of dedications and *vitae*. There is in some cases a perceptible air of diffidence about the wider significance of the development of saints’ cults. For some readers this reluctance to engage with more theoretical issues may leave a gap in the book. It would for example have been interesting to have more on the politics of the development of the cult of St Andrew in Scotland, and more on the Eucharistic theology underlying the popularity of the Three Kings. However, as the contributors make abundantly clear, much of this ground-clearing work still needs to be done, and we cannot speculate about the significance of dedications until we have accurate lists of dates and identification of place names.

The other major gap in the book is that it says little or nothing about gender issues and female saints. The Welsh St Non is mentioned, though largely in the context of her son St David, but that is all. While Scotland and Wales have fewer surviving cults of female saints than Ireland, there are surely some relevant examples of saints whose cults travelled between and outside the Celtic nations: the complex cult of St Bride/Brigid, sometimes conflated with that of St Brigid of Sweden; the cult of St Margaret of Scotland, which may have spread to Eglwys Cymyn on the Carmarthenshire/Pembrokeshire border; and most striking of all, the Irish saint Monnina who became the Anglo-Saxon Modwenna.

Newport

MADELEINE GRAY

MEDIEVAL WELSH SETTLEMENT AND TERRITORY. ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE FROM A TEIFI VALLEY LANDSCAPE. By Jemma Bezant. 210 × 297 mm. 129 pp. 68 illustrations. British Archaeological Reports, Oxford, 2009. ISBN 978 1 407304 42 7. Price £36.00.

This slim volume is the product of Jemma Bezant’s PhD thesis at the University of Wales, Lampeter. She focuses on the reign of Rhys ap Gruffudd and on the commote of Gwinionydd in the Teifi valley and argues that here the territorial pattern displays a considerable degree of continuity across the chronological divide between the Welsh and Anglo-Norman periods. In this the work is hardly novel—but it does offer a study of west Wales, as opposed to the north Wallian perspectives of her predecessors.

The first two chapters are devoted to surveys of the history and geography of the area under consideration. They are comprehensive, interesting and well written. Chapter 3 aims to introduce the specific landscape units as outlined in the medieval law codes and other literature. This chapter is little more than a summary of decades of work by T. Jones Pierce, G. R. J. Jones and, more recently,

Rhys Jones. Bezant rightly makes the point that the land divisions discussed in, for example in *Lfyr Blegywryd*, are ‘schematic and mathematical’ (page 39) and ‘difficult to identify on the ground’ (page 35). Despite these problems with the sources for the nature of the pre-twelfth-century landscape she goes on to claim that Rhys was able to ‘wipe the slate clean and generate new forms of governance’ (page 40). Her evidence is based on the analysis of a series of grants to the church, which she maintains are of one of the earlier landscape units: the *cwmwd*. The continued existence of the *maenor* and the *tref*, together with the practice of *gwestfa*, is also postulated and is debated in the context of grants of monastic granges.

The sixth chapter Bezant takes as her theme the nature of the community and the role of place in defining individual identity. It considers the *tyddyn* and *gwely*. Through the study of both medieval and post-medieval documentary material (including much detailed genealogical data) combined with geophysical prospection and excavation a model is then proposed for the identification of early territorial units. These seem to have remained intact over many centuries—making possible the assertion that the landscape possesses a ‘deep antiquity’ (page 114). The short conclusion is strange—I would agree with Bezant’s criticism of the current preoccupation with Historic Landscape Characterisation, but find her comment of the view from the National Library of Wales as quite unnecessary.

This is an attractive volume with plentiful illustrations including several in colour. Sadly the author has been let down by BAR—once again their proof reading has failed to identify too many minor, but nevertheless annoying, errors. An index to the detailed placename and genealogical material would have been a valuable addition. Landscape historians now regularly (and quite rightly) try to display a multi-disciplinary approach, or at least awareness, in their work. At the outset Bezant claims that she is going to take this further with a trans-disciplinary analysis—the meaning of this is unclear and on page 7 we return to type and are being promised a multi-disciplinary study based around a retroactive analysis. In the conclusion Bezant returns to her aims and is anxious to justify herself by arguing that she has realised them. I wonder if this is the case. With the exception of the area selected for study, I see little new here and am left perplexed: did Rhys ap Gruffyd lead the transformation of the landscape in a new direction or did he take an extant system and use this as the basis for his actions?

Newport

JONATHAN KISSOCK

THE FITZALANS. EARLS OF ARUNDEL AND SURREY, LORDS OF THE WELSH MARCHES (1267–1415). By Michael Burtscher. 156 × 234 mm. x + 182 pp. 51 illustrations. Logaston Press, Almeley, Herefordshire, 2008. ISBN 978 1 904396 94 9. Price £12.95.

This volume consists very largely of a sequence of studies of each of five lords of the Fitzalan family who, between the late thirteenth century and the early fourteenth, were earls of Arundel. Their extensive estates were concentrated in two main areas, in Sussex and Surrey and in Shropshire and the adjacent march of Wales. The western lands had their origin in royal grants to the Fitzalan family of lands in Shropshire, their main early components being Oswestry and Clun, lordships that became increasingly detached from the county to be effectively part of the march of Wales. To these, in the Arundel period, were added extensive lordships given to English baronial families at the conquest, Chirk first held by the Mortimer family and Bromfield and Yale by the Warenne earls of Surrey. Altogether, these lands formed one of the greatest of English baronial estates and territorial power placed the Arundel earls in the highest ranks of the nobility. Proximity to the crown brought them further advancement and with it, for better or for worse, involvement in the turmoils of the political affairs of the realm.

Each of the earls is treated in turn in a detailed descriptive discourse in which the historical interest of the Arundel dynasty is placed in the context of the political history of England. Of the five earls, two came to a sad end by execution, in each case death occurring shortly before their respective monarchs too met their destiny in similar manner. In the interval another Arundel had become exceedingly wealthy and, in prosperity and adversity, relations with the crown and other members of the baronage of England were ever-important ingredients in the earls' fortunes. Thus we are taken through the course of events that led Edmund Fitzalan to be counted among the Ordainers in opposition to Edward II before reconciliation with the crown brought him to what proved to be a fatefully close association. With the succession of Richard II Fitzalan, the family's well-being was restored and wealth increased, but then Richard III Fitzalan's participation in the events of the reign of Richard II as one of the Lords Appellant thrust him into political turbulence from which neither high status nor great wealth offered protection. Dr Burtcher attends to the Arundel narrative with dutiful attention to detail, yet much of the contextual matter is that of mainstream English political history and a reader might well feel somewhat deprived of the more thematic treatment that the source material, and the copious historical studies cited, offers an historian of the dynasty.

The review of the Arundel estates that completes the volume provides an opportunity for a cohering discussion. Thus figures from the last years of the century indicate that the marcher lordships of Oswestry, Clun, Chirk and Bromfield and Yale together yielded about £1,800, with income from the English estates placed at about £1,000. It is evident that, while the earls' interests were focused on the southern counties, where their favoured residences stood, their marcher lands contributed very substantially to their enormous wealth. It would be good to have had a closer look at the question of how income from land compared with that from other sources including trade, the rewards of service to the crown, and war. Most of all, a study of the Arundels would be considerably enriched if the generous account of the earls' dealings with the crown and the baronage were balanced by rather more attention to their relations with the communities of the lands from which they drew their income. Substantial studies of the Arundels' marcher estates, to which the author refers, have broached issues concerning the sources and nature of seigniorial income and the lords' relations with the society under their rule, and instructive conclusions have emerged. Perhaps limitations imposed upon the quantity of text that might be published, and the need to provide the extensive illustrative material that is included, somewhat curtailed discussion in the present volume, but it makes an attractive presentation that is likely to win favour among its readers.

Aberystwyth

J. BEVERLEY SMITH

WALES. CHURCHES, HOUSES, CASTLES. By Simon Jenkins. 158 × 235 mm. xi + 292 pp. 119 illustrations. Allen Lane, London, 2008. ISBN 978 0 713998 93 1. Price £25.00.

This is an attractive book, well illustrated and laid out with clarity. It will no doubt grace the bookshelves of many a reader of this journal. With a title which promises so much, there is every reason why it should. It would be interesting, however, to know whether, a year after purchase, the book will have guided that reader around the churches, houses and castles it leads the purchaser to expect that it should.

It is an ambitious title and even the most optimistic reader would expect selection; after all, Wales has an awful lot of castles and churches if not great houses. But the reader might expect that selection to be based on some logical process. What the book delivers, however, is more like a gentleman's tour, a whimsical selection of charming visits graced with beautiful illustrations. The pleasure of the visit, we

are told, was the main criterion for selection and thus the reader learns a lot about the likes and dislikes of Simon Jenkins, less, perhaps, about the subject matter of the book.

An introduction gives an atmospheric overview of Wales' history and its buildings. It does not pretend to be comprehensive or factual, and should not be treated as such, though one does wonder at the source of statistics such as the 140 recorded structures of henges cromlechs, huts and barrows in Wales—the real number would be more than ten times that. Some assertions must be applauded. The reality of the nature of any dynamic architecture being the result of waves of incoming influence so that 'a Celtic cross, a Norman castle ... a Calvinistic chapel, a tycoon's palace are all "Welsh"' is well expressed. He is kind enough to state that 'the standard of conservation in Wales is higher than ever' and that historic buildings provide a backdrop for a vigorous culture, the preservation of which allows a country to handle its history good or bad. However, the reader is left in no doubt as to Jenkins' feeling about the conservation of ruinous structures. 'There are simply too many ruins in Wales' he declares, recommending reconstruction as a way of reviving their interest. This is a recurring thesis throughout the book. Not for Jenkins, Henry James' feeling that the 'purest enjoyment of architecture was to be had among the ruins of great buildings', Gilpin's 'perfect beauty' of the ruin, or Ashurst's 'continuity of truth' displayed by the conserved but not reconstructed monument.

The main body of the book is devoted to the description of a selection of castles, churches and houses that are open for visiting, contribute to the story of Welsh buildings and which confer most pleasure during a visit. The chapters are in old county order, surely an oddity and confusing to the reader since they have been remodelled and renamed for some 15 years. And readers really do have to know where they are as there is no overall map of Wales to locate them, nor a contents page. Each old county has a list of sites at the front ranked with stars; those familiar with the sites will wonder at the wisdom of ranking such disparate sites against one another. In Anglesey, the huge pile of Plas Newydd gets four stars, the entrancing Neolithic burial mound Bryn Celli Ddu merely one. No access arrangements are given as they do tend to change, but the lack of directions does reduce the usefulness of the book as a travelling companion.

The selection of castles, more than the other two categories, is affected by Jenkins' lack of regard for the ruin. In contrast to his apparent desire to celebrate the Welsh nation's architecture, few of the castles of the Welsh princes are selected—Dinefwr and Castell y Bere are the only representatives—and no earthwork castles are included. The great castles of the Normans and the Edwardian Conquest fare better but are far from representative with swathes of the country barely featuring. Castle ruins such as Rhuddlan and Denbigh are dismissed in passing as 'benighted mound[s] of stone like so many handed down by the old Ministry of Works'. Meanwhile, the thesis that reconstruction adds to the agreeableness of a visit results in some startling observations such as at Ruthin where, we are told, the 'empty ruin' of the medieval castle was 'transformed' by the erection of the Victorian hotel in its midst. The fact that the unconserved medieval fabric is steadily collapsing is not mentioned. Cadw comes in for some criticism and challenges can be constructive. But to be creative, criticism has to be balanced and tempered with some realism. The castles that are lauded are those which are either reconstructed by the addition of Victorian structure and decoration, such as Chirk, Castell Coch and Pembroke or left unconserved, charming perhaps, as romantic ruins, but doomed to gradual collapse.

The selection of houses is fairly predictable and concentrates on the stately and grand rather than the vernacular, though some of the latter are included. It is with the churches that Jenkins is more reliable and this writer will certainly benefit from visiting some of the smaller churches like Llanfigel as yet unexplored. The stated selection criterion of accessibility seems to be ignored when it suits as several of the churches are kept locked and the houses in private hands only occasionally if ever open to the public. But Jenkins' opinions are expressed forcibly in these sections too. We are urged to restore the medieval wall paintings at Llangar church, adapt Chepstow castle to be lived in, rebuild the Roman baths at



Caerleon to show what a working Roman bath looked like, reinstate the water garden at Raglan, use Castell Coch for hospitality and entertainment, and give Neath Abbey a ‘dash of Victorian reconstruction’. Some of these comments are fair—and I hope that he would approve of the work we in Cadw have recently completed at Tretower—but his apparent requirement perpetually to opine, rather than let a site speak for itself, quickly becomes irritating.

After reading this book, one is left with the feeling that Jenkins relishes the unusual, the out of the ordinary site. This is valuable, of course, as a guide and an inspiration to visit lesser known buildings. But you will not come to this book to achieve a better understanding of castles, houses or churches, their building styles, characteristics or development. The selection is just too arbitrary and the brief historical and architectural sections on the buildings are also arbitrary if not, on occasions, downright inaccurate. At Dinefwr Castle, we are told about Nest but not about the Lord Rhys, arguably one of the greatest medieval Welsh princes whose seat of government this castle was; the lack of intellectual rigour in the description of Pennal, Cefn Caer, gives an impression that this house could conceivably have been a residence of Glyndŵr, the description of the contrived vernacular of the estate cottage of the Ugly House as a squatter’s house is unfortunate, the screen at Eweny is monastic masonry, the new glass above serving to fill for purely practical reasons what would have been a medieval open space. One could continue, but this is enough to illustrate how, perhaps, impressionism and aesthetics appear more valued than mere factual accuracy.

In summary, there are good points about this book, most of them visual. Photographs are generally stunning, a sizeable minority supplied by Cadw, as the acknowledgements reveal. The book will doubtless inspire visits to lesser known historical gems and will perhaps engender debate over the merits of conservation and restoration. Consulted in small doses at individual sites, the descriptions may be easier on the eye; idiosyncrasy and opinion certainly have their place and can be challenging and refreshing. So let us finish on that positive note.

Raglan

SIAN REES

SAVING ST TEILO’S. BRINGING A MEDIEVAL CHURCH TO LIFE. Edited by Gerallt D. Nash. 187 × 221 mm. 144 pp. 121 illustrations. National Museum Wales Books, 2009. ISBN 978 0 720005 98 1. Price £14.99. (Available in Welsh as *Achub Eglwys Sant Teilo: ailgodi adeilad canoloesol*, ISBN 978 0 720005 98 8.)

This popular and attractively illustrated book celebrates the translation of the medieval parish church from Llandeilo Tal-y-bont near Pontardulais, Carmarthenshire to its new home amidst the forty or so imperilled tokens of the Welsh built heritage at St Fagans.

The original church, which is of early medieval origin, was fairly plain architecturally and missing most of its original fixtures and fittings. Its real treasure lay in the wealth of wall-paintings of different dates discovered below layers of whitewash within its crumbling interior. This is reflected in the reconstructed building whose internal wall surfaces are bedecked with a startlingly recreation of its appearance in the decades prior to the Reformation. To those raised in a Protestant tradition the brash use of colour and imagery of the newly painted interior can be seem quite alien, and at its official reopening in 2007, Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury, pointedly talked of ‘reclaiming a part of our past we ourselves are reluctant to believe existed’.

The book touches on the excitement of discovery, the practical difficulties and ethics of wall-painting conservation (whether to sacrifice a better overpainting to see something earlier below) and how the

paintings were lifted using the *stacco* technique. The paintings included an elegant early fifteenth-century painting of St Catherine, traces of Crucifixion on the chancel arch perhaps of the mid-sixteenth century, and an important series of late fifteenth- to early sixteenth-century paintings including a sequence of paintings of the Passion, the Mocking of Christ, Instruments of the Passion, and Christ's Last Rest, and the Passion Angel, traces of St Christopher (in his traditional siting opposite the main church entrance), and traces of probably St Thomas of Canterbury and other saints (St James the Great or St Roche, possibly St Margaret of Antioch), as well as fleeting appearances of priests or bishops, and possibly the Virgin and Child and the Magi, angels and fragments of architectural devices, linking borders, and chequerboard and flower motifs. Later paintings included a number of post-Reformation texts, Royal Arms and the Lord's Prayer.

The book outlines the meticulous way in which the original building was recorded and how its various elements were numbered to enable a faithful recreation to be made at St Fagans. From the perspective of an excavator, the reviewer would like to have learnt more about the buried archaeology and its context, and to have seen more of the original wall-paintings on which the reconstructions are based (only that of St Catherine and a fragment of Latin text make an appearance). But, perhaps understandably, the major thrust of the book concerns the recreation of the church at St Fagans and its promise of 'bringing a medieval church to life'. In the case of the wall-paintings this involved the search for parallels elsewhere in Wales and south-west England to fill in missing detail, the skills of the modern painter using traditional *secco* painting techniques, the grinding of azurite, the sourcing of pigments (including those from the Clearwell Caves in the Forest of Dean), the use of milk casein for binding, the handmade brushes made of squirrel or hog's hair, the use of oyster shells for palettes, and the technique of 'pouncing' an outline of the original image on to the wall from a cartoon. Details are likewise given of the many other essential craft skills that were needed to bring the project to a successful conclusion, including the burning of quicklime, the plastering and whitewashing of the walls, the reconstruction of missing roof-trusses and the rood screen, roofing in stone tiles, the making of effigies, new window glass and church bell, and the fabrics to dress of the altar.

The achievement of the National Museum in bringing together all the resources and skills necessary for the recreation of this single church underlines the commitment made again and again by small medieval rural communities such as that at Llandeilo, perched on the banks of the river Loughor.

Welshpool

WILLIAM BRITNELL

THE GWENT COUNTY HISTORY. VOLUME 3. THE MAKING OF MONMOUTHSHIRE, 1536–1780. Edited by Madeleine Gray and Prys Morgan. 196 × 252 mm. xvii + 408 pp. 53 illustrations. 23 tables. University of Wales Press on behalf of the Gwent County History Association, Cardiff, 2009. ISBN 978 0 708321 98 0. Price £65.00.

I remember the impression made on me long ago, when I was discovering a taste for local history, by the huge tomes of the *Glamorgan County History*, edifices that buckle the most robust of bookcases. In retrospect, they seem to represent a sort of academic *hubris*—the idea that it was possible to create a permanent and conclusive record of an area whose institutional existence came to an end in the 1970s, and whose social significance was arguably the province of a county set that has melted away.

Yet in this first decade of the new century, with the Union counties largely passed into myth, there is a renewed interest in the county history genre. *Pembrokeshire*, volume 2, came out in 2001 (it is now out of print); Merionethshire, with volume 1 published in 1967, gave birth to volume 2 of its county history

in 2001 (a reprint is mooted). Their sponsors are tortoises compared with the Gwent County History Association, who published volume 1 in 2004, volume 2 in 2008, and launched volume 3 less than a year later. This is a project team that has enormous energy, guided by general editor Ralph Griffiths, harnessing the enthusiasms of working academics and freelance specialists.

*The Making of Monmouthshire* does not face the problem of geographical definition with which its predecessors grappled; its jump-off point is the Acts of Union that brought the county into existence out of a congeries of medieval jurisdictions. It ends on the eve of industrialisation. The first eight chapters deal with politics, religion and power structures, with the period divided at the British Civil Wars. A further nine chapters cover discrete topics over the whole span of the volume—‘everyday life’, population, transport, towns, markets and trade, poor relief, language, literature and education, enclosure and improvement, buildings and early industry.

Chapter 18, by Julian Mitchell, is a little bit different and quite original. It is a study of the fashionable Wye tour as it evolved in the eighteenth century, connecting changing structures of power with the hunger amongst the elite for the picturesque, as represented in natural and man-made landscapes. This theme finds focus in a discussion of the landscaping at Piercefield, carried out by the Morris family with the wealth it leached from slaves and sugar.

This sort of structure—eighteen chapters and 400-plus pages—means that each chapter is relatively short, around twenty or thirty pages. I can see the logic in compartmentalisation—both in terms of getting specialists to write succinct essays on what they know best, and therefore in terms also of getting their work in on time—but I can also see a virtue in fewer, longer, and more integrated discussions of the material. The fragmented approach to authorship makes it hard for the editors to create a sense of an overall structure and perspective. The effect is knowledgeable, but bitty. One is offered a lot of information, but little debate, and little sense, generally, of how what is being said about Monmouthshire/Gwent should be understood within a wider context. That seems a shame, because as several authors point out, Monmouthshire looks Welsh from some points of view, English from others. If one looks for a regional context, for instance, should we be thinking of south-east Wales, of the March, of Severnside, of the southern Midlands, or all of these?

The way the topical chapters, especially, have been defined sometimes seems to have more to do with what an author can write about, less with the object of an integrated discussion of social change and its relationship to economy, culture and topography. The earlier chapters on politics, power, religion and belief, make more structural sense, and sit well with Robert Matthews’ discussion of the 1642–60 watershed. Over the book as a whole, the reader must expect a lot of overlaps, and to follow the topic, say, of the evolution of the aristocratic and gentry families and their estates will require matching and comparing information from a diversity of directions. Thus, John Gwynfor Jones on landownership before 1640, Stephen K. Roberts on Tudor and Stuart politics, and Judith Jones on ‘everyday life’ have a lot to say on social structure, power and elites. But so, too, do Jonathan Newman’s work on building history and Paul Courtney’s on landscape and agrarian improvement.

In fact, Jones and Roberts have conflicting views of the political and social significance of the new county. For Jones (‘Landownership and power 1536–42’), the shire community is a meaningful term, given definition by the territorial and legal boundaries created at Union and the administrative responsibilities allotted to local rulers. His perspective on the ‘Welsh’ gentry under the Tudors will be familiar to the specialist. Here, the story is reduced to a narrower stage. Roberts takes a more critical perspective, and is more accommodating to the lay reader. He focuses much of his discussion around the issues that engaged local rulers, showing how politics centred in different ways around Catholicism, around maritime trade and the bridging of rivers, around law and order, and around relationships with Bristol. He closes with an interrogation of the concept of the ‘county community’ and wonders

whether people's allegiances and loyalties were focused on the shire at all. He points to the existence of strong regional and local identities and observes political dynamics that undermined identification with the shire. He concludes: 'The concept of a county community is not one that can exercise much purchase in understanding the politics of early modern Monmouthshire'. This chapter offers context and a readiness to challenge familiar assumptions that is refreshing. The same can be said of Madeleine Gray's elegant discussion of Tudor and Stuart belief and the relationship between the strength of recusancy and the Catholic loyalties of big-wigs such as the earls of Worcester and the Morgans of Llantarnam.

Gray, in her editorial guise, and Prys Morgan have done a heroic job in riding herd on their fifteen authors. They have produced a readable, physically attractive, volume with an attractive range of relevant illustrations. The editing is technically superb. But it would have been nice to have been offered in addition an editorial voice—one, that if not welding together the many different parts, pointed to some of the relevant historiographical and methodological issues, offered a wider context in Welsh and English regional history, and flagged up some of the more obvious debates. This is not a book that makes any concession to the general reader or the student.

This makes it worth questioning the concept of the 'County History'. The genre seems to lay claim to permanence; to enshrine a settled interpretation of the history of an area that can claim geographical stability; but surely, it is possible only to offer work in progress, part of a continuing dialogue with the past, in which we need to continue to challenge familiar assumptions.

Cardiff

MATTHEW GRIFFITHS

**IRON WORKING IN MERIONETH FROM PREHISTORY TO THE 18TH CENTURY.** By Peter Crew. 150 × 210 mm. 32 pp. 59 illustrations. Snowdonia National Park and Plas Tan y Bwlch, Maentwrog, 2009. ISBN 978 1 845272 60 9. Price £4.00.

This booklet is the printed version of the second in a series of memorial lectures given in memory of the (tragically early terminated) life of Merfyn Williams who actively participated and supported the work described in this excellent publication. By accident and methodological excavation Peter Crew came across a previously unsuspected commonality of late prehistoric iron metallurgy in the previously unknown stake-built roundhouses of north-western Wales. In doing so he developed new methods in scientific archaeological techniques that achieved an international reputation for his work during Merfyn's active direction of Plas Tan y Bwlch. An instance of these was in using very high resolution magnetic surveys of the bases of prehistoric bloomer iron-furnaces on a close, 10-centimetre grid to give well-defined dipolar signals. These could then be mathematically modelled to recover the directions of remanent magnetism. The results were spectacular, giving one of the hut-enclosed bloomer furnaces at Crawcwellt (near Trawsfynydd) a date of last firing of 100 BC.

The methodology, carried out by the Tan y Bwlch team, was subsequently applied to the larger Llwyn Du bloomery site to the south of Crawcwellt and revealed this larger site to have been employing some 10–12 people in three periods at the end of the fourteenth century and beginning of the fifteenth. New techniques of more detailed analysis were also developed at this site using cores from a nearby bog. Peat cores are normally sampled at 1-centimetre intervals but here 2-millimetre slices were made: each slice representing about 10 years of peat accumulation. Small-scale fluctuations of oak pollen were interpreted as evidence of selective pollarding to provide enough suitable timber for fuel. Interestingly, the excavations also located a cruck from a phase 2 building, dated to between 1376 to 1392 by

dendrochronology fixed by radiometric dates. This means that it presently forms the earliest known surviving roof timber used in a secular building in Wales.

The excavation of two mid-west Wales iron furnaces are also described—the Dol y Clochudd and Dolgun blast furnaces, dating from the sixteenth and early eighteenth centuries respectively. The former is a rare substantial survival from the time that the British iron industry was forced by timber shortages to expand beyond the Sussex Weald. This example was only in blast for eight years and very few sites of this era survive above foundation level. Usually, such a site has been later rebuilt and much of the evidence for a sixteenth-century furnace lost. The Dolgun furnace is especially important by being planned by two of the central characters at the start of the British Industrial Revolution in 1713—Abraham Darby of Coalbrookdale and his partner, Thomas Goldney of Bristol.

The fifth site described is the small, stone-walled fort of Bryn y Castell above Ffestiniog where very rich bog iron-ores were smelted mostly in a period twenty to thirty years before the Romans arrived.

These sites have mostly been consolidated by Snowdonia Park who employed both Peter and Merfyn, and very useful access notes and a map on the rear cover are included. In Peter's time as National Park archaeologist, with the able support of Merfyn, sites that would not obviously further the study and methodology of historical metallurgy advanced very significantly under his able hand.

This small booklet has its sites and pioneering experimental metallurgy copiously illustrated in colour.

Aberystwyth

STEPHEN HUGHES

THE LEAD, COPPER & BARYTES MINES OF SHROPSHIRE. By Michael Shaw. 172 × 243 mm. x + 310 pp. 216 illustrations. Logaston Press, Almeley, Herefordshire, 2009. ISBN 978 1 906663 09 4. Price £12.95.

Mike Shaw has provided an excellent introduction to the history of non-ferrous metal mining in the county, which I can thoroughly recommend. Brooke and Allbutt's, *Shropshire Lead Mines* (1973) has long been out of print and was strictly limited in scope. The present volume covers all known lead and copper workings and the subsidiary barytes industry. Shaw describes the geology of the various ore fields, their mineralogy, mining methods and processing and where appropriate the smelting. His treatment of the barytes industry is exemplary and explains not only the nature of the mineral, but also its uses to the present day. The illustrations are excellent and aptly deployed. The main body of the book is a gazetteer of the mines area by area, describing the visible remains of workings and surviving buildings including those of the toxic smelt-houses; those in the Ironbridge Gorge and later at Pontesbury were particularly nasty. Within the space available, there is a mass of detail about the history of each mine, production records where they survive and the succession of companies and individuals involved. It is not an economic history and is light on the eighteenth century for which there is a substantial body of unexploited material.

Roman mining operations present a problem. As long ago as 1908 Professor Haverfield urged caution in reading too much into the Roman villa at Linley. More recently Dr Graham Webster and Professor Barri Jones have thrown caution to the winds; Webster followed Thomas Wright and interpreted the remains as a lead-processing complex for which there is no evidence and Jones interpreted aerial photographs at nearby Norbury as hushing. In fact, as demonstrated in a recent *Shropshire Transactions*, what Jones saw was indubitably medieval ridge and furrow and nothing to do with Roman mining.

Your reviewer found no evidence of medieval lead mining at Shelve after 1379. The revival in the 1550s was driven by Lord Stafford's need to generate income. He encountered the 1379 entry and

persuaded an official of the Mint to take a lease of the mines, presumably in search of silver. It was a rather inopportune moment to start mining lead when there was so much monastic lead clogging the market. The history of the resumption of large-scale lead mining in the late seventeenth century and through the eighteenth century very largely remains to be written. The archives are regrettably dispersed and sometimes inaccessible and whilst there are plenty of mining leases there are rarely any production or royalty records. The persistence of partnerships over long periods in the eighteenth century, however, suggests that there were good profits to be made, particularly at Pennerley where a group of Shrewsbury drapers from 1728 were responsible for driving the first major drainage level, later known as the 'Boat Level' which was extended up to the Bog between 1809 and 1812. In the later seventeenth century Derbyshire miners and entrepreneurs exploited the More estate but in the eighteenth century after the exit of the London Lead Company in the 1730s, partnerships were normally Shrewsbury-orientated, except for the new Snailbeach company of 1782 served from Oswestry and Minera. Some of the Shropshire entrepreneurs were also active in Merioneth and Cardiganshire, notably the 'Shrewsbury Company' in which Henry Bowdler, Jonathan Scott and later Edward Jeffreys and his family were involved. From the 1770s John Probert of Cophthorne, oversaw the Cardiganshire mines of Lord Powis and adventured on his own account. He was a major participant in the Shropshire White Grit Company for which there is useful material in the Powis Castle collection in the National Library of Wales of which the author seems unaware. Cardiganshire miners were employed at the Bog mine in the 1760s, but by the early nineteenth century the mining population was indigenous. Census material is used but nothing is said of the remarkable squatter settlements and smallholdings, which grew up around the south-west Shropshire lead mines which, although reduced in size, are still a feature of the landscape. Major standing remains have been preserved at Snailbeach and Tankerville mines but much of the mining landscape has been sanitised in the later twentieth century.

Inevitably there are some quibbles. Mathew Boulton is invariably spelled 'Bolton'. Westcott copper mine was opened briefly in the 1750s after the Gatten estate was purchased by Thomas Hill of Tern. John Weston, who took the Bog mine about 1789 was an outsider from North Wales, He floated the mine on the London Market as the 'Good Chance' mine to raise £6,000 and by 1796 had exhausted the capital to little effect, observed somewhat cynically by John Lawrence. Weston like later miners at the Bog spent deeply to little profit. Regrettably, there are no output tables for any of the minerals, nor comparative tables with other lead-producing areas.

Habberley, Shropshire

JAMES LAWSON

PIGSTIES AND PARADISE. LADY DIARISTS AND THE TOUR OF WALES, 1795–1860. By Liz Pitman. 140 × 216 mm. 155 pp. 56 illustrations. Gwasg Carreg Gwalch, Llanrwst, 2009. ISBN 978 1 845272 49 4. Price £7.50.

The author declares a three-fold aim: first, to bring to public awareness some interesting historical material by women writers; secondly, to show that by no means all the travel diarists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were male; and thirdly, to serve as a gazetteer of itineraries for modern tourists. Following a foreword by Lord Raglan and a general introduction to the subject and to the period 1795 to 1860, there are six chapters devoted to individual examples of lady travellers in Wales. As the author makes clear, they are not household names, even among the most dedicated topographical historians.

When researching her subject the author quickly became aware of the immense number of diaries written by travellers in Wales from the 1770s onwards, now to be found in libraries and record offices in

Wales and England. Most of the diarists whose work has actually been published were male. However, it must be said that well-known authors such as Thomas Pennant and Henry Wyndham did have something important to record; they had an academic education and great powers of observation, and could usually finance their own publishing activities. Diaries kept by ladies were generally less weighty, but witty and interesting nevertheless. They were for private and family edification and not aimed at the wider world.

The author discovered at least eighty unpublished ladies' diaries, and from these she selected the most representative and interesting to describe or quote. A wealth of hitherto unknown topographical illustrations drawn by the diarists also came to light and many are reproduced. The travellers are treated chronologically, from 1795 to 1860.

The series begins with two contrasting characters. The first was Frances Anne Crewe, a noted society beauty, who explored north Wales in 1795. She was the daughter of Fulke Greville, who was accompanied by the artist J. C. Ibbetson on his tour of north Wales in 1792. At the age of eighteen Frances had married John Crewe, later the first Baron Crewe. In contrast, Sarah Anne Wilmot, a 'female antiquary' visited south Wales in 1795 and 1802 in search of the picturesque, in company with her husband John. They began with the famous Wye Tour, which included an inevitable visit to the ruined Cistercian abbey at Tintern.

The early nineteenth century is represented by the diaries of Millicent Bant, companion to Lady Wilson during visits dated 1806 (mid and north Wales), 1808 (south and west Wales) and 1812 (Hay-on-Wye to Monmouth). Lady Wilson was well-informed on matters picturesque and fond of good wine (not easily to be found in Welsh hostelrys of the period).

Mary Anne Hibbert appears as a frequent traveller, visiting locations in north-west Wales and the southern fringe of Wales between 1816 and 1858. From 1849 she made use of a new mode of transport—the train. In 1824 Margaret Martineau, of a wealthy Unitarian background, made a circuit of Wales in a family party, starting out from St Albans in Hertfordshire. They approached their journey with zest, and Margaret recorded many pertinent, and often critical, remarks on the inhabitants, the state of the roads and the wet weather. In 1837 Elizabeth Bower with her newly wed husband made a honeymoon tour of England, Wales and Ireland lasting six weeks. They visited Chepstow, Machynlleth and Holyhead en-route to Ireland and returned via Bangor, Capel Curig and Llangollen. Finally, the last visitor to be described is Frederica Rouse Boughton, a daughter of Downton Hall in Herefordshire.

The make-up of the book is curious. The two-and-a-half pages of acknowledgements preceding the text proper would have been better located at the end, alongside the notes on sources and repositories and the credits for illustrations. There is a useful gazetteer of place-names and inns, but unfortunately for a work containing so much new research, no index. At least the gazetteer could have been made into an index of places by the addition of page references.

It is a delight to see so many new topographical views (but no consolidated list). They are supplemented by engravings after well-known artists of the period, and occasionally, but less felicitously, by modern photographs. The main title of the book is misleading. It is true that one finds an occasional mention of pigsties and the odd reference to paradise, but readers expecting to advance their knowledge of either subject will be disappointed; the substance of the book is in the sub-title 'Lady Diarists and the Tour of Wales, 1795–1860'. A grant from the Cambrian Archaeological Association towards the original research is gratefully acknowledged. Liz Pitman is to be congratulated on bringing to light so much fresh material regarding the discovery of the picturesque landscape and inhabitants of Wales.

**Other books received**

MEDIEVAL AND TUDOR GWENT CLERGY (TO 1563). By David H. Williams. 210 × 298 mm. 94 pp. 1 illustration. Aberystwyth, 2009 (obtainable from the author) Price: £8.00.

The first edition of a substantial listing of the known clergy, several thousands in number, in part of south-east Wales, together with a useful bibliography.