

Reviews

J. E. LLOYD AND THE CREATION OF WELSH HISTORY. By Huw Pryce. 137 × 216 mm. xvii + 277 pp. 6 illustrations. University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 2011. ISBN 978 0 7083 2389 2. Price £19.99.

Few scholars have stamped their authority on a subject as thoroughly and enduringly as did Sir John Lloyd in his *History of Wales from the Earliest Times to the Edwardian Conquest*. It is not so long since university teachers of Welsh medieval history might be found confessing that lecturing on the thirteenth century was largely a matter of constructing a dialogue between themselves and Sir John Lloyd.

Huw Pryce's latest book succeeds admirably in attaining its goal of 'exploring Lloyd's life and work in greater depth than before in order to try to offer a richer and more complex understanding of their significance'. The structure chosen by the author is simple enough: the work is divided into two main parts. In the first, of a little over sixty pages, Lloyd's biography is set out. We move from his childhood and adolescence in Liverpool, in a household with roots in northern Montgomeryshire, to his university education at Aberystwyth and Oxford. This led to his employment as a university teacher at Aberystwyth, followed by his appointment at the University College of North Wales, Bangor, as registrar and secretary, and Permanent Lecturer in Welsh History. He remained as registrar until 1920 even though he had been appointed Professor of History in 1899. Pryce then explores Lloyd's emergence as the pre-eminent historian of Wales, starting with the publication of his *History* in 1911, and continuing with his Ford lectures at Oxford in 1920 on Owain Glyndŵr, subsequently published by Oxford University Press in 1931, and his leading part in such ventures as the *History of Carmarthenshire and Y Bywgraffiadur Cymreig hyd 1940*.

The second, and larger, part of the book examines aspects of Lloyd's approach to, and vision of, Welsh history. Many readers will be introduced for the first time to Lloyd as a commentator on the history of modern Wales, his work in this regard represented mainly by brief studies such as *The History of Wales* in Benn's Sixpenny Library (1930). Other chapters probe his adoption of an interdisciplinary approach to subjects such as the development of Wales from prehistoric to post-Roman times, his reconstruction of medieval (and indeed pre-medieval) Welsh society, and his exploration in depth of the 'Age of the Princes'. Pryce skilfully examines the way in which Lloyd combined narrative history with 'analysis of ecclesiastical, literary, social and institutional topics'. Rulers and their deeds were important to him, but as Pryce points out Lloyd stressed that 'while Welsh nationhood realised its full potential under exceptional leaders like Llywelyn [ab Iorwerth] its foundations were resolutely popular.'

Lloyd's career was not without ironies and paradoxes. One wonders, for example, what would have been the effect on Lloyd's life and the path of his subsequent scholarship if he had succeeded in one of his two unsuccessful attempts to win a fellowship by examination at All Souls College, Oxford. And Pryce makes the interesting observation that 'given Lloyd's expertise, the paucity of research on the history of medieval Wales by Bangor graduates is striking'. That reflection leads to the conjecture that 'the very qualities of the 1911 *History* that inspired admiration may also have inhibited further research in the field it transformed'. This last point is typical of the shrewd assessments that characterise the work and contribute to a book that will stand—and indeed that demands—several re-readings.

It is a copiously and helpfully referenced volume: before we get to the Bibliography and Index almost exactly one quarter of the book is made up by the end-notes. Such a meticulous approach not only inspires confidence but allows a multitude of telling observations to be made in a way that does not break up the flow of the main text. And it is rare to find such a well-produced and illustrated volume at

such a remarkably accessible price. There is one missed opportunity: the list of Lloyd's works is confined to those actually mentioned in the book. This means that we are still without a comprehensive bibliography of Lloyd's writings. In another respect it is a pity that Pryce did not go further: the mature consideration and perceptiveness that underlies his work leaves this reader—and, I suspect, will leave many more—with the wish that he had extended his study to an examination of Lloyd's place in the subsequent development of Welsh medieval studies, of where he stands in the context of the work not only of forebears and contemporaries but of the generations that followed him, and of where modern scholarship might benefit from consideration, modification and rejection of his work. But this is surely a subject for another book. And that book is still necessary, for Lloyd shone a bright light, and cast a long shadow.

On Sir John Lloyd's death in 1947 *The Times* commented that 'to vary a famous saying, whatever else is read, Lloyd must be read'. To appreciate the truth that lay behind that remark, we must in turn adapt it: whatever else is read about Lloyd and the environment in which he worked, this book must be read.

Llanidloes

DAVID STEPHENSON

WALES AND THE WELSH IN THE MIDDLE AGES. Edited by R. A. Griffiths and P. R. Schofield. 160 × 241 mm. xvii + 252 pp. 11 illustrations. 5 tables. University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 2011. ISBN 978 0 7083 2446 2. Price £65.00.

It is a measure of the esteem in which Beverley Smith is held by his fellow academics that no less than ten of the fifteen papers in this Festschrift are authored by professors, whether in post or retired, and three more by present and past staff at the National Library of Wales. Beverley spent almost his entire career in Aberystwyth, retiring from the chair of Welsh history in 1995. The bibliography of his research compiled by Huw Walters reveals how prolific he has been over more than fifty years. It runs to over 170 entries—books, articles and reviews—and the reviews apart, almost all of them have focused on medieval Welsh history. Prefaced by an introductory memoir from Geraint Gruffydd, the majority of the papers in this attractively produced volume reflect Beverley's academic interests and some have clearly been inspired by what he has written. Only two contributions stray beyond the boundaries of Wales, but as with many Festschriften the papers are of variable length (between nine and twenty-three pages long) and relatively heterogeneous in their subject matter.

Legal aspects of the medieval world have been amongst Beverley's interests, and these find reflection in two contributions. Phillipp Schofield uses the late thirteenth/early fourteenth-century court rolls from the lordship of Dyffryn Clwyd to reinforce Rees Davies' contention that the marcher courts generally employed English law but could on occasions resort to Welsh law and custom, permitting a more flexible approach to litigation than would be seen in an English manorial court. Wendy Davies goes back to the tenth century and looks at how disputes were settled in Spain and Portugal, and contrasts the sparsity of information on secular courts in Wales with those in the Iberian peninsula.

One of three surviving thirteenth-century, abbreviated versions of Domesday Book—the Neath abbey *Breviate*—is considered by Daniel Huws, not for its primary text but for the additions that were introduced by no less than thirteen different Cistercian scribes around the beginning of the fourteenth century. And one of these additions, a section of the *Annales Cambriae* for the years between 1257 and 1263 is the subject of David Stephenson's paper in which he argues that the chronicler was working at Cwmhir Abbey in mid-Wales.

Huw Owen revisits familiar ground between the Clwyd and the Conwy valleys in north Wales with his examination of the clans and gentry families in the Vale of Clwyd in the two and a half centuries after the Edwardian Conquest. Dense in its detail about the descents of individual families, Owen makes the interesting point that the Vale witnessed considerable English colonization, yet Welsh families remained prominent and were the patrons of some of the leading Welsh poets of the time. A second paper with a north Walian emphasis is Tony Carr's which pays tribute to Thomas Jones Pierce, one of Beverley Smith's principal teachers, who made extensive use of the extents for various northern counties that were compiled from 1284 and well into the fourteenth century. Carr's understandably brief reassessment emphasises the importance of these surveys for comprehending the economic basis of the pre-Edwardian conquest era.

Other papers include Huw Pryce on Anglo-Welsh agreements between 1201 and 1277, T. M. Charles-Edwards examines dynastic succession in early medieval Wales, David Carpenter writes on how some Welsh princes favoured confederation rather than domination in their dealings with their vassals, and Michael Prestwich elicits a remarkable level of detail (to my mind) about the Welsh archers who made up two-thirds of Edward I's force in his expedition to Flanders in 1297.

By this point the reader may be questioning why the reviews editor of *Archaeologia Cambrensis* has chosen to review this book, rather than passing it to a historian who would be better qualified to offer a perspective on its contents. The reason is not unassociated with the fact that, as Geraint Gruffydd noted in his memoir, Beverley Smith's interests extend beyond documentary history and that for some years he was chairman of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales. The remaining three papers in this volume reflect these wider interests and were seen as must-reads. Ralph Griffiths defines the milieu in which William Rees, one of Wales' greatest twentieth-century historians researched topics which exemplified a departure from traditional practice. His map of fourteenth-century south Wales is a remarkable piece of work and more than once Griffiths contrast Rees' approach, more that of an 'environmental and social historian' with a feeling for the landscape, with the narrative and political history espoused by his pre-eminent contemporary Sir John Lloyd. For this reviewer Griffiths' paper has provided a welcome overview of an historian whose works he has frequently resorted to without properly appreciating their context. Then Christopher Dyer applies his extensive knowledge of urban development in England to the towns of medieval Wales. He attempts, reasonably convincingly, to rehabilitate Welsh towns as a group by reassessing the arguments that in the past have been used to question their development as thriving urban centres; and he ends by stating that though they had own distinctive character, Welsh towns can readily be accommodated in the European mainstream of urban development. Finally, Richard Suggett turns his attention away from the vernacular architecture which most readers will associate him with to medieval church building. He rightly notes that interpretation has not kept pace with description, and having made the point that in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries church rebuilding was as prevalent as domestic rebuilding, takes us on a whistle-stop tour of regional variations in church architecture—stone vaulting, roofs, towers, shrines and relics in the north-west, and the patrons and donors who funded the new churches, before finishing with four all-too brief case studies. The breadth of the subject matter in these last two papers is clearly evident: is it too much to hope that in due course time the authors might consider their themes at greater length?

This handsome volume is an appropriate tribute to one of Wales' foremost historians. I am sure Beverley Smith will have enjoyed reading it.

EDWARD LHWYD. *ARCHAEOLOGIA BRITANNICA*. TEXT AND TRANSLATIONS. Edited by Dewi W. Evans and Brynley F. Roberts. 174 × 248 mm. xii + 262pp. Celtic Studies Publications, Aberystwyth, 2009. ISBN 978 1 891271 14 4. Price £29.95.

This admirable volume brings together the six prefaces contained in *Archaeologia Britannica* (*Glossography*), along with other related documents which cast light on the evolution of a vast project that culminated in the publication in 1707 of Lhwyd's landmark work in the history of Celtic Studies. The anthology is furnished with a 34-page introduction which briefly sketches Lhwyd's biography before proceeding to discuss the genesis of the *Archaeologia*, its composition, significance, and that of the accompanying texts. The editors show that, though monumental, the *Archaeologia* was by no means uncharacteristic of the scholarly milieu in which it was produced nor was it atypical of a period that witnessed the advent of several general systems of classification (in the natural sciences, for example, or in the study of diplomatics as initiated by Mabillon). The intellectual stimulus afforded by the newly founded Ashmolean Museum, the meetings of the Oxford Philosophical Society and queries and correspondence from antiquaries from farther afield were all conducive to Lhwyd's study of antiquities. However, it was his revision of the Welsh entries for the new edition of Camden's *Britannia*, it seems, that led Lhwyd to envisage the publication of an all-embracing work on the antiquities and natural history of Wales, a project that would see him embark in May 1697 on a four-year tour of the Celtic countries.

Such an undertaking would have been inconceivable in the absence of financial backing, a point illustrated by *A Design of a British Dictionary* (1695) which describes Lhwyd's proposed itinerary and invites subscriptions to fund his tour. Amongst the most forthcoming in their patronage of the venture were the Glamorgan gentry, in particular Sir Thomas Mansel of Margam to whom the *Archaeologia* is dedicated. Similarly indispensable was the cooperation of the informants who completed the *Parochial Queries*, providing Lhwyd with a broad collection of data on subjects as diverse as 'Coyns, Amulets, Chains, Bracelets, Rings, Seals, &c. where and when found and in whose Possession at present' and 'the Welsh Names of Birds, Fish, Insects, Plants, Stones; or any other Natural Bodies'. Yet lack of financial support was to plague Lhwyd during his travels and subsequently whilst preparing the *Archaeologia* for publication. In 1703 he resolved to invite subscriptions for the *Archaeologia* in a short notice that barely masks Lhwyd's frustration with the unsympathetic attitude of some towards the nature of his investigations. Many had expected a more popular, accessible work. Uncompromising, Lhwyd responds to his critics in the 1703 notice and yet more firmly in his prefaces to the sections of the *Archaeologia*. The *Design*, *Parochial Queries* and the notice to subscribers, three key background texts, are fully reproduced here, ahead of the texts hailing from the *Archaeologia* itself.

The prefaces to the various sections of the *Archaeologia* constitute the core of the anthology. These comprise: the general preface; *At y Kymry*; the preface to the *Comparative Etymology*; *Ragskref dhon 'Ramatek Kernuak*; the preface to the *British Etymologicon*; and that to the *Irish-English Dictionary*. The Welsh, Cornish and Irish prefaces are accompanied by English translations which were published separately during the eighteenth century, and are here for the first time gathered together. Whilst the general preface outlines the contents of the *Archaeologia* and the broad aim of the work, namely to 'contribute not a little towards a Clearer Notion of the First Planters of the Three Kingdoms, and a better Understanding of our Ancient Names of Persons and Places' (thereby also throwing light, it is presumed, upon the language of the Ancient Gauls), in the other prefaces Lhwyd discusses in more detail his approach to the subject. Various aspects of his methodology are thus elucidated: his use of a General Alphabet to facilitate comparison between the Celtic Languages; the six principles employed to explain the process by which dialects become distinct languages; his criteria for distinguishing between

common derivations and loanwords; and the motivation for bringing Irish into his scheme of analysis. As noted by the editors, the prefaces afford ample evidence that Lhwyd was ‘less interested in hypotheses than in evidence’, for instance in his balanced criticism of the Abbé Pezron’s general rule on the antiquity of monosyllables. They also provide a glimpse of Lhwyd’s (admittedly somewhat removed) identification with the speakers of the languages he studied, showing him to be endowed with an insider’s perspective, for amongst the generally bookish motivations for studying the Celtic languages, Lhwyd, who did not ‘profess to be an Englishman, but an old Briton’, notes their utility ‘to those that have taken upon them the Care of Souls, and to those likewise who have any Office or Place of Trust over the common People’.

The remaining texts include eleven commendatory poems in Latin, Scots Gaelic and Welsh from the *Archaeologia*, supplied with translations and commentary, along with four other praise poems in Welsh and Irish and prose appreciations of the *Archaeologia* by William Baxter. Also reproduced are a Gaelic glossary annotated by Lhwyd and a short tract on Welsh toponyms published posthumously in 1719.

A select bibliography supplements this absorbing compilation of texts. It should be mentioned that the editors have also produced a comprehensive bibliography, *Edward Lhwyd 1660–1709: Llyfryddiaeth a Chyfarwyddiadur / A Bibliography and Readers’ Guide*, published separately by the University of Wales Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies, Aberystwyth.

Dublin

RICHARD GLYN ROBERTS

DISCOVERED IN TIME. TREASURES FROM EARLY WALES. Edited by Mark Redknap. 191 × 224 mm. 163 pp. 150 illustrations. National Museum Wales, Cardiff, 2011. ISBN 978 0 7200 0604 9. Price £14.99.

This elegantly designed and quite sumptuous, but reasonably priced, book has been written by staff of the Department of Archaeology and Numismatics to ‘communicate latest thinking to a wider audience’. The appeal is clear—beautiful moody photographs allied to a brief non-technical summary relating to each of ‘70 iconic [the inevitable adjective] objects that tell the story of life in Wales’—by and large the upper end of the spectrum as signalled by the word ‘treasures’ in the title.

It will undoubtedly be successful in making the quality of the collections in the National Museum Wales better known, but I have two areas of disappointment: the absence of references to fuller discussions of each object and the failure to use explanatory line drawings to supplement the photographs. The commissioners of the book would no doubt argue that its role is not to explain in detail, but to attract and to inspire; to pull in the previously unengaged. In this aim I am sure they will succeed, but I think it is sad that those attracted and intrigued should not be told where to learn more about these fine objects. We need to be told where the new thinking is more fully argued. With only 250–300 words available, nobody can do full justice to their treasure; but a brief reference to a fuller publication could forestall a growing frustration within the interested reader. The elegantly designed pages, with their generous margins, could surely provide room enough for a reference relating to each piece. The suggestions for further reading will help, but they are mostly general surveys published a few years ago. Some of the more intriguing re-evaluations carried out by National Museum staff are not covered by them (and some not yet published in detail anywhere). The Cerrig y Drudion Crown (no. 28) is a case in point. The text is cryptic both about the old and the new interpretations (there is no mention of others in between), and neither the cropped photograph of the original fragments nor the small image of the new

reconstruction provide enough ‘evidence’ to convince. This is not to say that the entry is inappropriate, but just that it needs that essential link to a deeper discussion.

My other disappointment is the paucity of line illustrations. Line drawings have virtually disappeared from archaeology these days, especially from ‘accessible’ publishing; yet they can often say so much more than photographs or text, and clarify ambiguities (such as the puzzling mirror from Brecon Gaer, no. 38). I suspect their rarity may be because line drawings are more difficult to transfer to digital format. Only for the Capel Garmon firedog (no. 33) is there a drawing. It explains how the beautiful and impressive object was actually made by those three men over a long year.

The structure of the book is straightforward. Fronted by a short essay on the history and philosophy of the museum, the arrangement is chronological within a traditional and familiar periodisation: Palaeolithic to medieval. Each chapter, introduced by a short historical commentary, contains eight to twelve artefacts individually discussed and illustrated. The book ends with a useful glossary and a short list of further reading. This is in fact the artefactual version of Cadw’s 1990s guides to regional monuments, without the need to explain how to find them, since they are all in the National Museum Wales.

Like the British Museum’s *History of the World through 100 Objects* the choice of objects will promote discussion. On the whole I would not argue with their choices. We have the Pontnewydd teeth, we have Paviland, we have some nice microliths with their significant glue. We have rather a lot of Pen y Wyrllod, Talgarth, but also axes and grindstones, the stuff of everyday life, as well as the undeniably beautiful though inexplicable Maesmôr macehead. The Bronze Age is represented by more gold than bronze and from then on the element of ‘treasure’ tends to predominate—not surprisingly since valuable objects are preserved with greater care by their original and later owners. A high number of the fine objects have been found by metal detectorists and some have not yet been fully published, even though found some years ago. People will be interested to see again the Llys Awel Hoard of Romano-British figurines and the Little Orme group of ox-head escutcheons which both found a safe haven in the National Museum in the 1980s (nos 45 and 46). However, the value of the Portable Antiquities Scheme is clear from the rescue of unconsidered trifles (as in no. 58); while scholarly curatorship is rewarded in the re-union of the ivory diptych from Llandaff (no. 66).

The skill of our ancestors, the lucky chances of discovery, the thrill of deeper research, but especially the value of a museum to preserve and display these items, are all celebrated in this book.

Bangor

FRANCES LYNCH

MONTGOMERYSHIRE. PAST & PRESENT FROM THE AIR. By Chris Musson. 216 × 231 mm. 112 pp. 194 illustrations. Powysland Club and Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust, Welshpool, 2011. ISBN 978 0 9541139 0 2. Price £12.95.

This has been a difficult review to write, not because of the book that forms its subject, which is excellent, but because of the circumstances in which it was written. In January 2012 Bob Jones, Chris Musson’s long-time friend and pilot, was tragically killed in an air crash near the airfield which he built just south of Welshpool, Powys. As a result of the many hours they had spent in the air together above Wales and the Marches, Jones and Musson had developed a highly effective working relationship, pairing Musson’s exceptional skills as a photographer with Jones’ brilliance as a pilot. Watching them in action was an extraordinary experience: both men knew instinctively what the other required once one of them had spotted a ‘target’ and communication between the two seemed almost telepathic. Musson’s dedication of his latest book to Jones is therefore both a fitting and an unintentionally poignant one.

The format of the book is similar to the other collections of aerial photographs that Musson has written or co-authored, matching authoritative, but accessible and at times humorous, texts and captions with an array of stunning images. As previously, his approach to the historic environment is also a holistic one, spanning archaeological monuments, buildings and structures, and the landscape as a whole, and ranging chronologically from the Neolithic to the present. This enables Musson to bring out the character and distinctiveness of the archaeology and the landscapes of the areas he is examining. Thus, whilst the layout will be familiar to those who know his earlier volumes, his latest book loses none of its fascination.

In the first part of the book Musson introduces his subjects—the landscapes and archaeology of Montgomeryshire and the art of archaeological aerial photography. He firstly outlines the geology and geography of the pre-1974 county, now part of northern Powys. He highlights the topographical variability of the landscapes in this part of Wales, which range from the broad floodplain of the Severn north of Welshpool to the gaunt open moorlands on the edge of the Cambrian Mountains, and the rolling hills and valleys in between. He then explains why aerial photography is such a useful and effective survey tool for archaeologists, illustrating how different ground and weather conditions render archaeological sites visible from the air. He also looks to the future, introducing LiDAR (Light Detection And Ranging) which is rapidly becoming an essential tool for surveying large tracts of landscape with extraordinary detail and accuracy. Musson then provides a chronological overview of the county's archaeology, beginning with Neolithic and Early Bronze Age ritual monuments and the spectacular hillforts of the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age, and then on through the Roman and medieval periods and post-medieval agricultural and designed landscapes, to the forestry and industrial landscapes of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

In the following three parts of the book Musson takes us on a series of flights over Montgomeryshire, starting in the northern and western areas, then over the southern part the county, and finally in the east along the Severn Valley to the Kerry Ridgeway. We take in many spectacular sights and sites along the way: the extensive limeworks complex around Llanymynech; the nineteenth-century reservoir at Lake Vyrnwy, built to supply Liverpool; the forest of turbines that comprise the Llandinam windfarm; lead mines near Llanidloes; Offa's Dyke crossing the Vale of Montgomery; and the market town of Welshpool with its medieval core, nineteenth-century canal and railway and late twentieth-century bypass. The photographs he has selected in these parts of the book demonstrate Musson's deep knowledge of the landscapes and archaeology of this part of Wales. Particular highlights for this reviewer are the five ring-ditches which comprise the Pentrefelin barrow cemetery in the Tanat Valley; the stone-built roundhouses within Craig Rhiwarth hillfort picked out by a light covering of snow; the agger of a Roman road which survives for several hundred metres as a continuous earthwork under pasture near Adfa; the Llwydiarth Hall maze; and the shots of borderland hillforts.

The diversity and chronological range of the sites covered and the wealth of research which underpins the text will ensure that this book remains an essential source of reference for those interested in the archaeology of Wales and the Marches for many years to come. But the real value of this book is the photographs, which demonstrate yet again why Musson is one of our foremost aerial photographers. In their composition and lighting they are works of art, and one can return to them again and again and still find something fresh and new. Ultimately, we are left to contemplate the varying ways in which our landscapes reflect past human activity and, in Musson's own words, how 'what we do today can change or destroy that reflection, or create something new that will last long into the future'.

MYNYDD HIRAETHOG. THE DENBIGH MOORS. By Robert J. Silvester. 190 × 230 mm. 88 pp. 58 illustrations. Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, Aberystwyth, 2011. ISBN 978 1 871184 40 2. Price £9.99.

This volume is the first in a projected series of regional overviews based on the results of fieldwork undertaken as part of the pan-Wales Uplands Archaeology Initiative, a flagship fieldwork programme organised by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales and its partners, to survey all the unimproved uplands of Wales. The volume covers Mynydd Hiraethog (the Denbigh Moors), the 100-square miles block of upland at the north end of the Cambrian Mountains that has become the Welsh icon for wilderness with its vast landscapes of windswept moorlands and open skylines.

Appearances can be deceptive and as a fairly typical area of Welsh upland, Mynydd Hiraethog is no exception, as this well-produced and attractive volume demonstrates in ten main chapters. They cover the recurrent, and at times intensive, use of the area made by successive human populations, right from the end of the last Ice Age about twelve thousand years ago up to the present day.

The first three introductory chapters provide a description of the landscape and its salient features today, a brief account of the study of the area, and an overview of the principal human influences on the landscape during the major archaeological and historic periods. The archaeological record is by no means complete; however, a sufficient number of sites and evidence have survived to build up a convincing and engaging picture of human interaction through time with this largely inhospitable but by no means unproductive landscape.

The following seven chapters describe the archaeology of the area in more detail according to the principal land-use themes for which the evidence is most abundant. Prehistoric burial and ritual practices are amply demonstrated in the area, not only from the number of sites that have survived, but also from the proportion of these that have been excavated to modern standards, which principally occurred ahead of the construction of the Brenig reservoir in the mid-1970s. By contrast, the story of farming and settlement in the prehistoric period, and even more so in the historic period, has relied less on the excavation of individual monuments and much more on general fieldwork, the interpretation of a few large sites like Hen Ddinbych, the scant historical record, place-names and the field analysis of the numerous, and for the medieval and later periods the mainly unexcavated, more humble settlement sites. Not surprisingly, seasonal and recurrent use, sometimes on an intentionally permanent but seldom sustained basis, is very much the overarching pattern of human settlement and activity that emerges, as in so many other upland areas of Wales. However, Mynydd Hiraethog is distinctive for its lack of any appreciable mineral deposits, so apart from its mainstay of pasture, the only other notable natural resources extracted in more recent times have been peat and stone.

The volume enters the modern era with an account of the communications, the organised provision of which was essential for the more sustained exploitation of the area, initially by the large landed estates, and then by modern newcomers like Welsh Water and the Forestry Commission in the twentieth century. Grouse shooting first became popular in the late nineteenth century, but continues in parts to this day, with the gothic ruins of the former hunting lodge at Gwylfa Hiraethog a potent symbol of this activity at its heyday. The seven thematic chapters are then augmented by a list of the principal sites to visit and descriptions and Ordnance Survey map extracts for three walks, which if followed individually or in combination, are easily capable of revealing to the walker the very essence and the making of Mynydd Hiraethog and its human story. For those inclined to want to find out more, the volume concludes with pointers as to how to do so and a comprehensive list of references and further reading. There are minor glitches—the inconsistent use of metric and imperial distances in the text in places, and it would have been an advantage to have more site and place names shown on the location maps, but these

do not overly detract the reader, and the real question is whether or not the volume fulfils its intended purpose? It is essentially a new departure and presentational style for the Royal Commission, with the aim being to provide more accessible and appealing regional archaeological guides without sacrificing any of the intellectual depth which is so much the hallmark of their publications. The answer is a resounding yes as the volume avoids the extremes of being, on the one hand, a detailed gazetteer of sites for the archaeologically informed or, on the other hand, presented and dressed up as 'infotainment' for the tourist. The highly readable text bounds along and achieves the correct balance between these two extremes, and although there are plenty of well-informed site descriptions included—the cameo descriptions on Hafod-y-dre, Hen Ddinbych, Moel Rhiwllug and Gwylfa Hiraethog work very well—the narrative never loses sight of the bigger, landscape picture and the fascinating story of human engagement with this remarkable area through the ages. The superb illustrations help immensely as does the very reasonable price tag, and this reviewer for one will be looking forward to the publication of the next volume in what, on the basis of this excellent first volume, is destined to become a very attractive and collectable series.

Llansadwrn

RICHARD S. KELLY

SHADOWLAND. WALES 3000–1500 BC. By Steve Burrow. 190 × 220 mm. 192 pp. 155 illustrations. National Museum Wales, Cardiff, 2011. ISBN 978 1 84217 459 3. Price £20.00.

This is a companion volume to Steve Burrow's very successful book on the earlier Neolithic, *The Tomb Builders in Wales 4000–3000 BC* (2006). It has the same audience and same approach to the organisation and display of information. There are no references in the text but there is quite an extensive bibliography *raisonnée* (some 120 works cited) arranged by chapters at the end. Of the generous 155 illustrations only fourteen show what you might call archaeological plans, and most of those are historic, early diagrammatic ones; apart from maps all the others are high quality photographs, of monuments and of artefacts. This makes the book very attractive to look at and easy to read but it is difficult to get beyond the veneer.

You can enjoy this book and you can easily follow the author's line of reasoning, but I think you would find it difficult to use it to develop your own understanding of the periods and material covered. This is certainly not a textbook. None of the traditional archaeological tools of comparison are there. Pottery is illustrated impressionistically without any drawn profiles; objects are laid out in elegant groups without a scale, set at varying angles which makes the statement of size given in the caption unusable in any exact sense.

Museums these days are very anxious to be accessible, to shed any hint of intimidating exclusivity or elitism and books of this kind are in the forefront of this campaign. And yet they are as protective of knowledge as a dust-proof museum case (an impression reinforced by the ubiquity of the copyright sign on every picture). You can admire the goods and follow the story but you cannot really engage with it, get it out, turn it over, check the documentation. A lot of readers, no doubt the majority, will not be bothered by this and will not recognise the frustrations I feel on their behalf, for the book provides a lot of information very clearly organised and attractively packaged.

The book starts with a brief introduction setting the scene with Mesolithic hunters and the building of megalithic tombs and mysterious cursus monuments by the early farmers. It begins in earnest with the waning of the dominance of the big tombs and the emergence of simpler forms of burial in the centuries around 3000 BC. The final expression of megalith building, the large complex Passage Graves, now dated in Wales to about 3300 BC by dates from Bryn Celli Ddu on Anglesey, links this book with its predecessor.

Burrow then turns to monuments which look towards the future and isolates a dispersed group of what he calls ‘enclosures’ which others may have called henges or proto-henges which have internal banks and include Llandegai A, Castell Bryn Gwyn, Stonehenge and, more debatably, the Ysceifiog Circle. He also gathers various burials from caves and elsewhere with dates around 3300–3000 BC and finally comes to a more consistent group of individual burials in mid Wales, at Trelystan and Four Crosses. He then turns to artefacts and briefly discusses Peterborough pottery and gives a fuller commentary on stone axes, their manufacture and dispersal, alongside the import into Wales of high quality flint.

The following chapter covers 2900–2500 BC, a period with little evidence for external contacts but considerable developments of native trends in monuments, artefacts and local trade. In this section he discusses the astonishing achievements of the inhabitants of the Walton Basin in Radnorshire, where enormously ambitious enclosures were built within a tightly prescribed territory, and the less spectacular henge monuments elsewhere in Wales inspired, perhaps, by the rare ‘enclosures’ built a few centuries earlier, but now with banks outside the defining ditch to allow ceremonies to be observed at a distance. The extensive excavations in the Walton Basin provide evidence for discussions of diet, house types, flint-working techniques and pottery styles. Grooved Ware is said to derive its inspiration from long-forgotten and seldom-seen Passage Grave art, a view I have never found convincing when plaited rush baskets must have been everywhere in sight. He ventures with suitable caution onto Preseli and the nature of its link with Wessex and Stonehenge.

With the next chapter, ‘2400BC and after’, we enter a period of renewed foreign contacts with the introduction of copper metallurgy and the fashion for placing Beaker pots in burials with men who might be foreign travellers and even perhaps invaders. This contact period has undergone some serious re-thinking of late and Dr Burrow is a good guide to the minefield of its interpretation. This chapter also contains some discussion of the Irish evidence for copper mining, but not the discussion of the Welsh mines, nor metalworking which comes later.

The structure of the book is very much dominated by chronology, not surprisingly as Dr Burrow is the compiler (in conjunction with Sian Williams) of the The Wales and Borders Radiocarbon Database, but it can mean that certain sites, such as Llandegai, seem to get salami-sliced and themes of continuity are lost. On the other hand this approach emphasises the waning and waxing of certain ideas and identifies deliberate reversions, which might not be recognised as such under the guise of uncritical ‘continuity’.

From 2200 BC onwards Wales is judged to be a fully Bronze Age society. The first Bronze Age chapter provides good summaries of the evidence of early mining at the Great Orme at Llandudno, Parys Mountain on Anglesey, Copa Hill near Aberystwyth and Alderley Edge across the Cheshire border. This is followed by explanations of copper smelting, alloying and tool manufacture and also some discussion of the possible role of axe hammers. In this section Dr Burrow is careful to identify pioneers in the study of early mining, such as Duncan James, and it is good to see Dr David Jenkins’ role acknowledged in the production of the famous 3D section of the Bronze Age galleries in the Orme mines, although the diagram has lost some of its impact by being re-drawn in the National Museum’s rather soft-focus style.

The following two chapters deal with the record of the many Bronze Age burials from Wales—‘The dead in their thousands’. One gets the impression that Dr Burrow is somewhat overwhelmed by the quantity of evidence here and he does not always make the best use of it. There are some very instructive excavations such as Trelystan, which he uses a good deal but he fails to squeeze all the juice from it. On the other hand he uses Abercamddwr more than once, but it is not the best example to support his points. He discusses Letterston 3 and illustrates it by what he admits is an out-of-date diorama and, uncharacteristically, gets the excavation detail wrong. Moreover, he fails to understand the role transformation that it underwent. It is puzzling that the few excavation drawings he uses are all old ones.

In discussing the meaning of various peculiarities of burial practice he takes a fairly down-to-earth attitude and is loath to spring to ritualistic, romantic or sensationalist interpretations. Children are children and not necessarily sacrificial victims, ear bones are residues and even the Sarn y Bryn Caled arrowheads might have a 'normal' explanation. Rather surprisingly he promotes the old idea that men were buried in reversed and women in upright urns. However, he does have a section on the social implications of the change from inhumation to cremation which draws upon modern parallels to good effect. The burial pottery is photographed but not discussed in much detail, perhaps because typology is a bit too boring for a book of this kind. Grave goods fare better with a short chapter devoted to personal goods and ornaments and what they tell us of clothing and display, and to the social implications of weapons.

Unfortunately, the limited evidence for Bronze Age settlement in Wales does not add much to our knowledge of how society was structured. Stackpole as usual epitomises the wooden houses, but for stone ones he chooses to discuss a small round hut at Llyn Morwynion near Ffestiniog of which only half survives. It was not excavated, though it is associated with a good pollen record of clearance and regeneration. The many burnt mounds throughout western Wales provide a more plentiful record of daily life, but not a fuller one because we are still uncertain how they were used.

The section on burials had begun with a short discussion of cemeteries such as Penmaenmawr and Brenig (illustrated by some strangely unhelpful maps) which makes no mention of the ceremonial circles amongst the cairns and barrows. These circles, in both stone and timber, are discussed now in a section which stresses their role as meeting places, though there is little analysis of their individual location. I feel he is rather running out of steam by this stage and is unwilling to engage very deeply with these enigmatic and subtle monuments. Whereas he is right to point out that the fate of the Museum's replica of the Sarn y Bryn Caled timber circle suggests that wooden monuments would not have had a long life, he does admit that the dates from Brenig 44 in the centre of a growing cemetery, demonstrate several centuries of use. But he does not show much interest in the shifts in thinking and changes in role during that period. He calls the infilling of the centre of Moel Goedog Circle a 'slighting' as if it was a destruction, rather than a new phase of use. Emphasising meetings in the story of the circles enables him to pass onto a discussion of long distant routes and to deal with the final series of monuments, the standing stones, which are frequently set beside such tracks.

In concluding Dr Burrow comments on the surprisingly uniform nature of Early Bronze Age culture across Britain, but does admit that there is little evidence of dominant chiefs in Wales. Looking beyond 1500 the nature of the evidence changes, from burials and ceremony to fields and houses, a record of settlement that runs through to the arrival of the Romans. If he writes this next volume the National Museum will have given Wales and its readers a very clear and attractive picture of its prehistoric development.

Bangor

FRANCES LYNCH

SOLITARIES, PASTORS AND 20,000 SAINTS: STUDIES IN THE RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF BARDSEY ISLAND (YNYNS ENLLI). Edited by Jonathan M. Wooding. 180 × 245 mm. xvii + 150pp. 2 illustrations. Trivium Publications, Lampeter, 2010. ISBN 978 0 905285 94 8. Price £15.00.

Bardsey Island (Ynys Enlli) remains a spiritual place in the popular imagination. In 2000, for example, many Gwynedd school children were taken on day trips as part of the Millennium celebrations. Nevertheless, its spiritual history has been comparatively little studied. The aim of this collection of papers is to examine aspects of that history, ranging from the Middle Ages to the late twentieth century.

Some of the papers are derived from a colloquium held in 2003; others are published versions of the annual Derwas Chitty Memorial Lecture which has been held since 2001.

The Life of St Elgar was written to celebrate the translation of his teeth to Llandaf Cathedral in 1120. It includes the famous description of the sanctity of the island 'due to the 20,000 bodies of saints buried there, both confessors and martyrs' and was by this time being promoted as a pilgrimage destination, the 'Rome of Britain'. Edel Bhreathnach begins the volume with an interesting study setting this into a much wider context since, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Irish foundations such as Glendalough were promoting themselves in a similar way. Indeed, there seem to have been agreements between foundations which resulted in the setting up of pilgrimage routes between them, and these could have extended across the Irish Sea to Wales. Jonathan Wooding and Karen Jankulak then provide a useful edition of the Life of St Elgar (who was a hermit on Enlli, 1081×1106), accompanied by an English translation (not available hitherto) and a detailed consideration of the text.

The majority of the collection is, however, concerned with the spiritual history of the island and western Llŷn in the second half of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. Christopher Armstrong discusses the history of the Christian Ministry on the island. In the 1770s Pennant visited and recorded the saying of prayers in the abbey ruins though services were conducted in the church at Aberdaron on the mainland. However, the inhabitants later became Calvinist Methodists and the first minister was appointed to the island in 1824. In the later nineteenth century two ministers, William Thomas Jones Ceunant and William Enlli Jones, kept records of their daily routines which shed an interesting light on the life of the islanders at that time. Father Ignatius of Llanthony, who was attempting to revive Anglican evangelical monasticism, also expressed a wish to take over the abbey ruins and his poem, *The Holy Isle: a Legend of Bardsey Abbey*, was published in 1870.

In the late 1960s Enlli became the focus of a revival in the eremitical life. Jenny Farwell explores the background to this in the 1950s in the friendship of Mother Mary Clare, head of the Anglican Community of the Sisters of the Love of God at Fairacres, Oxford, with Father Gilbert Shaw, a priest who worked in the London slums, and Derwas Chitty, the Vicar of Upton, Berkshire, who wrote the famous account of early monasticism, *The Desert A City*, which was published in 1965. When Father Chitty retired to Llangwnnagl in 1968, this offered the opportunity for members of the Community who sought a solitary life to establish themselves in the vicinity and these included Sister Helen Mary, who was a hermit on Enlli between 1977 and 1992. The final three papers, by the late Donald Allchin, who regularly visited the hermits as their spiritual warden, and Jonathan Wooding, also consider the lives of Derwas Chitty and his circle. As Liddon Scholar in the 1920s, Chitty lived in Jerusalem where he was an almost daily visitor at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and Canon Allchin indicates how, in such holy places, his spirituality and love of archaeology were intertwined. He was also the brother of 'Lal' Chitty and the husband of Mary—archaeologists well known to the Cambrians—and the significance of both is reviewed. On a more historiographical note, Dr Wooding considers the impact of *The Desert A City*, originally delivered as the Birkbeck Lectures in 1959–60, on Nora Chadwick's *The Age of the Saints in the Early Celtic Church* published in 1961, and how our understanding of the origins of the early church in Wales has changed since, not least as a result of archaeological finds, notably the discovery of imported pottery from the eastern Mediterranean and North Africa.

Although the papers are of very variable academic quality and only certain periods in the history of Enlli are covered, there is, nevertheless, much of interest in this collection, not only for those already familiar with the island and its deep spiritual heritage, but also for those, both pilgrims and others, who have yet to reach its shores.

THE FORGOTTEN CASTLES OF WALES. By Paul R. Davis. 171 × 243 mm. vi + 286 pp. 139 illustrations. Logaston Press, Almeley, Herefordshire, 2011. ISBN 978 1 906663 55 1. Price £12.95.

Paul Davis concedes that the title of this attractively illustrated volume may be something of a misnomer, the book predominantly exploring masonry castles that have neither been conserved nor comprehensively studied in recent times rather than being genuinely ‘forgotten’ sites. As such, this is an alternative overview of the medieval castle in Wales, standing as a worthy, if somewhat eccentrically compiled counterpart to John Kenyon’s recent popular guide.

Forgotten Castles is divided into two sections, several brief chapters covering the usual themes of history, architectural development and function followed by an informal ‘gazetteer’ comprising several regional groups of site descriptions. The opening chapters are perhaps the less useful, adding little to our current thinking but presenting the broader story of the regional development of the medieval castle through a range of less famous examples. These provide a generally balanced and informative introduction, offering newcomers an admirably wide range of topics and case studies, the sections on the antiquarian period and the problems of modern management and conservation being welcome additions to the standard fare on the subject. Whilst forming by far the majority of Wales’ castles, disappointingly little space is devoted to earthwork sites, which are summarised in a few pages and are included in the gazetteer only when associated with masonry works. Thus the Mortimer-built Maeliennydd castles of Tinboeth and Cefnlllys are dealt with in some detail but their caput in this area for much of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the comparably impressive and complex motte and bailey at Cwm Aran, is mentioned only in passing.

The regional gazetteer is an unusual work owing to the somewhat eclectic choice of sites. On the one hand we have several Glamorgan and Gower castles, some reasonably well known and amply covered elsewhere by two monumental RCAHMW volumes, although admittedly augmented here by some good reconstruction drawings. On the other, the rear of the book contains a series of short entries for ‘lesser sites’, included ‘for the sake of completeness’, but which no longer meet Davis’ selection criteria, including the poorly understood but extensive wreck of Reginald de Grey’s Ruthin. Nevertheless, the gazetteer contains some of the first accounts of a number of interesting and important castles to be published for many decades. Some of the regional groups are themed, such as the series of dry-walled Welsh-built structures in Gwynedd, first suggested by Neil Johnstone to perpetuate earlier native sites and traditions. The first-floor halls, tower-houses and other defensible dwellings of Pembrokeshire are also discussed as a group, their limited size and defences contrasting sharply with great castles such as Blaenllynfi and Dyserth which were respectively the centre of a Marcher lordship and a royal campaign castle. Other inclusions such as Castell Dinas and Llangibby are remarkable for their sheer size and elaboration.

Most of the individual sites described in the gazetteer have been the subject of some formal research, either in county surveys of varying quality including those of Glamorgan, Breconshire and Radnorshire or have been the subject of individual studies, surveys and partial excavations. The various referenced publications are augmented by Davis’ own observations and illustrations which are perhaps the main selling point of this book to a popular market. They include clear maps, site plans, good-quality and well-chosen photographs, and most notably the author’s trademark reconstruction drawings. Some of the latter, whilst highly conjectural, are by admission interpretative or discursive aids that can be adapted as future research adds to our knowledge. Thus the lofty curtains and towers at Dyserth, Blaenllynfi and Castell Dinas soar again, having been either completely destroyed or surviving in varying states of overgrown collapse, intelligible only to an enthusiast. This reviewer particularly enjoyed the attempts at the unusual Welsh-revetted outcrop, tower and limited outworks at Castell Prysor and the elegant façades of the Monmouthshire castles of Llangibby and Cas Troggy, both of which are fitting companions to detailed

recent studies of these great ruins. The plans are more problematic. Unless the author has undertaken his own separate surveys, those accompanying the Glamorgan sites are clearly adapted from the two RCAHMW Inventories, whilst Llangibby and Castell Dinas must originate from King and Kay's masterly accounts. That this is not acknowledged in the accompanying captions is curious, given that Davis consistently lists his references and debts to other works at the end of each entry.

This returns us to the decision to revisit the Commission's work in Glamorgan and the potential criticism that a number of the individual entries contain no information that is unavailable elsewhere. This is perhaps unfair on this lively and thought-provoking book in which the author has compiled and presented such information in a format both accessible and affordable to a wide audience. Interesting questions are raised of most of the featured monuments, which have been thoughtfully placed into their broader historical and architectural contexts, in doing so drawing attention to the astonishing variety of medieval defended sites in the country. Indeed, regardless of the erratically compiled gazetteer, the tone, presentation and the content of the individual sections of this book present a fine template for future popular works on Welsh castles.

Nantgarw

WILL DAVIES

CASTLES AND MOATED SITES OF HEREFORDSHIRE. By Ron Shoesmith. 141 × 215 mm. viii + 312 pp. 134 illustrations. Logaston Press, Almeley, Herefordshire, 2009. ISBN 978 1 906663 30 8. Price £10.00.

Since the publication of the first edition of Ron Shoesmith's work in 1996, commercial archaeologists, academics and keen amateurs have added greatly to our knowledge of the almost bewildering array of defended medieval sites in this border county, rivalled only by neighbouring Shropshire. This edition incorporates the developments of the last 15 years into an improved, expanded and slightly glossier version of the most ambitious of Logaston's *Monuments in the Landscape* series.

The introductory chapters are necessarily brief in order to accommodate a gazetteer of over 200 sites but still provide a solid historical and archaeological context for the monuments. In less than fifty pages the author explores a broad range of topics from the varied origins of the sites to structural symbolism, destruction and conservation, many of these themes being continued in individual gazetteer entries. The staggering number and variety of monuments within the county dictates that two of the principal issues addressed by Shoesmith are those of identification and classification. This is especially prevalent at the lower end of the social scale where distinctions between what modern writers variously classify as low mottes, ringworks, moats and other uncategorised earthworks are almost impossible to draw, if indeed they ever existed in the minds of their medieval builders. Many such sites occur in clusters, there being no less than seven entries each for the parishes of Clifford, Dilwyn and Huntington and eight for Pembridge. Shoesmith recognises the potential range of explanations for such groups including sub-infeudated manors, changes of site and misnomers, highlighting that many may have been short-lived establishments in reaction to the Anarchy or other crises. Our incomplete understanding of the relationship between the physical diversity of the surviving earthworks and their social and defensive status is acknowledged by the brave decision to include moated sites in the gazetteer, one which would be welcome in other county surveys. This echoes the approach advocated by the historical geographer Norman Pounds and developed by archaeologists such as Oliver Creighton, in tackling these sites as manorial units within broader medieval settlement patterns, distinguished from their contemporaries only by varying degrees of low-grade defences.

Each gazetteer entry comprises a description and summary of the present state of research on the site, frequently accompanied by the author's informed observations, and usefully for a book of this size, abbreviated references. Over 130 illustrations are drawn from a wide range of published and predominantly historical sources including some welcome reproductions of Richard Kay's drawings and some uncommon antiquarian views. Entries are expanded where sites have been the subject of recent research, conservation and reassessment including Hereford, Kilpeck, Longtown, Wigmore, Stapleton, Weobley and on a smaller scale, the moat at Ford Abbey. Unsurprisingly for a stalwart of the rescue archaeology movement, the author draws his sources from across the discipline. Thus recent topographical and geophysical survey plots are presented for Ewyas Harold whilst details are provided of development-led evaluations at Clifford, a community archaeology project at Weobley and the Time Team investigations at Sutton St Michael, alongside the latest field observations of the redoubtable Woolhope Club. The author highlights the pressing need to publish fully the data generated by such works when discussing the major conservation works at Wigmore. The present condition of the sites is also considered, most notably the lamentable state of Stapleton and also Snodhill where the unique polygonal keep urgently requires consolidation.

There will inevitably be omissions or mistakes in such an extensive gazetteer and the rate of survey and discovery in the county produces an almost constant need for the revision, the most important work since publication in 2009 being the commencement of a major conservation scheme at Richard's Castle. There are however, some notable omissions. Neil Phillips' PhD campaign of topographic surveys covering the former Welsh *cantref* of Eryng in the south-western part of the county was possibly published too late to be fully utilised, whilst recent conservation at Wilton and Croft has generated new architectural information that is absent here.

The all-inclusive gazetteer policy perhaps presents more consistent problems, the deliberately uncritical approach to written sources having almost certainly resulted in the inclusion of misleading or incorrect information, a case in point being the identification of seemingly spurious masonry remains at a large proportion of the earthwork sites in the county. Nor is any attempt made to filter genuine sites from probable, possible (including place-names), or dubious ones, or clear misnomers. Whilst some of these need to be formally addressed in print and others are interesting archaeological sites in their own right, many could easily have been contained within a summary list and the saved space devoted to more important monuments. The brevity of some descriptions, most notably the paragraph devoted to the substantial fortified house of Kentchurch Court, presumably reflects limited access and previous fieldwork.

We should, however, be wary of measuring this book by standards that were never set for what is effectively a series of informed and thought-provoking guides, rather than comprehensive inventories in the vein of the Welsh Royal Commission's Glamorgan volumes. Such an undertaking for this county would surely be decades in production and beyond the current resources of any relevant organisation. Thus whilst more maps, plans and photographs of the numerous minor sites would be a great improvement, I suspect their absence may be due to the limitations of the format. This second edition consolidates the position of *Castles and Moated Sites of Herefordshire* as the pick of its series, both in the quality of production and the sheer volume of information and debate that Ron Shoesmith has managed to cram into 300 pages. The true value of this book is, along with its counterpart in Hereford Archaeology's fine online gazetteer, as a standard introduction and reference for future research. More than reasonably priced, it should satisfy the curiosity of any resident of or visitor to the county and also hopefully inspire the reader, as it has this reviewer, to venture out and explore this wonderful group of monuments.

A GUIDE TO THE CHURCHES AND CHAPELS OF WALES. Edited by Jonathan M. Wooding and Nigel Yates. 156 × 234 mm. xi + 228 pp. 21 illustrations. University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 2011. ISBN 978 0 7083 2118 8. Price £14.99.

Over the last decade or so there has been increasing interest in church tourism, and this is one of the books that have been provided to serve that market. Its appearance is particularly welcome in that most guidebooks have stayed firmly on the other side of Offa's Dyke, and the churches of Wales have tended to be overlooked in any general discussions of church architecture. It also acknowledges Wales' vigorous nonconformist tradition, with the inclusion of chapels forming a little over ten per cent of the total. An introductory essay, consisting of a potted history of religion in Wales from the Roman period onwards, is followed by statement on the 'Aims of the present guide'. These are stated as being the inclusion of 'as representative a sample as possible of the churches and chapels in Wales which show work of importance from the earliest days of Welsh Christianity to the present day' with the further proviso that the buildings should (at least at the time of writing) 'provide reasonable access', with the aim of encouraging the reader 'to visit and appreciate these buildings and to make churches and chapels a more significant element in determining the future direction of both the heritage and tourism policies of public bodies in Wales'. This is followed by a gazetteer of 250 places of worship arranged in six chapters— Mid Wales, the North-East, the North-West, South Wales, the South-East and the South-West. The list of churches in the back, with page numbers, is unhelpfully divided into these six sections instead of being a single alphabetical sequence.

The reviewer of a book like this will almost certainly turn first to those areas he or she knows best, in my case the dioceses of Llandaff, Monmouth and Swansea and Brecon which are to be found in the chapters on the south and the south-east, together with parts of those on the south-west and mid-Wales. There were a few regrettable howlers— the predecessor to Ewenny priory towards the western side of Glamorgan is described as 'Saxon', and the church at Llantwit Major is described (in the introduction) as being 'in proximity' to the well-known Roman villa and therefore indicating continuity, when the two are actually a mile apart. However, by and large I felt that the selection of churches for inclusion was sensible. I might myself have made a different choice in Monmouthshire and I was disappointed that the superb 1930s Expressionist church of St Michaela and All Angels at Beddau (NGR SS 0600 8494) was omitted. Although Beddau normally opens only for services and the annual Open Church Day, it is worth visiting for the exterior alone (and I note that in spite of the policy stated in the introduction, other buildings have been included where access is only at service time). But why was Swansea St Mary included? 'Very pedestrian' is the verdict on the design, and although it is noted as an example of post-war reconstruction, Llandaff Cathedral (in the south Wales section) provided a much more imaginative approach to the problem. The nine-line entry for Swansea is unlikely to inspire anyone to visit, and it serves to flag up one of the main shortcomings of the book. The introduction states that no attempt was made to standardise the entries, which are very uneven. For some churches and chapels, the enthusiasm of the writer shines through. After leafing through the book, I really want to visit Bodelwyddan in the north-east, although I am not generally a great admirer of Victorian architecture, and the entry for Penmon in the north-west conveys exactly why this church is not to be missed. Every church in a book like this should have a description that makes you want to go and see it, but far too many of these fail. One of my favourite churches, Nash just to the east of Newport, has a glum seven-line entry that completely fails to convey the delightfulness of the eighteenth-century ensemble of nave complete with all its contemporary fittings, and with the rare baroque doors to the porch.

Another problem raised its head when I test-drove the book in the area of Wales that I am not familiar with, north of Radnorshire. On a journey up to Chester I thought I would go and have a look at a few of

the churches here, but the format did not make it easy. Would Pennant Melangell be on the way? 'A side road reached from the B4391 at Llangynog, 10 miles north-west of Llanfyllin' is not a terribly helpful direction. Some of them are even worse. What is someone unfamiliar with Radnorshire to make of the location for Glaswcm, which says 'on a side road, 1 mile east of Cregrina', when Cregrina village is so tiny? Grid references, or better still, a series of simplified maps showing the relationship of the churches to each other and the network of main roads would have helped. In the end, I went to visit Gresford and Worthenbury because they were easily locatable near Wrexham; two superb churches of my two favourite periods, Perpendicular and post-Reformation, but Worthenbury in particular was not particularly well served by its entry and I could easily have overlooked it.

In conclusion, this is a book that the hardened church-crawler will want to have, and will be prepared to put up with its shortcomings. But if their aim was to reach a wider audience, the editors should have thought more carefully about what was needed to attract them, and to have ensured that their contributors provided it.

Swansea

EDITH EVANS

MAPPING THE MEDIEVAL CITY. SPACE, PLACE AND IDENTITY IN CHESTER c. 1200–1600. Edited by Catherine A. M. Clarke. 142 × 222 mm. xvi + 244 pp. 10 illustrations. University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 2011. ISBN 978 0 7083 2392 2. Price £48.00.

This small volume contains a collection of papers on medieval Chester looked at from two interesting but diverse strands of study that have rarely been given the opportunity to come together in this way. The papers derive from an international conference, 'Mapping the Medieval City' held at Swansea University in 2009.

The first strand is that of the city itself, its buildings and physical structure. The medieval period has left an indelible mark on modern Chester. The major medieval institutions, the Benedictine Abbey of St Werburgh's (now the cathedral), the church of St John the Baptist and the castle, headquarters of a powerful and latterly royal earldom, still survive and to a great degree continue their original functions. The churches are still places of worship and the castle remains the centre of justice and, until very recently, of the county administration too. In addition, the basic framework of the city, the city walls and streets are essentially medieval and still retain many structures from the period including the unique Rows.

Keith Lilley's paper explores how this surviving structure, combined with map evidence, can be recorded and presented. In addition to the surviving standing fabric, he utilises the evidence from archaeology, such as that for lost religious houses, and a range of early maps, particularly the original large-scale Ordnance Survey maps of 1871–73. It is apparent that many medieval features such as plot boundaries were still surviving at this date. Lilley demonstrates that the use of modern systems of geo-referencing and digital presentation produces a result that is very much more than a traditional paper-based 'two-dimensional' period map. Systems of links and overlays are tools for the modern researcher but they can also allow the perceptions of contemporary medieval recorders to be investigated.

The majority of the remaining papers concern the second strand of study and have been contributed by historians and literary historians. Chester is fortunate to be described in several contemporary medieval accounts, in particular Lucian's *De Laude Cestrie*. Although well known, this work has not been available until now except in very dated translations. Mark Faulkner investigates the background to this work and

raises the interesting possibility that Lucian was in fact a monk of Combermere rather than Chester as has generally been supposed. In another paper, John Doran explores the ecclesiastical/political background of the period in which Lucian was writing, and in particular the moves to displace monks at cathedral priories and replace them with secular canons. Lucian is keen to emphasise the harmonious relations between the canons at St John's in Chester and monks like himself and the benefits accruing therefrom. That this was not just a theoretical aspiration is demonstrated by the way the monks of St Werburgh's and the canons of St John's jointly and successfully defended their ancient burial rights in the city against the incoming friars in the thirteenth century.

However, accounts of Chester in contemporary texts derive not only from within the city but also from across the border in Wales. Chester is frequently characterised as a centre of Anglo-Norman power, a bastion against rebellious Welsh and a base for conquest of north Wales. Whilst this is not untrue, one is not surprised to discover that detailed study reveals a more complex situation. Chester also functioned as the main urban centre for north Wales and was a destination for pilgrimage. Significantly, it was not the Norman-founded abbey of St Werburgh's within the city walls with its relics of a Mercian saint that was sought out by pilgrims, but the fragment of the true cross at St John's, outside the city walls. Welshmen settled in Chester and Chester citizens acquired estates in north-east Wales. Jane Laughton's paper describes how by the later Middle Ages, Welshmen were numbered amongst the leading citizens of Chester, holding the mayoralty on several occasions. Thus internal disputes amongst the leading citizens are sometimes better understood by taking account of this Welsh perspective.

This volume of papers demonstrates the value of research across differing academic disciplines, allowing us to people the medieval city whose bare bones we can reconstruct from the surviving fabric, and to explore it through their perceptions. If one has to offer criticisms, I was disappointed by the size and quality of the map illustrations, perhaps a factor of the page size and paper employed. Also, I noted one or two factual errors; a reference to St Mary's where St John's was clearly intended. However, it is not fair to view this volume just in isolation. It is really the tip of a much larger iceberg, the 'Mapping Medieval Chester Project' directed by Catherine Clarke and funded by AHRC. The project website provides much background to this volume. The various medieval texts, including that by Lucian, are presented with translations and commentaries, together with digital maps reconstructing the medieval city. A comprehensive set of links enable the reader to move between the maps, texts and commentaries. The website which really should be used in conjunction with the book can be viewed at www.medievalchester.ac.uk.

Chester

SIMON W. WARD

ST LAURENCE'S CHURCH, LUDLOW. THE PARISH CHURCH AND PEOPLE, 1199–2009. By David Lloyd, Margaret Clark and Chris Potter. 171 × 244 mm. viii + 264 pp. 98 illustrations. Logaston Press, Almeley, Herefordshire, 2010. ISBN 978 1 906663 40 7. Price £12.95.

This well-written and attractively illustrated paperback provides a lively and authoritative record of Ludlow's major parish church throughout eight centuries. Three authors combine to provide an almost seamless narrative with the same themes of church fabric and furnishings, clergy and their assistants, churchwardens and influential townspeople being considered in similar sequence throughout eleven chapters of roughly equal length. Only the chapters on the Tudor and the early Georgian period are somewhat longer—understandably so, as the religious changes associated with the Reformation were drastic and the Georgian prosperity which accompanied the town's 'golden age' led to a notable

interaction between church and corporation. The initial chapter is shorter and lacks the precision shown elsewhere. Its reconstruction drawing looks unconvincing as do the early stages of the church's plan development.

The bulk of the book concentrates on three themes set against a regional and, where necessary, national background. The growth of the fabric is considered carefully with the major expansion of the fifteenth century, the neglect of chancel and chapels in the eighteenth century, and the substantial restorations of 1859–62 and 1889–91. Continuous campaigns of decoration involving all types of material enhanced the medieval structure. The Reformation altered the balance of church use, though all the screens were kept. Concentration upon seating for the auditory congregation filled the church with box pews and balconies whilst the medieval stained glass deteriorated. Victorian restoration returned the church to a Eucharistic hierarchical emphasis. Recent retrenchment has seen areas reassigned to non-worship uses. The final chapter is particularly thoughtful on the decline of clergy numbers, of income and of civic commitment.

What emerges from an examination of clergy (rectors, guild priests, readers, preachers) is how difficult it is before 1800 to identify real characters, stamping their personality and churchmanship upon the town. Another aspect is how numerous was the clergy body, up to ten chantry priests in early Tudor Ludlow, and how generous were the local inhabitants in ensuring their own salvation and the well-being of the poor and of the scholars.

The third major theme is how closely integrated was the life and conduct of the church with that of the town. In the medieval centuries the main merchant association, the Palmers' Guild, dominated Ludlow's government, though there were another ten or twelve trade guilds, some of whom such as the stitchmen, weavers and hammermen still continued into the nineteenth century. At the Henrician Reformation the town government took over the running of the church, appointing readers and preachers, paying organists and sextons, repairing fabric and bells. The borough corporation, both the twelve aldermen and the twenty-four councillors led by their respective bailiffs, took over the running of the school and the various almshouses by absorbing their property and income into the borough's funds. Although it had to defer socially to the Prince of Wales and his Council in the Marches when in residence at Ludlow castle, the corporation was continuously involved in the religious and charitable aspects of urban life. After 1689 the borough council basked in the reflected glory of a fashionable gentry society. This close relationship only ceased during the changes introduced by the Liberal government of the 1830s, vividly described in 'The Great Lawsuit'. The ensuing secularisation and the growth of Dissent had further repercussions as the last two chapters clearly show. The book is completed by five appendices listing the office holders and a thorough index.

This work is not free from the occasional misprint and error, but these scarcely detract from its many merits. One questionable statement concerns the income of the rector in 1735. Surely John Ecton's *Thesaurus* (1742) should have been consulted. Another error is the illustration of the south porch (page 21) printed in reverse image. The identification of the falcon and fetterlock as a Talbot device (page 42) is correctly given as a Yorkist symbol (plate 10c). This highlights one failing in the book's presentation. Although there is a wealth of illustrations (26 in colour and 72 monochrome), there is seldom any reference to them within the text. For instance the mention of 'the well-known water-colour of the [church] interior' does not state whether it means plate 15. Similarly there is no appendix giving a list of sources for the historic illustrative material, unlike the assiduous referencing of the archive material. Too often in historical works the illustrations are treated as wallpaper to entertain the less scholarly reader. This is a pity because the three authors have provided an enthralling account.

INTRODUCING HOUSES OF THE WELSH COUNTRYSIDE. By Richard Suggett and Greg Stevenson. 209 × 200 mm. 204 pp. 106 illustrations. Y Lolfa and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, Talybont, 2010. ISBN 978 1 84771 276 9. Price £14.95.

The stated purpose of this book is 'to celebrate the achievement of Peter Smith's *Houses of the Welsh Countryside*' and it presents a timely opportunity to reflect on the impact that the original work has had on the study and understanding of Welsh vernacular building since its publication in 1975. It is also opportune to consider where and how these understandings have continued to develop in the decades that followed. But this book was also produced to accompany a television series, and this has posed inevitable limitations on its depth and scope.

The introductory chapter clearly places the original work in its context, setting out the strengths of its geographical approach and the ways in which it transformed the understanding of Welsh rural building. The chapters that follow explore themes that were identified in the original work, and give some insight into subsequent progress. The main architectural themes are summarised and emerge clearly and strongly. They are also sometimes enriched by insights derived from later work on the social and cultural contexts of building. The chapter on hall-houses provides an exceptionally clear discussion not only of the architectural principles of the house type, but also its social context and usage, clearly developing the themes of the original book. Other chapters are not so clearly set out: the chapters on the Snowdonia House and the houses of the Welsh border give a good introduction to the houses themselves, and explain how they marked a radical change in building traditions, but have less to say on the social, economic and cultural forces that enabled this transformation to take place.

The question of the longhouse in Wales has long been a vexed one, mired in controversy and confusion. The chapter on this subject does little to dispel the confusion, though it does provide some lovely examples of true long-houses revealed by painstaking architectural detective work. But the true long-house is only one manifestation of a broader phenomenon, which is the importance of stock in the economy and culture of rural Wales. Many other building types and arrangements were developed in response to a stock-based economy, and have also made a significant contribution to the rural landscape. By clinging to the terms of the original debate, an opportunity to explore some of these other architectural and cultural forms has been overlooked.

The chapter on the modern house is largely a re-telling of Peter Smith's original chapter on the Renaissance and the development of the centralised plan. The subject matter is almost entirely focused on the large country house, but this book strays a long way from the traditional houses of the Welsh countryside by suddenly introducing a twenty-first-century mansion in Cheshire. Carden Hall is not Welsh, it is not traditional, and it was only made possible by planning guidance introduced by a previous Conservative administration which enabled wealthy owners to build wherever they wanted to. Its inclusion here does this book no credit.

It is also a pity that this book fails to move beyond the assumptions in Peter Smith's original work, that the modern house can somehow be explained by reference to high architectural prototypes, and that by the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, regional vernacular architecture was as good as dead. In many parts of Wales, it is the ordinary buildings of the nineteenth century that still dominate the character of the countryside. These buildings have regional character, and it is simply not true to say that a house could look the same from Aberystwyth to Wrexham. Regional distinctiveness survived, but it owed a great deal to variations in the use of materials and detail, rather than plan. A plan-based approach to understanding building traditions is important, but it is not sufficient to explain the many textures of the vernacular in Wales.

The Welsh cottage has received considerable attention since the first publication of *Houses of the Welsh Countryside*. This book unfortunately perpetuates the romantic interpretations that gather under the

phrase ‘home-made homes’, here rather oddly extended to include the carefully designed picturesque cottages of estate villages. Perhaps because of their more obvious localism, discussion of building techniques is largely confined to clom and thatch, thus once again failing to do justice to the very significant masonry traditions that contributed so many robust cottages to the landscape of Wales.

The ‘appreciations’ which provide the examples that follow each chapter lack the narrative coherence of the illustrative sections that followed each of Peter Smith’s chapters and were presumably selected for their capacity to contribute to the television series. Not all are illustrated, which limits their utility, and they do not always enlighten the themes of the chapters. The digital illustrations were presumably also prepared primarily for use on television. As interpretive tools, they do not even come close to the value of Peter Smith’s cut-away drawings.

Doubtless this little book will contribute in its own way to inspiring renewed interest and enthusiasm for the buildings of rural Wales, in fitting tribute to Peter Smith. But as the study and record of Welsh rural buildings continues, it should also have been prepared to venture further into areas which were not mapped out in his pioneering work.

Nantgarw

JUDITH ALFREY

THE GWENT COUNTY HISTORY. VOLUME 4. INDUSTRIAL MONMOUTHSHIRE, 1780–1914. Edited by Chris Williams and Sian Rhiannon Williams. 194 × 252 mm. xxii + 376 pp. 54 illustrations. 32 tables. University of Wales Press on behalf of the Gwent County History Association, Cardiff, 2011. ISBN 978 0 7083 2365 6. Price £65.00.

The Gwent County History continues its onward march to the new millennium. This penultimate volume carries its story through the ‘long nineteenth century’, from the French Revolution to the First World War, from rural Monmouthshire to industrial Gwent. It is dedicated to the memory of three people to whom the project owes much—Gwenllian Jones, Lord Raglan and Professor John Williams. The eighteen chapters, by sixteen writers, cover a wide spectrum.

W. T. R. Pryce studies, with maps and statistical tables, the population movements which transformed the western uplands, once ‘seldom traversed by the gentry, except for the purpose of grouse shooting’. He makes good use of census returns (giving birthplace origins from 1841) and G. S. Kenrick’s study of Pontypool-Blaenavon of the same year. The population was fluid, some migrants spending winter around Blaenavon, but returning to Cardiganshire each summer.

Ian Pincombe’s chapters cover rural economy and rural society. Agricultural improvements, from the 1790s onwards, met a certain native inertia, but agricultural shows and gradual adoption of new techniques produced a broad-based economy, whilst large statutory enclosures, involving ‘a bonfire of customary rights’, transformed the landscape of some areas. Rural labourers often moved seasonally between farmwork and industry. Landlord/tenant relations were normally relaxed, though housing for the rural poor was often sub-standard and insanitary, and petty crime common. By the end of the period some large estates were already being sold off.

Trevor Boynes looks at transport and Newport docks, before John Elliot’s chapter on iron and steel. Ironmaking in 1780–1830 built on the earlier charcoal iron industry, with access to plentiful carbon-rich coal, though iron ore was scarcer and of indifferent quality. Steel gradually replaced wrought iron, with the adoption of the Bessemer process from 1861 onwards, though the beneficiaries of Gilchrist Thomas’s Basic Bessemer process, invented at Blaenavon in 1878, were Germany and America, not south Wales. By 1885 only five Monmouthshire iron companies survived. The subsequent period of convulsive change saw a shift to steel production around Newport.

Bill Jones' study of the coal industry combines business history, technology and social history. The iron smelting and sale coal sectors showed marked differences. The latter contributed much to the growth of Newport, pitting sale coal owners like Thomas Phillips and Thomas Prothero against borough radicals like John Frost, though by one estimate the monthly death toll from accidents on the Monmouthshire coalfield equalled the number of Chartists killed by the soldiers at the Westgate. C. Roy Lewis charts the urban geography of both older market towns and new industrial centres. Like Pryce he considers the distinctive Irish population, particularly of Newport. Though migration began earlier, the Famine brought a flood of destitute refugees, causing some social conflict, though they came to play a significant role in the town's professional and civic life.

Cultural matters occupy six chapters, including languages, education and literacy (Sian Rhiannon Williams) and English and Welsh literature (Sam Adams). Christopher Turner deals with church and chapel and Gareth Williams with popular culture and sport. The retreat of the Welsh language began in the mid-eighteenth century, but was not a simple story of decline. Sian Williams charts the complex cross-currents. Lady Llanover's *eisteddfodau* may have been less influential in language preservation than grass root organizations like Welsh benefit and Cymreigyddion societies. Sam Adams provides a useful account of the printer-authors of the county and their works, devotional, poetic, scholarly and sometimes polemical, and of more substantial figures like the poet Islwyn, the apparition-haunted Edmund Jones ('Yr Hen Broffwyd'), the historian Joseph Bradney and writers like Arthur Machen and W. H. Davies.

The experience of the Anglicans, hampered by small underfunded parishes, contrasts with that of the nonconformists who occupy most of Turner's chapter. Their response to doctrinal differences and the need to evangelize the new industrial population, much of it English-speaking, could result in lively intellectual debate. The 1841 'Rhymney Baptismal Fair' a two-day open-air debate on infant baptism before a large crowd, ended in uproar. Peter Lord and John Morgan-Guy discuss visual culture, including the Newport artist J. F. Mullock who painted the delightful Victorian pub scene on the dust jacket. (Mullocks, also printers and stationers, produced the early publications of the Monmouthshire Antiquarian Association.)

Political developments occupy four chapters. Margaret Escott describes how Parliamentary representation was gradually wrested from the monopoly of the Beauforts and the Morgans of Tredegar. Andy Croll looks at local government before Chris Williams' important chapter on popular movements before 1850. His balanced account of the Scotch Cattle and the Chartists is a welcome corrective to earlier works which saw them either as semi-criminal rioters or as proto-Marxist revolutionaries. John Williams then takes up the story of trade unionism and the labour movement from 1850. One strength of this book is the way in which many chapters interlink. Thus John Williams explains how local government, discussed in detail by Croll, served as preparation for wider labour representation in Parliament and elsewhere.

The book ends with discussion of 'Monmouthshire, England or Wales', a debate which this reviewer, a Marcher Welshman, sometimes finds a little unreal, though it can still cause heated debate within the county. The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, Newport Museum and others provide a range of excellent illustrations, from nineteenth-century architecture to political cartoons. Maintaining the high standards of its predecessors, the book recalls those currently trendy restaurant menus which offer a range of 'taster', tapas-style dishes. Not that the chapters are insubstantial—far from it—but the quality and flavour of a number raise hopes that they will appear elsewhere as substantial main courses.

THE ORIGINS OF AN INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION: ROBERT MORRIS AND THE FIRST SWANSEA COPPER WORKS, c. 1727–1730. Edited by Louise Miskell. 150 × 216 mm. xii + 127 pp. 5 illustrations. South Wales Record Society, Newport, 2010. ISBN 978 0 9553387 3 1. Price £18.00.

The subtitle of this fairly slim volume is *The Origins of an Industrial Region* and this is what makes this book so valuable as a source. The first copper works in Swansea was founded in 1717 by Dr John Lane of Bristol who went bankrupt in 1726 and passed the works on to Robert Morris (senior), possibly in partial lieu of debt for his working for Lane for the previous three years. During the initial two years of his business Robert Morris, founder of one of the two key industrial dynasties of the world copper-smelting centre at Swansea, kept detailed letterbooks (now lost) which were available to his sons as a historical source some fifty years later.

Robert Morris' second son John took over and developed much of the western Swansea Valley industrial complex including 'Morris Town' (Morrison), the multi-storey workers' flats of Morris Castle and the ordering of cast iron plates from Darby at Coalbrookdale 'for wheeling coal on in my collieries' in 1776. As Louise Miskell explains in her invaluable introduction the eldest son, Robert Morris junior, became an Oxford-based barrister with Radical political leanings who then brought disgrace on his family by eloping to continental Europe with his twelve-year-old ward. Morris' ward returned to Britain after two marriage ceremonies and two years later. The marriage was annulled and the discredited Robert Morris junior returned home to Swansea where his industrialist brother John seems to have given him the task of writing up the origins of the internationally important industrial centre of Swansea, as described at the time by their pioneering father some fifty years before. The result of this rehabilitative task was the 1774 manuscript entitled 'History of the Copper Concern', 173 pages of handwritten notes that only re-appeared in the public domain upon its donation to Swansea University's archives in 1952 and which is reproduced in full and in printed form as the bulk of this book.

Perhaps the most important aspect of this work is that the period 1727–30 was precisely the period when the supremacy of Swansea over other smelting sites was established. It is this which makes the manuscript such an invaluable tool in understanding the geography of copper-smelting in eighteenth-century Britain.

When Robert Morris first entered the bidding for Cornish copper ores a virtual, Bristol-based cartel for the fixing of prices existed which Morris undercut. Their reaction was to try and force up ore prices and drive Morris out of business. This back-fired for south-west Wales-based smelters had lower costs for the carriage from coal mines to smelters and an advantage in the quality and quantity of coal which the Bristol smelters could not match. Within ten years much of the Bristol copper-smelting industry was relocating to Swansea and Neath.

Despite Robert Morris' training and background in the law rather than in smelting there is much to interest mining and smelting historians and archaeologists here. An example is the note:

1727 The Lead ore worked then was from Cardiganshire. The lead furnaces then at Langevelach works were capable of working 16 tons ore per week. The usual produce of the Lead ore was from 10CWT to 15CWT per ton ore, which make a working of 12 ton per week.

Lead ore from St Cyrus by Exeter. Mr Sampson Hill one of the proprietors. The mine adventurers had a lease in 1728 of Mr Powell's of Nanteos; [i.e. Cwmystwyth lead mine] who had the 9th dish. Flintshire had then most [Halkyn Mountain]. Mr Winne had the greatest work; produced 3 to 4,000 tons a year at £6 per ton at which price the buyers would get £4 per ton.

This extract give a flavour of the note-like character of Robert Morris junior's selective transcript of his father's letters with very valuable notes added by Louise Miskell and also highlights the fact that early copper smelters very often also smelted lead.

This publication is probably Robert Morris junior's greatest contribution to the world. Eleven years after returning to Swansea, in 1785, he remarried into a south Welsh farming family, but after his wife's death four years later he returned to the law. Debarred from practising in England and Wales by his elopement with a minor, he went to Bengal in India and after unsuccessfully trying to establish himself as a lawyer died at Tattigar in 1793.

Louise Miskell is to be commended for making this largely unknown but very significant source available to a much wider audience and for setting its context with an invaluable introduction and epilogue.

Aberystwyth

STEPHEN HUGHES

HERBERT LUCK NORTH. ARTS AND CRAFTS ARCHITECTURE FOR WALES. By Adam Voelcker. 231 × 254 mm. 136 pp. 170 illustrations. Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, Aberystwyth, 2011. ISBN 978 1 871184 41 9. Price £14.95.

A monograph on an architect whose entire career was spent in Wales is a rarity and one so beautifully produced as the Royal Commission's book on Herbert Luck North an especial cause for celebration. H. L. North will probably be known to many for the two delightful books on the old churches and old cottages of Snowdonia which he wrote with Harold Hughes, but his architecture will be a revelation for those who have not found for themselves The Close at Llanfairfechan, the coastal resort where North spent his professional life.

The later nineteenth century threw many sensitive souls against the hard rocks of commerce and they variously found solace in art, in religion, in poetry, in socialism. And where one generation followed Ruskin, the next followed Morris, from whom the manifold strands of the Arts and Crafts movement all seem to have their origin. The bicycling socialist, the artist-craftsman in a rural workshop, the collector of folk-song and myth, the lover of beauty, are the heirs of Morris, and North was one of them. Of middle-class stock typical of Morris' followers, he was the son of a Leicester bank-manager, and grandson of a solicitor involved in the creation of Victorian Llanfairfechan. His training was with the most demanding of the Arts and Crafts practitioners, Henry Wilson, for whom he laboured with other young men on the church at Brithdir (Merioneth), where everything that could be was made by hand and Wilson still found the masonry 'too carefully done'. For the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, North, aged only twenty-five, was in charge of the rescue of the Old Post Office at Tintagel, a classic exemplar of those venerable and time-eaten vernacular buildings beloved of Arts and Crafts architects like Ernest Gimson (also from Leicester). But what is interesting about North is that he did not become a fastidious repairer of crumbling cottages, nor did he seek to recreate the cottage in new buildings.

The justification for this book, so lavishly illustrated with plans and photographs, is that North evolved in North Wales a model for small houses in particular that is *sui generis*, distinctive, retaining its appeal through successive generations. A North house is easily recognised, white roughcast, sweeping slate roofs, acute gables, and small-paned casement windows, generally metal. There is a purity to their forms, the gables without overhangs, the geometry of squares and triangles, rarely curves and circles. Their brick chimneys delight as miniature castles.

The quest for the ideal smaller house was one that occupied North's architect contemporaries. Voelcker cites Clough Williams-Ellis on the same path. North's Seiriol Road houses in Bangor, of 1927, built for

COPEC (Christian Order in Politics Economics and Citizenship), one of the socially-conscious Christian movements of the time, stand out against all the social housing in Wales. One wishes there had been more. The houses of The Close, North's own private development and rather more expensive, show greater variety, but with the same basic forms, a demonstration of controlled vitality to which modern house-builders should be introduced. In these middle-class houses and his own more radical Wern Isaf, the beauty of North's simple detail emerges, and the photographs (by Iain Wright) do this justice. The Wern Isaf fireplace in blue and silver-grey is shockingly good. Voelcker's neat plans illuminate the text and it is a joy to follow the clear description of the extraordinary layout (three-eighths of an octagon) at Wern Isaf through plan and pictures.

Considerable space is given to North's church work, fascinating if disappointing. Much was not built, and the major work, St Winifred's School chapel at Llanfairfechan, is demolished. North emerges here also as quietly radical, the school chapel a sequence of transverse Gothic arches mysteriously lit from windows invisible in side gables, the whitened brick illuminated by coloured stencil in the roof and a helm-like altar canopy. Fortunately this can be savoured in miniature at the Church Hostel chapel in Bangor. The helm shape reappears as the sanctuary ceiling, painted with a lovely vine trellis in simple colours.

Voelcker instructively considers North in relation to modern architects, certainly no modernist, but not a traditionalist in the imitative sense. He used modern materials when they suited but made no show of the fact. Unlike Williams-Ellis he expressed himself little in print. Indeed, little emerges of North the man because he was a private man who would leave his works to speak for themselves. This book allows them to speak.

Langport, Somerset

JULIAN ORBACH