Archaeologia Cambrensis 168 (2019), 277–306

Reviews

Books for review should be sent to the Reviews Editor, Dr R. J. Silvester (see address opposite Contents page).

NEOLITHIC AND BRONZE AGE FUNERARY AND RITUAL PRACTICES IN WALES, 3600–1200 BC. By Geneviève Tellier. 210 × 297 mm. xiv + 200 pp. 90 illustrations. 47 tables. BAR Publishing, Oxford, 2018. ISBN 978 1407 31649 9. Price £39.00.

This useful book, based upon a PhD awarded by Bradford University in 2017, examines the character of funerary and ritual practices in Wales between the Middle Neolithic and the Middle Bronze Age periods, between 3600–1200 BC. Some of the ground it covers will be familiar from the chapters by Frances Lynch in *Prehistoric Wales* (2000) and Steve Burrow's *Shadowland* (2011), but the synthesis of the wealth of data presented in the volume will provide an invaluable starting point for anyone researching in this field.

The study looks in particular at the chronology indicated by associated radiocarbon dates and artefacts, monument and burial types, and osteological evidence. In addition to the analysis and discussion of this material, a corpus of about 300 radiocarbon dates from 90 sites, the tabulated site data for about 240 sites, and an extensive bibliography will also be of lasting value to researchers.

The chronological framework for the study is established in Chapter 3, based on radiocarbon dates and artefactual associations, adopting the established sequence of ceramic styles from Impressed Wares, to Grooved Ware, Beakers, Food Vessels, Collared Urns, and Bucket and Barrel Urns. Changes in the mode of burial and associated monument types are then discussed by reference two five periods — Middle Neolithic (*c*. 3600–2900 BC), Late Neolithic (*c*. 2900–2400 BC), Chalcolithic (*c*. 2500–2200 BC), Early Bronze Age (*c*. 2200–1700 BC) and Middle Bronze Age (*c*. 1700–1200 BC). Bayesian modelling is employed in the analysis of the radiocarbon dates where sufficient are available from Welsh sites but it is interesting to note that no clear phasing is evident in the case of the modelled dates for Early Bronze Age burial mounds, suggesting that most were used over a relatively short period of perhaps no more than a century or two.

Discussion of the monument types associated with burials, which include simple pit graves, timber circles, henge monuments, round barrows, stone circles and standing stones, is helpfully illustrated by a series of distribution maps based on data from the Historic Environment Records of the Welsh Archaeological Trusts, which were enhanced by the *Prehistoric Funerary and Ritual Monuments Survey* funded by Cadw between 1997 and 2003.

Osteological analysis, used to provide demographic data, is summarized in Chapter 4. This involved the examination of over 250 bone deposits, mostly cremations, from about 100 sites, representing about a third of the total number of such assemblages recorded in Wales. This is followed by an analysis of funerary and ritual activity in Chapter 5 and by a review of pyre technology and cremation ritual data in Chapter 6.

Chapter 7 provides a valuable synthesis and discussion of the Big Data presented elsewhere in the volume, focusing on the changes in the character of burial practice between the Middle Neolithic and Middle Bronze Age period. The period of the study largely commences following the end of the use of megalithic tombs and marks a major shift from a tradition of communal burial of remains which remained accessible, to one in which individual burials were rendered inaccessible. Middle Neolithic burials are relatively rare in Wales but include both inhumations and cremations and were largely those of single individuals. These are associated with a variety of monument types including pit graves and timber circles, of which some have associated grave goods. The small number of burials and the absence

of recurrent burial traditions suggests that burial may have been reserved for certain individuals and that the majority of human remains were disposed of in ways which are not visible archaeologically. A similar pattern is evident in the Middle Neolithic but appears to show a hiatus in formal burial practice except for those currently largely confined to Anglesey passage graves. The Chalcolithic period sees the widespread adoption of round barrows and cairns, pit graves and burials within circular enclosures and the dominance of single inhumation burials. Inhumation burial continues into the Early Bronze Age, but there is a notable shift to cremation, the simultaneous burial of a number of individuals and a more frequent association with grave goods. Burials become associated with a broader range of monument types including henges, pit circles, timber and stone circles, and flat cremation cemeteries in addition to round barrows and cairns. During the Middle Bronze Age there is again a pattern of burial at a wide range of monument types, but fewer burials have grave goods and there is now a greater proportion of token deposits of cremated bone, some of which are associated with standing stones. Throughout the period of study the analysis has shown no significant differences in the age or sex profiles of those who were buried.

Shrewsbury W. J. Britnell

MAKING A MARK. IMAGE AND PROCESS IN NEOLITHIC BRITAIN AND IRELAND. By Andrew Meirion Jones and Marta Díaz-Guardamino. 185 × 245 mm. xxix + 288 pp. 118 illustrations. Oxbow Books, Oxford, 2019. ISBN 978 1 78925 188 3. Price £40.00.

The book stems from a project funded by the Leverhulme Trust in 2014 which was designed to provide a detailed examination of a selection of decorated Neolithic portable artefacts held by museums in Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and the Isle of Man by means of digital imaging techniques. The study included objects of slate, chalk, flint, bone, antler and wood and embraces everything from outstanding pieces of craftsmanship to what might appear to be little more than graffiti. Many of these objects will already be well known to those familiar with Neolithic decorative arts, such as the flat, incised chalk plaques from Amesbury and three-dimensional pieces such as the Folkton chalk drums, the stone figurines from Links of Notland, and the flint mace-head from Knowth.

The focus is upon three regions which have produced significant amounts of relevant material: firstly, the south of England from Cornwall to East Anglia which is particularly notable for a variety of decorated chalk artefacts from flint mines and causewayed enclosures; secondly, Wales, the Isle of Man and eastern Ireland known for decorated artefacts associated with passage tombs and settlements; and thirdly, north-east Scotland and Orkney, which has produced stone balls and decorated artefacts from settlements. Two customary introductory chapters on archaeological theory and the meaning of art are followed by ones which jump between regional syntheses and the analysis of particular artefact types but also include useful up-to-date summaries of the likely dating of the types of artefacts concerned. These are followed by several somewhat didactic chapters on the meaning and significance of Neolithic decoration but which usefully identify relationships with other forms of Neolithic ‘mark making’, such as pottery, rock art, and the decorated stones associated with passage tombs, together with some interesting observations on miniaturisation and skeuomorphism. The volume concludes with by now almost customary chapter (the longest in the book) by two artists involved with the project, Ian Dawson and Louisa Minkin, on their interactions with digital imaging and Neolithic art. An appendix lists the collections visited but omits the catalogue of artefacts examined promised on page 11, though there is a helpful index.

Three digital imaging techniques were employed: Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI), photogrammetry, and digital microscopy. RTI enables fine surface detail to be examined in three

dimensions. The summary of RTI given in the book is somewhat opaque, but Wikipedia (under 'Polynomial Texture Mapping') explains that it involves capturing a series of photographic images with a camera in a fixed position and with the object lit from different angles. The images are then processed and combined with the use of software which enables the manipulation of a virtual light source to achieve optimal visualisation of surface detail. Motion photogrammetry enables the creation of a three-dimensional model of the object which can again be examined in the round. A hand-held digital microscope allows fine detail to be recorded.

Great play is made of the fact that the fine surface detail recorded by the combination of these digital techniques permits the examination of objects in four dimensions — the fourth dimension being the elucidation of the sequence in which the decoration was executed and how this may have been altered through time. Thus, one of the principal tenets of the study is that the evidence for 'reworking, revision and erasure' — a phrase which recurs as a mantra throughout the book — means that rather than seeing these items simply as finished objects we should look at them as representing 'continual, and repetitive engagement and re-engagement with materials'.

Some new insights are presented, but there are perhaps two grounds for disappointment: firstly, lingering uncertainty about the interpretation of some of the detail recorded, and secondly the presentation of the results. For the sake of readers of this journal this can be illustrated by reference to the small number of the Welsh artefacts included in the book. The RTI images (fig. 5.10) of the incised plaque from Hazzeldine Warren's excavations at Graig Lwyd in 1921, for example, are presented at too small a scale to be intelligible and have in any case been superimposed (like many others in the book) by lines or 'annotations' presumably drawn by hand. It is argued that later flake scares and peck marks were deliberately intended to deface and erase the decoration, but might they not simply indicate reuse of a discarded object? (The recent excavations which suggests a date of 3110–2910 cal. BC for Graig Lwyd were, incidentally, by J. Ll. (rather than L.) Williams and colleagues.) The 3D modelling and RTI imagery (fig. 5.2) of the chevron and concentric markings on the as yet unpublished length of oak timber found in a peat bog at the Maerdy Windfarm, dated to 6000–6270 BP, confirms that these were deliberately made (rather than being caused by bark boring insects). But does a groove running across part of the decoration, as claimed on page 200, really indicate 'definite attempts at erasure of marks'? Finally, the Maesmor mace-head, which has given its name to the small yet remarkable group of flint mace-heads from Britain and Ireland and which on analogy with antler mace-heads date to the period *c*. 3500–2900 cal. BC. Analysis of the mace-head on page 125 sadly illicits little new information or indeed comment, presumably since it provides no support for the thesis of 'reworking, revision and erasure'. (Incidentally, the name of the mace-head appears in the book as Maesmore and Maesmawr but is correctly Maesmor, after the estate of this name to the west of Corwen where it was found in about 1840, though the map of the Irish Sea region in fig. 5.1 curiously relocates it to somewhere in the vicinity of Bangor.) The interesting observation is made that this widely scattered group of mace-heads were possibly 'crafted by a single craftsperson, or restricted group of craftspeople' and that the mottled brown and white flint from which the Maesmor and Knowth mace-heads were made may have been chosen for its similarity to the 'colouration of red deer antler'. The book's claim that 3D digital modelling is the one true way of appreciating these objects may be true, though it is unfortunate that when images of this kind are rendered on the printed page in 2D they rarely seem to live up to the best photographic images — such as the stunning images of many of the same objects in the influential *Symbols of Power* (1985) exhibition catalogue. Excellent drawings and descriptions of both the Graig Lwyd plaque and the Maesmor mace-head appear in Steve Burrow's *Catalogue of the Mesolithic and Neolithic Collections in the National Museums & Galleries of Wales* (2003), which is not referenced in the book.

A number of other examples of the supposedly deliberate reworking of artefacts are again not wholly convincing, such as the erased second set of 'eyebrows' on one of the Folkton drums (fig. 4.3) and the

secondary striations on the Garboldisham (Norfolk) antler mace-head (fig. 3.11). An introductory chapter claims that 'the study does not aim to impose preconceived theoretical constructs on the decorated artefacts of Neolithic Britain and Ireland', though the book's attempts to establish patterns which 'resonate' with the reworking of Neolithic monuments — such as the redigging of the ditches of causewayed enclosures and cursuses — give the impression that this not the case.

Shrewsbury W. J. Britnell

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF PREHISTORIC BURNT MOUNDS IN IRELAND. By Alan Hawkes. 206 × 290 mm. vii + 327 pp. 195 illustrations. Archaeopress Publishing Ltd, Oxford, 2018. ISBN 978 1 78491 986 3. Price £50.00.

Burnt mounds are one of the most common prehistoric site-types in Wales and are likely to be encountered on many excavations. While individual mounds are of interest they are best understood en masse, allowing trends to be recognised and genuine rarities to be identified. However, the available summaries of burnt mounds in the British Isles are now out of date and a large-scale study was long overdue. The appearance of Alan Hawkes' new volume is therefore to be welcomed with some excitement by Welsh field archaeologists. The Irish focus of the study does little to reduce its usefulness, as British and Irish burnt mounds are clearly part of a shared tradition.

Ireland is the ideal choice for a study of burnt mounds as these sites have been known and studied there longer than anywhere else in the British Isles. The boom in commercial archaeology in the 1990s and 2000s means that a large number of new sites have been excavated and published, giving a massive database for comparisons. Hawkes therefore has 1165 excavated sites to work with, making his comparisons and typologies genuinely significant.

The book is packed with good-quality photographs and useful comparative plans, but it is the themes drawn out from this huge database that gives the book its main strength. These include mound and trough morphology, associated structures, relation to settlements, dating and, of course, function. While a book of this sort will never be light reading, I found it quite a page-turner as I was keen to see Hawkes' conclusions on vital issues such as chronology and use.

This book will mainly be used as reference by anyone who has dug their own burnt mound, and for this it will prove invaluable. I am currently preparing a report on a burnt mound with a well, something I had not come across before. Now I know that some 65 features on burnt mounds in Ireland have been interpreted as wells. By contrast only two sites have timber launders, making the launder found on the burnt mound at Porth Neigwl, Gwynedd by George Smith appear even more significant. While there are almost certainly regional variations this book provides the perfect starting point for any assessment of these sites in Wales.

Perhaps my biggest disappointment was the chapter on chronology, which was not the fault of Hawkes. He provides a useful chronology showing the start of burnt mounds in the Early Neolithic through to their end in the Iron Age and demolishes the suggestion of burnt mounds continuing into the medieval period in Ireland. He then uses his chronology to study changes in the form and function of the sites in a way that has not previously been possible. Unfortunately Irish archaeologists have not provided him with the quality of material that he really required. Many excavated sites are undated and most of those that are dated have only a single, and therefore not very trustworthy, date. Only a few archaeologists have tried to explore the duration and reuse of sites. The number of excavated sites only highlights the missed opportunity and hopefully will act as a goad to the rest of us to do better. Two radiocarbon dates must

be the minimum for even the simplest site and where several troughs or pits demonstrate reuse we really should try and date the full duration of use.

The chronological control is at least good enough for Hawkes to place burnt mounds in their cultural context and link them to social, cultural and economic changes over three and a half millennia. This book is therefore far from being a simple list of sites. He also shows how burnt mounds contribute to the understanding of these periods and why they should not be dismissed as minor sites.

The book is not perfect. Few authors nowadays appear to have enough time for editing and there are the usual typos and paragraphs that could have done with heavier editing. There are also some mistakes with site references. The bibliography will prove to be very useful, but cross-referencing the bibliography with the tables of sites would have aided its use. At least the license number is given so excavations can be chased up on the Excavation.ie online database. It is a pity that the tables of dated sites do not give the full radiocarbon references with lab number and uncalibrated radiocarbon age, which would have made the book even more valuable as a reference work.

A private individual would need a burning interest in burnt mounds to justify the cost of this book but all archaeological units and university departments should buy it, so the sales ought to be healthy. In summary this is both a very useful and attractive book. Although it is already out-of-date as many more burnt mounds have been found since 2010, the cut-off point for Hawkes' research, this book will stand the test of time because the number of sites included in this survey makes it such a valuable baseline for the future.

Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, Bangor JANE KENNEY

LIFE AND DEATH IN THE COUNTRYSIDE OF ROMAN BRITAIN. By Alexander Smith, Martyn Allen, Tom Brindle, Michael Fulford, Lisa Lodwick and Anna Rohnbogner. 212 × 298 mm. xviii + 419 pp. 246 illustrations. 35 tables. Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, London, 2018. ISBN 978 0 907764 46 5. Price £32.40.

In a world where authoritative publication of major research projects may be delayed by many years, the timely appearance of the promised third volume in the series of three Britannia Monographs for *New Visions of the Countryside of Roman Britain* — following *The Rural Settlement of Roman Britain* (2016) and The Rural Economy of Roman Britain (2017) is very welcome. One can imagine a massive sigh of relief from the authors and project team, together with the series editors (Fulford and Holbrook) when this last volume went to press. In a world of increasing online data it is a successful physical outcome for this ambitious project, which was latterly extended to encompass Wales as late as 2015 with a second grant from the Leverhulme Trust.

The three volumes are the culmination of a project begun in 2006 to assess and synthesise the research potential of 'grey literature' reports of developer-funded excavations on Roman sites arising from the post-PPG16 explosion in archaeological interventions. An early, rapid national overview suggested some 9000 separate interventions in England alone in the period 1990–2010. This author reviewed the first volume (*Archaeologia Cambrensis* vol. 166) and summarised then some of the top-level issues with the project in relation to the Welsh material, including the selection and discussion only of excavated sites (a considerable problem for vast swathes of Wales) and the unusual division of the landscape of England and Wales into Natural England's 'Natural Areas'; the latter device separates the Roman archaeology of the Vale of Glamorgan, for example, from the Gower and Carmarthenshire, placing it instead alongside the sites of Roman Cambridgeshire and Central England.

While Volume 1 established a new approach to the study of rural settlement, and Volume 2 looked at economic life, this final volume places 'people firmly at the heart of the analysis — how they looked, lived, interacted with the material and spiritual worlds . . . and also how they died' (p. xvi). It is arranged across eight chapters.

Following the Introduction in Chapter 1 which establishes the context of the study and the range of the volume, Chapter 2 (by Brindle) deals with personal appearance and adornment with a concentrated focus on brooches, much as if a master's thesis on brooches has dropped into a larger study of the 'countryside'. Chapter 3 (Smith, Brindle, Fulford and Lodwick) looks at Lifestyle and the Social Environment, seeking at times to capture the more intangible elements of settlement archaeology: gardens, lighting and heating, ornamental plants, food and drink, public entertainment, bathing, and literacy. This is a brave and wide-ranging chapter providing excellent texture and background for those excavating or studying the physical remains of villas, homes and rural settlements, with numerous studies valuably referenced. Chapter 4 (Allen) examines the exploitation of animals and wild resources including landscape questions on the physical evidence for pastoralism and husbandry. Chapter 5, Religion (by Smith, with contributions), is a substantial chapter for those interested in new, physical evidence of buildings and structures revealed through developer-funded excavations. Although this new volume has generally fewer illustrations than the first (although just as many graphs and distribution maps), here we find the ever-valuable scaled plans and landscape maps of new (and longer-standing) examples of temples and ritual landscapes including key developer-funded discoveries like the timber shrines at Heybridge, Essex. There are maps of Springhead, Bath and Lydney — and even the oft-published Hayling Island; Llyn Cerrig Bach is mentioned, but nowhere is the Gallo-Roman temple of Gwehelog/Llancayo near Usk discussed, nor the scheduled rural (valley bottom) Romano-British temple at Plas-newydd, Ruthin nor the postulated temple or villa at Portskewett Hill (excavated and scheduled). These are significant known or potential votive sites for Wales but as the first two have not been excavated, and the third is postulated, they have been omitted. Thus the opportunity to discuss these sites in a national context has been sadly lost, leaving a key distribution map (fig. 5.32) lacking any rural Romano-Celtic temples for Wales. These omissions illustrate how an adherence to such a rigid project remit limits the academic value of the volume for Wales. As with Chapter 2, the material culture of votive sites is usefully dealt with alongside the structural evidence.

Death and burial practices including inhumations, cemetery complexes and aspects of bioarchaeology and palaeopathology are dealt with in Chapter 6 (by Smith, with contributions) making available huge new datasets — 15,579 burials from 1162 sites — for the first time. Wales fares poorly for excavated burials, as the distribution maps show, but the comparative datasets here will be an invaluable resource for all future excavators of cemeteries and burials. Chapter 7 takes some of the previously presented data forward in a substantial chapter by Rohnbogner on the Rural Population before Smith and Fulford draw their conclusions together in Chapter 8. As with previous volumes, the forty-page bibliography will be a further long-lasting strength of this publication.

This volume is densely packed with data and graphs but with just over half the illustrations of the original 2016 volume; it is not for the general reader and probably has most value as an essential index to information and data which is largely hidden, inaccessible or at the very least difficult to compare across a range of Historic Environment Records, the holdings of private contractors and regional and national archives. It is more difficult to judge its value in the context of Wales. Any reader from Wales will know that entire scheduled Roman villas (including significant sites like Croes Carn Einion, confirmed in 1996), complex cropmarks of Romano-British farmsteads or rural settlements and known Roman temples have been consciously omitted from the volumes as they have never been trenched, while sites like Fishbourne and Bath keep cropping up. It is an imbalance in data that we may have to accept as the inevitable price of such a vast national survey which has stuck firmly to its original remit. Smith and Fulford make the point

in their Conclusions that 'Life and death within lower status farmsteads — where the vast majority of the population would have resided — has been largely ignored' with their new study 'resulting in a picture of the countryside of Roman Britain . . . removed from the bucolic scenes of villa life', often the norm in publications on rural Roman life (p. 346). Certainly the clear vision of the original project to shed light on the difficult 'grey literature' of the developer-funded world has been achieved, and its timely completion and authoritative publication must be congratulated.

RCAHMW, Aberystwyth TOBY DRIVER

CLASH OF CULTURES? THE ROMANO-BRITISH PERIOD IN THE WEST MIDLANDS. Edited by Roger White and Mike Hodder. 222 × 288 mm. xiv + 226 pp. 98 illustrations. 5 tables. Oxbow Books, Oxford, 2018. ISBN 978 1 78570 922 7. Price £30.00.

Clash of Cultures? The Romano-British Period in the West Midlands is the third volume to be published in a six volume series that explores the archaeology of the region from the Lower Palaeolithic onwards under the general title *The Making of the West Midlands*. The whole series is based on a Research Audit and Research Assessment produced by the West Midlands Archaeological Research Framework, and on the huge amounts of data held in county Historic Environment Records. The present volume draws on and augments *The Rural Settlement of Roman Britain* (2016), a synthesis of traditionally published and unpublished ('grey literature') archaeological work. The series has been long in production — the first volume came out in 2007, and still to come are the volumes on the early medieval, medieval and post-medieval periods.

The first and second chapters of *Clash of Cultures* give respectively an overview of the region's archaeology written by Roger White and Mike Hodder, the volume's editors, and an assessment of the impact of the Roman army on the area by Roger White. As elsewhere in lowland Britain, the Roman conquest of Britain confronted the native populations of the West Midlands with probably shocking — but potentially exploitable — cultural change, accompanied by a sudden physical change to stretches of its countryside. Elements of the latter are still partially visible in region in the alignment of roads, the outlines of forts and the excavated plans of towns and villas. Evidence for the towns come in the form of the excavated and casual finds of mass-produced ceramics and glass, of metalwork, coins, and of industrial-scale salt production. The overall distribution map of sites and Roman roads in Chapter 1 gives a ready visualisation of the varying availability of evidence available in the region for description and discussion.

The six counties — Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire and the former West Midlands — are then allocated a chapter each, authored for the most part by former and current county archaeologists. The writers of these county chapters have taken on the unenviably hard task of succinctly outlining, illustrating and analysing the existing data on the unevenly understood archaeology of their counties, while trying to conform to a standard chapter format. Each county chapter has a time-line running from the late Iron Age, through the impact of the Roman army and into the following two centuries of civilian settlement. Evidence is drawn widely from antiquarian research in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, detailed research work of the later twentieth century, metal-detector finds, fieldwork and — increasingly now — excavation in advance of commercial development. Because their subject-matter is confined to the varying quantity and quality of archaeological evidence that is available, these county chapters vary considerably in length and content. The three rural southern and western counties give the broadest-ranging assessments, with the advantage of having many sites that

have not been significantly overlain by the post-medieval developments that characterise most of West Midlands County and much of Staffordshire and Warwickshire. The authors conclude with a consideration of the future research needed to make the native and Roman history of their county better understood. These research proposals are mostly practical though sometimes inevitably wishful (most have one or two important large-scale excavations from the 1970s to the 1990s that really should, but probably will never now, be fully published). Each of the county chapters has a distribution map of sites (drawn to the uniform standard used in the first two volumes of the series and corresponding to the overall map in Chapter 1) and all the book's chapters are well illustrated with colour images of finds and excavations, and with plans and reconstruction drawings. Their texts are supported by good individual bibliographies.

The three penultimate chapters of the book consider and analyse coin distribution analysis, pottery evidence and religious sites, while in the last Roger White directs our eyes forward to consider the region during the fifth and sixth centuries, that traumatic period that saw a generally settled, prosperous and ordered Roman province begin the change, through the breakdown of central administration and the ambitions of warlords and petty kings, to being part of Anglo-Saxon England.

As noted above, an important original intention of the West Midlands research audit as elsewhere in Britain was, after summarising the existing evidence, to assess what future research could or should ideally be undertaken in the area; and to this end a very useful table accompanies Chapter 1 listing the research priorities identified by the authors of each chapter. Overall in the West Midlands there are of course many common themes for future research — trying to get important past excavations fully published; coming to a better overall understanding of native and Roman landscape-use through further use of lidar, environmental sampling and aerial photography; isolating Roman industrial and mineral exploitation sites from among overlying later workings; and finding 'missing' forts, roads and religious sites. Some of the authors make special pleading for objectives particular to their areas. In Herefordshire Keith Ray identifies Kenchester as worthy of the depth of protection and research as given to Caistor by Norwich in Norfolk whose defences were bought by a local archaeological trust in the 1980s, and where a research and community project has since been undertaken by the local authority, the trust and Nottingham University. Ray also cites the opportunities for identifying the 'Roman Wye'. In Worcestershire Hal Dalwood and his colleagues identify the value of some future discovery and full excavation of both a salt workshop at Droitwich and also a 'Malvernian' pottery kiln; while for Warwickshire Paul Booth suggests that the hints of differences in the character of rural settlement in the three north-east/south-west trending zones of Arden, Avon valley and Feldon could be analysed by prioritising the accumulation of basic economic and environmental evidence; and 'with parts of the county lying potentially within at least three tribal territories there is scope to develop further the question of the relationship (if any) between aspects of material culture'.

The editors and publishers of *Clash of Cultures?* are to be congratulated on having persisted over what they admit is its 'extremely long gestation period', to produce a substantial and overall useful book. The volume is a heavyweight tome, both in fact and in its ambitious scope, and some of its content will not be for the general reader. As a whole, though, while its central sections are particularly aimed at the archaeological community and at local authority planners, *Clash of Cultures?* is generously topped and tailed by well-written, wider-ranging chapters that should appeal to anyone with an interest in the history of the West Midlands region.

Shrewsbury JENNY BRITNELL

THE QUEST FOR THE IRISH CELT. By Mairéad Carew. 157 × 232 mm. ix + 316 pp. 27 illustrations. Irish Academic Press, Newbridge, Co. Kildare, Ireland, 2018. ISBN 978 1 788550 09 3. Price €24.99.

Over the past twenty-five years, there has been an increasing recognition that archaeological research and its interpretation are a product of their contemporary historical and social context and are therefore subject to political manipulation. This was certainly true of Ireland in the early years after partition in 1922 when the newly established Irish Free State under Éamon de Valera was seeking to forge an identity as an independent nation state within Europe, freed from the shackles of British colonial rule; there were also strong ties with Irish diaspora in America. One of the major themes of this nationalist, nation-building project was the idea that Ireland was a country with deep Celtic roots, the origins of which lay in later prehistory, and that these had shaped identity ever since. Furthermore, Ireland lay beyond the Roman Empire, the influence of which was minimised. This allowed for continuity with what was then known as the Early Christian Period initiated by the arrival of St Patrick in the fifth century and this, together with artefacts such as the Ardagh chalice and the Book of Kells, was used to underpin the authority of the Catholic Church.

During the 1930s archaeology was harnessed as a means of demonstrating the significance of Ireland's ancient Celtic identity. Central to this was the role of the Harvard Mission, initiated in 1931, which ran until 1936, led by the physical anthropologist Earnest A. Hooton whose academic interests lay in race and eugenics. The overarching aim of the American mission was therefore to establish the origins of the Celts in Ireland alongside their continuity up to the present. To this end, the anthropological strand involved the measuring of the skulls of thousands of modern Irish men and women with the aim of comparing them with those recovered from archaeological excavations. The latter included skulls from the early medieval cemetery at Gallen Priory which was (perhaps unexpectedly in the context of the time) directed by the Anglo-Saxonist, T. D. Kendrick, from the British Museum. Two talented Harvard academics led the archaeological strand which embraced Ireland as a whole. The first was Hallam L. Movius, whose principal interests lay in prehistory, particularly the Mesolithic, and whose excavations were mainly conducted in Northern Ireland with its contrasting political mind-set. The second was Hugh O'Neill Hencken, who had gained his PhD at Cambridge University. He directed highly significant excavations on early medieval sites, the crannogs Ballinderry 1 and 2 and Lagore and the ringfort at Cahercommaun, as well as investigating prehistoric burial monuments. Their main contact in Ireland was with the director of the National Museum, the Austrian archaeologist Adolf Mahr, an expert on the European Iron Age, who joined the Nazi party in 1933 and was an enthusiastic supporter of its ideology. Carew argues that the then Professor of Celtic Archaeology at University College Dublin, R. A. S. Macalister, may have been sidelined as, though born in Dublin, he was of protestant Scottish extraction. The link with the National Museum resulted in a concentration on sites, notably the crannogs, which were productive in artefacts, the majority of which went to enhance its collections.

Despite the nationalist context and the highly dubious nature of the eugenic research, the archaeological strand also had influential and positive results. Firstly, the Harvard Mission professionalised Irish archaeology by training a generation of native archaeologists including Seán P. Ó Riordáin, later Professor of Celtic Archaeology at University College Dublin, Michael O'Kelly, later Professor of Archaeology at University College Cork, and Joseph Raftery who became director of the National Museum. Secondly, it introduced sound scientific archaeological techniques, such as a better understanding of stratigraphy, the examination of animal bones, and pollen analysis which was carried out by Frank Mitchell, later Professor of Quaternary Studies at Trinity College Dublin. Thirdly, in many cases labour costs for the excavations were defrayed by the Irish Free State Relief from Unemployment Scheme, established in 1934 and modelled on Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, which also had an archaeology programme; other expenses were met by American sponsors. Fourthly, the excavation reports, though a product of

their times, were promptly published and, by 1951 when Hencken's important contribution on Lagore appeared, the interpretations of the evidence, which attempted to link entries in the Irish annals with the stratigraphy of the site, were the product of a different archaeological outlook that was developing after the Second World War. Finally, the excavations brought archaeology to wider public attention public, both in Ireland and beyond.

Nearly a century after partition and some thirty years after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement, the time is now ripe to look back objectively on the development of archaeology across Ireland in the 1930s. Mairéad Carew's book, based on her PhD thesis, uses a wide range of archival sources, including the papers of Hooton and Movius, and newspaper articles, to do just this. The study opens with a discussion of the historical context followed by an examination of the Harvard reconnaissance trip to Ireland in 1931. Later chapters consider why the Harvard Mission chose Ireland and the political ideology behind its research, the Lagore excavation, the impact of the Mission on Irish prehistory, the significance of the Unemployment Scheme, and how the politics of the day affected research methodology and archaeological interpretation. The book ends with a discussion of the importance of the media in disseminating ideas about Celtic art and archaeology to a much wider public. At times chapters would have benefited from more signposting as well as an additional introductory account of the Harvard Mission near the beginning that would have been helpful to those unfamiliar with it, as would a concluding chapter bringing together the significance of the author's research. Overall, however, Carew's study is measured, as well as containing a great deal of interest and being easy to read.

Bangor University NANCY EDWARDS

MANX CROSSES: A HANDBOOK OF STONE SCULPTURE 500–1040 IN THE ISLE OF MAN. By David M. Wilson. 175 × 246 mm. x + 181 pp. 63 illustrations. Manx National Heritage and Archaeopress Publishing Ltd, Oxford, 2018. ISBN 978 1 78491 757 9. Price £19.99.

In this attractive and compact volume, David M. Wilson provides the first published synthesis for over 100 years on the corpus of early medieval sculptured stone monuments on the Isle of Man. The monuments here are arguably too often overlooked by the tradition of wide-ranging studies on the development and use of early medieval art across Britain and Ireland, and this is partly due to the lack of an updated modern corpus or catalogue of the monuments. P. M. C. Kermode's 1907 compilation is still a critical reference volume for any study. Wilson does not attempt to replace or replicate Kermode; rather he makes clear that his objective is to synthesise and contextualise the corpus for a modern general, but seriously scholarly, readership.

The volume begins with a chapter offering an overview of the Isle of Man within its geographic and political context, focusing on the period of its earliest known monuments of the fifth to eighth centuries. There follow two chapters outlining the monuments of this earlier period highlighting not just their inherent problematic and challenging nature for both art historians and archaeologists, but also the complex intellectual, social and political context in which they were made. A very full chapter is devoted to the early monastic site at Maughold, clearly already a significant centre of learning, art and ecclesiastical administration by the eighth century. The monuments and their complexity are key to this interpretation and Wilson offers detailed descriptions of several monuments, well illustrated, alongside explorations of comparative examples from the Irish Sea area and further afield to Northumbria and Pictland.

Another chapter deals with a transitional period in the sculpture corpus dating to the ninth and tenth centuries and the presumed beginning of Scandinavian settlement on the Island (from a range of original

locations across the Norse and Hiberno-Norse world). This chapter does a good job of putting the island into that Irish Sea context and its network of interactions both martial and peaceful. The following two chapters deal with the tenth to eleventh-century monuments from the island, which are perhaps the most well known and studied owing to their mixing of Christian and Scandinavian mythological iconography. Wilson begins with an introduction to the Scandinavian art styles seen on the island's monuments and their dating before turning to an extended discussion of the mythological scenes. These scenes, such as the Sigurd story motifs, are examined largely in the light of their potential for Christian exegesis and pedagogy. It would perhaps be nice to see Wilson looking here into other potential avenues of interpretation of these scenes, as well; referring to recent discussions on memory and ancestral imagery in the light of expressions of identity and the status of patrons or sculptors might have offered multiple ways of interpreting the monuments. The final chapter deals with the impressive corpus of Scandinavian runic inscriptions in the corpus from the Island. At this point I would have welcomed another short chapter before the presentation of a well-crafted and curated bibliography and reading list. Another chapter here would have offered Wilson a chance to bring out his key themes from his synthesis and offer him a chance to help set the agenda for further study of these stones by prodding and challenging subsequent scholars to delve into this rich archaeological resource. It is perhaps a credit to Wilson's volume that at the end the reader is actually wanting to hear more of what he has to say and to benefit from his knowledge and experience of the monuments.

The volume is richly illustrated by both photographs and line drawings. It is written in very accessible language and should successfully broaden knowledge and understanding of this important collection of monuments on the Isle of Man. It should be considered an essential volume for all those interested in not just early medieval art, but any aspect of early medieval archaeology of Britain and Ireland.

University of Chester MEGGEN GONDEK

AN INTELLECTUAL ADVENTURER IN ARCHAEOLOGY REFLECTIONS ON THE WORK OF CHARLES THOMAS. Edited by Andy M. Jones and Henrietta Quinnell. 206 × 292 mm. xiv + 284 pp. 150 illustrations. Archaeopress Publishing Ltd, Oxford, 2018. ISBN 978 1 78491 861 3. Price £44.00.

This collection of twenty-five contributions by colleagues, friends and former students has been published in celebration of Professor Charles Thomas (1928–2016), the most influential figure in twentieth-century Cornish Archaeology, a great campaigner on heritage concerns, and archaeologist internationally recognised for his wider contributions to the field. The miscellany of papers vary considerably in length and subject matter, from seven presented at the 2017 AGM of the Cornwall Archaeology Society, to additional articles reflecting the broad range of Charles' work, interests and personality. The editors have justifiably drawn comparison with his book *Gathering the Fragments* (2014) and Stuart Piggott's Festschift *To Illustrate the Monuments* (1976), which includes a highly entertaining paper by Charles well worth reading on 'The archaeologist as fiction', from better-known appearances in crime novels to *Boys Own Paper*, E. Nesbit, Arthur Machen and a variety of genres.

The first chapter sets the scene with the background to the genesis of the book, followed by a review by Nicholas Johnson of Charles Thomas' 60-year 'adventure' in archaeology, from student years at Oxford and in the early 1950s at the Institute of Archaeology in London, to his University Career in the 1960s in Edinburgh and then Leicester, followed by work at the Institute of Cornish Studies between 1971–91. It recalls his work at Gwithian, on the Isles of Scilly and at Tintagel, and the way in which he was a prime mover in transforming both amateur archaeology in Cornwall, a founder of Rescue, and a Commissioner

for the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments for England (1983–97). His University of Edinburgh excavations are the subject of a paper by Mary-Jane Mountain, referencing his interest in early episodes of *Dr Who* and the concept of time travel as a means to explore scientific ideas and the past, while Arthur ApSimon remembers Charles as a diploma student at the Institute of Archaeology, already with 'real archaeological experience' behind him.

All the chapters are characterised by the inclusion of personal recollections of Charles, and most focus on the landscapes he cared deeply about: Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Andy Jones' reflection on The North Cliffs Project study of stone tools found along the North Cornish coast and their significance, describes how it developed largely from early fieldwork by Charles and the Cornwall Archaeology Society in the 1950s; Anna Lawson-Jones provides a short recollection of 'flint' picking' trips with Charles at these sites. Roger Mercer looks at the Early Neolithic period in Cornwall 'from all directions', and reminds us that whatever Charles was writing about, whether Cornwall or Scilly, Pictish art or early Christianity, he felt the importance and need to create archaeological narratives (particularly important today for accessible knowledge of cultures beyond memory). Vanessa Straker and Thomas Walker look at Gwithian's environmental history, from personal memories to a well-illustrated summary description of the Gwithian environmental projects, addressing key questions such as 'when and why did the main sand layers accumulate, and do the sand blow episodes relate to others in the south-west' (questions equally relevant to parts of the Welsh coast). This is complemented by recollections of the excavations later in the book by Adrian Rodda and Christopher Knowles.

Turning to the early medieval period, Henrietta Quinnell reviews the work of archaeologists on Lundy, including Charles's 1969 excavation of the Beacon Hill early medieval cemetery, and provides a synopsis of the subsequent steps towards a fully published excavation report. Jacqueline Nowakowski looks at past and current archaeological fieldwork at Tintagel, in the context of the contributions by Charles and Arthur Ralegh Radford and the site's challenges. Charles is not excluded as a contributor: the opportunity has been taken to publish his report on the 1956 excavations on Teän (Isles of Scilly), drafted in 1960 but never finalised, which is co-authored with Charles Johns. One of the longest papers in the book (46pp.), it covers the excavation results, catalogues the finds (which include E ware) and concludes with illustrated acknowledgements from both authors.

Some papers look beyond the south-west to Scotland and France, again reflecting Charles's interests and contributions. Back in 1976 I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to re-excavate one of the trenches he had excavated during the first year of his Russell Trust excavations at Iona Abbey, in the bottom of which he had meticulously placed a 1956 halfpenny, Pitt-Rivers style. Ewan Campbell and Adrian Maldonaldo place the work by Charles on Iona in a wider content, from his stationing as a soldier in the Trossachs in 1945 to his work on Iona, in Dumfries and Galloway, West Lothian and on Shetland. The baseline archaeological record created of upstanding features on Iona would only later be surpassed by the RCAHMS inventory (and his recognition of such baseline records is a recurring theme throughout the book). The authors reflect on his interest in Pictish art and his knowledge of Latin, Greek and Celtic languages, also evident in Anna Tyake's paper on his work on an early medieval inscribed stone from St Columb Minor, Cornwall. Ann Preston-Jones reconsiders the well-known granite cross known as St Piran's Cross, Perranzabuloe, and comparable crosses with related forms and decoration, while Thomas Goskar describes 3D laser scanning of prehistoric rock and early medieval inscribed stones in Cornwall. Oliver Padel reconsiders the place-name Annet in Scilly, while Adam Sharpe shines a light on Charles the 'linguistic archaeologist'. As Campbell and Maldonaldo point out, Charles's work in Scotland and Ireland contributed much to his thinking on early Christianity, and his survey *The Early Christian Archaeology of North Britain* (1971), expanded from his 1968 Hunter Marshall Lectures, influenced many, including this reviewer. John Gould reminisces on the work of the diocesan archaeologist in Cornwall, in particular

at the parish churches at St Levan and Tintagel. Looking further afield, Peter Fowler writes about his partnership with Charles in exploring the deserted settlement on le Causse Méjean, Languedoc, France, and the wide range of sites identified in this upland area, while Martin Bell reflects on coastal archaeology in western Britain and Tim Darvill recalls the work and impact of the CBA's Countryside Committee, chaired by Charles, and various projects from the 1980s on archaeology on the uplands, as well as its current challenges.

The charm of this book lies in part in its miscellany of offerings written in a variety of styles, the inclusion of colour plates of Charles's Christmas card illustrations as well as a poem he wrote in 1950 (in a short piece by Nicholas Thomas on 'the bard of Manton'). Less well known to some readers may be his interest in military history and its badges (also referenced), which I only became aware of in a 2018 article in *The Armourer*: his extensive collection of about 15,000 items included cap-badges from all over the world and from all the services.

This book gives the reader diverse perspectives on Charles the adventurer archaeologist and man, his intellect and kindnesses, as reflected in Freya Lawson-Jones's childhood 'short saga' of Charles and his influence. It is not possible within this short review to touch upon all the topics (e.g. unpublished work, red herrings and research on early medieval monuments in Wales). The final endnote by Philip Marsden is entitled 'A man of letters': he was a fine writer and teacher. The breadth of his interests and legacy are reflected in the complete bibliography of his published works at the end of the book, ordered by subject area (as well as in the private correspondence many of us hold in archives). An affectionate mosaic on his life and legacy, and part social history, it is well worth reading.

National Museum Wales MARK REDKNAP

PLACES OF WORSHIP IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND, 1150–1350. Edited by P. S. Barnwell. 197 × 252 mm. vi + 266 pp. 87 illustrations. Shaun Tyas, Donington, Lincs, 2018. ISBN 978 1 907730 67 2. Price £45.00.

This is the third in the Rewley House Studies in the Historic Environment series of collected essays on the history of churches and other places of worship in the British Isles. The first volume, covering 300–950, was reviewed in vol. 166 (2017) of this journal and included a chapter by Nancy Edwards on the archaeology of the early medieval church in Wales. There was less about Wales in the second volume, covering 950–1150, and readers of this journal will doubtless be disappointed to discover that there is very little new material on Wales in the current volume. Indeed, in his chapter on Cistercian architecture, Glyn Coppack has ignored the complexities of Welsh filiation and has relocated Grace Dieu to Cheshire.

The omission is particularly unfortunate as so many Welsh churches have their architecture rooted in this period. More could surely have been made of the surviving Romanesque fabric of the Benedictine priory at Ewenny and the Augustinians at Penmon, and the possibility that the quality of the Romanesque work at St Woolos in Newport indicates a failed priory foundation. Margam and Whitland are referred to briefly but more could be said about the financial problems which produced Margam's perfect 'Bernardine' nave, the unusual octagonal chapter house and a classic builder's bodge between chapter house and the elaboration of the south transept. In the light of Richard Halsey's chapter on the lengthening of English cathedrals in the period, it might also have been useful to consider Cwm-hir, where the original plan had a nave 78 metres long — longer than Canterbury and nearly as long as Winchester.

In spite of these caveats, there is much to admire in the current book. Phillipa Turner's introduction and her discussion of images in the English churches of the period provide a context for similar studies

in Wales. John Harper's chapter on liturgy, ritual and music includes a detailed study of the Bangor Pontifical. Deirdre O'Sullivan considers the surviving fabric of friaries including the Dominican house at Brecon (now Christ College). She does however say that lay burial in friaries was unusual before the fourteenth century: Llywelyn ab Iorwerth's foundation at Llanfaes near Beaumaris was specifically to house the tomb of his wife Siwan, and his grandson's wife Eleanor de Montfort was also buried there. Brecon also has early fourteenth-century tomb carvings, one of them an incised slab depicting a woman.

Richard Oram's chapter on the Scottish Premonstratensians and Tracy Collins on Irish nunneries also provide valuable comparisons with Wales. The evidence of archaeology and surviving buildings for the nunneries suggests a diversity of size and layout which may help in the interpretation of the much more fragmentary Welsh evidence. It is particularly puzzling that foundations for women were so numerous in Ireland when there were only three (and a possible fourth) in Wales. Part of the answer may lie in the fact that the order of choice in Wales was the Cistercians, an order which notoriously had difficulty in accepting female vocations, while the order of choice in Ireland was the Arrouasian. This, however, begs the question of why the choice of order was so different. Was it simply the timing of Anglo-Norman incursion and settlement? Richard Fawcett's chapter on the care of souls in Scottish parish churches also considers the influence of the politics of Anglo-Norman settlement on the ecclesiastical landscape, as well as the influence of the Irish in the West Highlands. Finally, Paul Barnwell's very thoughtful analysis of theological developments and their influence on the architecture of parish churches provides the context for the rebuilding in stone of so many Welsh parish churches in this period.

The book is well presented and generously illustrated. At £45, it is by modern standards reasonably priced for a work of such academic calibre. Meanwhile, we are promised a chapter on Welsh parish churches in the next volume (1350–1530). Watch this space, as they say.

University of South Wales MADELEINE GRAY

THE HOUSES OF HEREFORD, 1200–1700. By Nigel Baker, Pat Hughes and Richard K. Morriss. 221 × 286 mm. xvi + 192 pp. 180 illustrations. Oxbow Books, Oxford, 2018. ISBN 978 1 78570 816 9. Price £25.00.

Publication can be a remarkably tortuous business, but this study shows that perseverance can be rewarded with a handsome book — eventually. *The Houses of Hereford* has been rescued from the oblivion of grey literature by sustained editorial effort and grant-aid from Historic England. It presents the results of survey work of historic buildings largely carried out by Ron Shoesmith and the City of Hereford Archaeological Unit in the 1970s and 1980s. From their site reports, a volume of case-studies and synthesis was prepared by Richard K. Morriss in the 1990s with historical research by Pat Hughes, and eventually edited by Nigel Baker. English Heritage (as was) made publication possible by providing editorial support, colour photography (James O. Davies), and selective tree-ring dating. This was a commendable initiative, but the dispiriting news now is that Historic England (as is) is withdrawing from publication. Presumably this book, the result of numerous hours of dedicated recording and analysis, and general commitment to understanding and preserving the historic environment, would not now be possible in the current anti-publication climate. As it is, the authors have been well served by Historic England and Oxbow Books, and this reasonably priced book will have lasting value.

The volume displays the strengths and weaknesses of development-led building recording where only part of a building may be accessible. Accurate and delightfully wonky sections (reproduced at various scales) coexist with inadequately interpreted plans, and sometimes there are no plans at all. Of course,

pre-modern urban buildings are often a muddle, generally fragmentary and multi-phased, having been chopped and changed over several centuries of existence. Interpretation must often begin at roof level, generally the least changed part of a building structurally though sometimes bewilderingly subdivided. The Bishop's Palace, usefully described here with the Cathedral Barn, is the most striking and earliest example of survival at roof level. However, as this book shows, Hereford retains other splendid medieval roofs, notably at the Booth Hall where carvings of tonsured clerics, hands clasped in prayer, delightfully terminate the false hammer-beams of the later fifteenth-century trusses.

There are twenty-four case-studies, some more rewarding than others. Highlights include, satisfyingly, several canonical halls with glorious roofs that have now been tree-ring dated: at 20 Church Street (crown posts, 1320d), Harley Court (elaborate but still hidden, 1431d), and 29 Castle Street (archbraced with possible 'fleurons' to the cusped windbraces, after 1419). The early-modern buildings are often fragmentary but two relatively complete seventeenth-century tradesmen's houses have been identified: the residences of John Jones, carrier, and John Jones, butcher. The carrier's dwelling was a relatively simple but probably characteristic two-unit house (hall and inner-room with attic chambers) in the suburbs. The butcher was sufficiently prosperous to complete in 1621 the house now known as The Old House, the only survivor of the rows of High Town, and justly celebrated for its flamboyant timber detail. Shops and workshops are largely absent from this study; the authors note that it was difficult to access the cellars and undercrofts that originally served as taverns and trading basements. However, the warehouse with six-tier framing at the rear of 10–11 High Town, interpreted as a wool store, is a notable seventeenth-century commercial building converted to housing. The case-studies conclude with a discussion (inexplicably lacking a plan) of The Mansion House, the oldest brick-built house in Hereford, which marks the end of the flamboyant urban timber-framing tradition in the later seventeenth century.

Hereford usefully joins studies of historic housing in Shrewsbury, Ludlow and Presteigne, to mention a few towns only a ride away from the medieval cathedral city. The editors discuss the historical and architectural contexts of their selected buildings, but this book is essentially a stand-alone study of Hereford and readers will make their own comparisons with other towns. It has to be said that the extended architectural descriptions of the case-studies are not easily digestible. As always, a picture is worth a thousand words and there are valuable (if sometimes speculative) reconstruction drawings by Bryan Byron. Much richness is revealed here but this is not a comprehensive study; it is good to know that more probably remains to be discovered behind relatively late facades.

RCAHMW, Aberystwyth RICHARD SUGGETT

THE WORLD OF THE NEWPORT MEDIEVAL SHIP. TRADE, POLITICS AND SHIPPING IN THE MID-FIFTEENTH CENTURY. Edited by Evan T. Jones and Richard Stone. 157 × 235 mm. xix + 276 pp. 33 illustrations. University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 2018. ISBN 978 1 78683 263 4. Price £29.99.

The World of the Newport Ship is an excellent collection of essays reflecting, at its core, the body of research presented at a two-day conference convened at the University of Bristol in July 2014 to promote research both about and contextualising the 'Newport Medieval Ship' discovered on the west bank of the river Usk in June 2002. The 161 ton, lapstrake construction ship built in Spain, tightly dated with tree-ring data to a couple of years either side of 1450, was discovered by chance after a cofferdam isolated part of the riverbank in preparation for the construction of a new theatre. After a battle between a reluctant council and enthusiastic general public the ship was recovered and is undergoing preservation, though it has yet to be seen if aspirations for a museum will be realized.

The volume is introduced (chapter 1) by Evan Jones, who conveys the tenor and content of the Bristol University conference, including the thrust of those papers that did not become part of the edited volume, making a case for the value of the Newport Medieval Ship. Chapter 2, by Nigel Nailing and Toby Jones, conveys the detailed archaeology of Newport Medieval Ship in manner approachable to the layman. This covers the ship, as found (it was undergoing repairs when abandoned), its construction and small-finds evidence of life on board. The rest of the volume, in contrast, comprises a collection reflecting 'the world of the Newport ship'. That is to say, less cryptically, chapters 3 to 10 comprise a very tight set of essays on aspects of commercial and maritime life in the late medieval Severn Sea, or Bristol Channel. Chapters 11 and 12 offer continental perspectives on Iberian and Atlantic-Mediterranean trade.

The findings presented on the 'world of the Newport ship' are too numerous and diverse to summarise in their entirety, but, as is customary, some highlights are as follows. Chapter 3, by Ian Friel, investigates 'the rise and fall of the big ship, 1400–1520', demonstrating that while 'big' ships of 150 tons or more grew in importance in the early fifteenth century, the loss of the Gascon wine trade from 1453 and the introduction of the caravel prompted the disappearance of the big ship by the sixteenth century. Chapter 4, by Susan Rose, surveys violence at sea, concluding that piracy was particularly problematic in *c.*1450 but abated somewhat after the loss of Gascony in 1453. Chapter 5, by Bob Trett, assesses medieval Newport and its sea trade, highlighting the importance of maritime trade, mainly on smaller ships sailing to Bristol and smaller local ports; it is a fair small-town study still badly needed for many of the boroughs of Wales. Chapter 6, by Ralph Griffiths, does an excellent job of assessing the natural and human hazards of sailing the Severn Sea, emphasizing how fifteenth-century political machinations added their own maritime hazards and opportunities. Chapter 7, by Peter Fleming, surveys 'urban networks and connections' from a mainly Bristolian perspective, but sheds considerable light also on the urban network of south Wales and the movement of persons as well as goods. Chapter 8, by Evan Jones, attempts to set out a new methodology for assessing medieval shipping, again based on Bristolian records, looking at tonnage by destination, among other factors. Chapter 9, by Wendy Childs, again uses Bristolian records to look at the commodities, market stability, the use of safe conducts and other factors affecting Bristol's maritime trade. Chapter 10, by Richard Stone, looks yet again at Bristol's overseas trade, using the city's 'Particular Customs Accounts', uncovering patterns in trade, such as the seasonality of trade to France, Ireland and the Iberian Peninsula. Chapter 11, by Hilario Casado Alonso and Flávio Miranda, finally breaks free, mostly, from the pattern of Bristol-based articles to instead look at the Iberian economy and exchange with north-west Europe as a whole, but with a case study of Iberian-Bristolian trade. Of most interest, it covers aspects of Iberian population growth and its indirect relationship with the expansion of Iberian trade. Finally Chapter 12, by Francesco Guidi-Bruscoli, surveys the movement of ships into and out of the Mediterranean, making particularly good use of the Datini letters to track the speed of travel of ships and the presence of Mediterranean ships in northern European waters. The general thrust of the chapter is to emphasise the connectedness of European, Levantine and even North African ports.

Overall, the scholarship is of a very high standard throughout, and it serves to emphasize the richness of the source material for late medieval maritime trade in south-west Britain and Iberia. There is though something of a disconnection between the great pride of the Friends of the Newport Ship in the significance of the archaeological remains as a treasure of Newport and of South Wales, and the dominance of Bristolian research in the volume. On the one hand, that in no way degrades the importance of the good scholarship, but it highlights the broader issue of how dreadfully under-researched the economic history of South Wales (and Wales in general) is, when compared to south-west England. As amply illustrated by the chapters by Trett and Griffiths, there is robust source material available for fifteenth-century south

Wales, which makes it all the more frustrating that the world of the Newport Medieval Ship is here effectively cast as a Bristolian one.

Swansea University MATHEW STEVENS

THE PARISH AND THE CHAPEL IN MEDIEVAL BRITAIN AND NORWAY. By Sarah E. Thomas. 160 × 241 mm. xiv + 218 pp. 67 illustrations. The Boydell Press Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2018. ISBN 978 1 78327 314 0. Price £60.00.

CHURCH MONUMENTS IN SOUTH WALES, c.1230–1547. By Rhianydd Biebrach. 174 × 247 mm. × + 212 pp. 59 illustrations. The Boydell Press Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2017. ISBN 978 1 78327 264 8. Price £60.00.

It is rare, at least in this review editor's experience, for any laudatory remarks about the publisher to appear in a review, other perhaps than to comment on the positives and negatives of the editorial process or the quality of the photographic reproduction. As readers most of us perhaps take for granted the publishing process, perhaps acknowledging the appearance of a familiar publishing house, or less frequently puzzling briefly over the continued absence of a highly respected publisher from the list of reviewed volumes. However, the appearance, a year apart, of the two books cited above, following David Stephenson's *Medieval Powys* (reviewed in *Archaeologia Cambrensis* in 2017), allows us to applaud the policy of the long-established East Anglian publishing house, Boydell and Brewer, through their imprint The Boydell Press, in delivering admirable and academically strong research volumes in an attractive and well-edited format.

At first glance Sarah Thomas' slim volume on *The Parish and the Chapel* has little immediate relevance to Wales. The outcome of a post-doctoral research project at the University of Aberdeen, the case study areas that illuminate her monograph are from more northerly regions — the diocese of Sodor which covered the Hebrides in Scotland together with the Isle of Man, the diocese of Galloway on the south-western Scottish mainland, the archdeaconry of the East Riding of Yorkshire and the diocese of Bergen in Norway — with just one in southern England, the archdeaconry of Cornwall. Wales does not feature and nor for that matter does Ireland. Explaining Thomas' selection is unnecessary in this brief review, other than to note that amongst her primary aims are to assess the level of Scandinavian influence in the British Isles on the creation and maintenance of chapels, both those that fell within the parochial system in the high and late medieval periods and those that were independent of it, and also to examine the impact on the religious landscape of the population decline resulting from the catastrophes of the fourteenth century.

Thomas identifies four main groups of chapels distinguished by their functions and their users. Firstly there are the dependent chapels, usually referred to as chapels-of-ease, which were integral elements of their parishes serving communities that were distant from their parish churches; these might or, more commonly, might not be allowed to exercise rights over baptism and burial. On the evidence of the tables that are inserted in the text these were by far the most common type of chapel. Then there were private chapels attached to castles, manor houses and monastic establishments which served select or restricted groups but like the dependent chapels had official or semi-official status, their establishment dependant on the consent of the local bishop. In contrast, locational chapels were constructed in specific places of particular significance, whether at centres of assembly, on travel routes, at hazardous locations such as river crossings, or in places of historic significance such as battlefields. Finally, cult chapels were devoted

to the worship of a particular saints and like the locational chapels they attracted a more diverse range of users. Each of the four groups is allotted its own chapter, sandwiched between a wide-ranging preliminary section that examines and elucidates the role of parishes and parish churches in the community, their origins and functions and the importance of tithes, and a chapter which seeks to determine whether the emergence and success of chapels followed a consistent pattern across the case study areas or varied according to the locality.

That Wales receives virtually no attention in Sarah Thomas' study, other than an intriguing reference to an obscure paper by David Williams on monastic grange chapels, is regrettable though understandable. But in compensation we have a particularly useful handbook that can only encourage other researchers to adopt her approach in other regions. The academic study of the relationship of church and chapel has been strongly influenced by such works as Norman Pound's *History of the English Parish* (2000) and Nicholas Orme's articles (1996–2006), heavily Anglo-centric studies that promise only limited assistance to Welsh researchers. Of her study areas, it is significant too that it is Yorkshire's East Riding which is consistently singled out as different from the rest, in generally being better documented, in the absence of insular saints' dedications, in its pattern of church dedications, in the absence of cult chapels and sparsity of locational chapels and so on. In the search for chapel identities in western Britain, Thomas identifies information sources such as papal petitions, episcopal registers and inquisitions post mortem to complement the more obvious recourse to early modern travellers' accounts and archaeological research. Further, in her first chapter devoted to 'the role of parishes and parish churches in the community', she covers such diverse matters as the financial support of churches through tithes, the occurrence of detached portions of parishes, the boundaries of parishes and their physical marking, their size, and the various functions of parish churches. There is much here that looks to gel with medieval practices in Wales, and it is useful to be able to identify similar trends along the western seaways. Clearly written and mercifully free of academic jargon, this is a volume well-worth having on the shelf.

And so to *Church Monuments in South Wales*. In 1968 Colin Gresham published his magisterial *Medieval Stone Carving in North Wales*. It has taken fifty years for a full study of the church monuments in the more southerly half of the country to appear and for this we can now thank Rhianydd Biebrach for transforming her doctoral thesis into this attractive and authoritative volume, enhanced by some excellent photographs.

Medieval monuments cannot be claimed as commonplace in the churches of the seven historic counties that here constitute south Wales. On the evidence of the distribution map there are clusters in the churches on the Glamorgan coastal plain and in southern Pembrokeshire, a more diffuse spread in Monmouthshire but not a single example appears to have been recorded in Cardiganshire and only one in Radnorshire. The author puts this into perspective by establishing that there are more effigies, either extant or reliably attested from earlier records, in Somerset (213) than across south Wales in its entirety (194).

Effigies made their earliest appearance in the thirteenth century, usually as memorials to clerics, though important secular magnates soon adopted the habit, primarily amongst the families of Anglo-Norman descent, rather than those who were native Welsh. Some monuments were carved from imported stone, primarily sourced from particular quarries in north Somerset and south Gloucestershire, yet there are unanswered questions as to whether the stone was transported in blocks to be carved in a Welsh workshop or shipped as finished products from English workshops. Some monuments are sophisticated carvings, others decidedly cruder in appearance. Prior to the fourteenth century, local quarries also provided stone: monuments in St David's were carved from Caerbwdi sandstone which was also used in the cathedral building, the raw material being quarried on the coast only a short distance away to the south-east. Although monument numbers from the fifteenth century are limited, the Black Death and possibly too the

Glyndŵr rebellion half a century later seem to have destroyed these local industries. Where monuments exist they are imports from the West Country and in alabaster from Nottinghamshire, the latter much preferred at the end of the Middle Ages.

Later chapters reveal how current academic approaches are enhancing our perceptions of church monuments: the analysis of patronal involvement with its emphasis on the display of status; the circumstances in which monuments were erected, whether memorialising a family line on the verge of extinction where only an heiress remained, or alternatively where a family was elevated within the social hierarchy through land acquisition or political aggrandisement; and the limited visibility of the Welsh gentry with only one effigy having a Welsh inscription — that of the chronicler Adam Usk, buried in Usk Priory in 1430 — and with emerging families of Welsh descent beginning to emulate their English counterparts only in the fifteenth century. What becomes evident is that Wales was in the mainstream of monument development and English trends were followed in Wales, as with the fifteenth-century feature of cadaver effigies. Then, too, there is the 'after-life' of church monuments, their damage and destruction not just testimony to the iconoclasm of the Reformation during the Tudor era and the Puritanism of the seventeenth century, but to eighteenth-century neglect, as with Llandaff Cathedral, and nineteenth-century restoration 'clearances' as practiced by some architects.

If there is a slight concern, it is in the reader's uncertainty over terminology, as to what constitutes a church monument in different sections of the book. Information derived from cross slabs is used selectively (p. 23), brasses are mentioned in passing in the text but don't appear in the index, and on occasions it is unclear whether the term church monuments is synonymous only with effigial monuments, or covers the entire spectrum of commemorative forms including cross slabs and brasses as well as alabaster memorials. No catalogue is provided and it is difficult not to contrast Biebrach's work with Nigel Saul's comparable volume on English monuments published in 2009 which carried a list of pre-Reformation civilian effigies as an appendix. And as noted above Cardiganshire as mapped appears to have none, but nowhere is this stated — the county's single entry in the index refers only to the historical development of the March — and it is necessary to turn to the relevant Pevsner Architectural Guide to confirm the absence of medieval monuments of any form.

Gresham and Briebrach's studies, then, are rather different. Contiguous in area, they are separated by a lifetime of evolving research priorities. Gresham's is a hefty tome with at its core a detailed corpus of all the monuments known to him in north Wales in the 1960s, a time before Pevsner's county guides became available in print. Yet it remains an indispensable volume for the researcher and for church archaeologists such as this reviewer, even if the work of Brian and Moira Gittos reported in the pages of our journal has revealed that as an accurate guide it is not as flawless as was once believed. Briebrach's study, by contrast is in keeping with developments witnessed in contemporary analytical and academic studies of English monuments; core material, such a prominent feature in Gresham, is taken as understood, and Briebrach's study moves us forward to the multi-disciplinary interrogation and understanding of that data. But at the end there is a gentle irony in the fact that Gresham's volume is far too hefty to lug around the churches of north Wales seeking out the monuments that it describes, whilst Briebrach's book is much more manageable, physically, yet doesn't hold the information that could make it a vital accessory in any tour of the churches of south Wales.

University of Chester BOB SILVESTER

THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF LATER MEDIEVAL ARCHAEOLOGY IN BRITAIN. Edited by Christopher M. Gerrard and Alejandra Gutiérrez. 176 × 252 mm. xlii + 1058 pp. 214 illustrations. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2018. ISBN 978 0 19 874471 9. Price £110.00.

This handbook, like others in the series, is a heavyweight volume in many senses. It weighs in at over 2kg, so bed-time reading is difficult, and at 1058 pages long it would take quite a few nights to get through. There are some 59 contributors, their names reading like a who's who of British medieval archaeology. It complements the Anglo-Saxon handbook produced in 2011, which is of similar size and content, and there are a wide range of other Oxford handbooks which expand on many of the themes covered in this volume.

Despite its length, it does not aim to offer full coverage of the archaeology of the period 1066 to 1550 (its definition of the 'later medieval period'), but rather snapshots of themes. For example, you will not find a description of medieval pottery styles, but you will find an interesting discussion of medieval vessels in the chapter entitled 'cooking, dining and drinking' which falls within the wider theme of 'An Archaeology of the Senses'. The introductory section provides an overview and a discussion of methods, theory and the contribution that written records make to our interpretation of medieval archaeology. Theoretical approaches are also often discussed in more detail under each of the themes. A volume of this size, with this number of authors, is very difficult, if not impossible, to present as a single coherent narrative. However, by use of the excellent index and the very extensive bibliographies following each section, it is possible to cross-reference subjects, and to undertake further related research on each of the topics.

The book is divided into ten parts, or themes, each with an initial overview, followed by a series of more detailed chapters by individual authors. The themes include theory and methods; the countryside; rural settlement; towns; power and display; crafts, industry and objects; religion and belief; an archaeology of the senses; growing up and growing old; and trade and exchange. The choice of themes reflects current thinking and trends in British archaeology. Whilst the idea of the 'life course' has now entered mainstream archaeology, the archaeological interpretation of the senses is relatively new, and its inclusion as part VIII in the volume is to be welcomed.

There is little doubt that the book is a tremendous resource, and its strengths lie in its up-to-date coverage, its discursive text, and wide-ranging references. The handbook has numerous uses, and though it is unlikely anyone would read it from cover to cover, the short narrative text which makes up each of the chapters does provide a very useful overview of current thinking on a very wide range of topics, whilst the extensive bibliographies encourage further study. It is, surely, the most complete single source reference work on the topic yet to be produced.

It is stated in the preface that the handbook is not an encyclopaedia, but that authors have been encouraged to synthesise the data, and 'explore newer debates'. Inevitably, the way this has been achieved varies from chapter to chapter, but in general this approach works well, though this reviewer found chapter 14 'Perceptions of medieval settlement' and much of Part VIII 'An Archaoelogy of the Senses' particularly enjoyable in this respect, whereas other chapters tended to rely more heavily on established ideas.

However, a volume of this size with so many authors inevitably carries problems of narrative, and it is often difficult to find a specific subject, despite the very thorough indexing. Climate change, for example, is discussed in several chapters, though most of these references would be impossible to find without the help of the index. The most comprehensive coverage is in Peter Brown's chapter on 'Coping with Disaster'. Oddly, however, this chapter doesn't discuss the Black Death, and in order to assemble any coherent ideas on the impact of the plague of 1348–50 it is necessary to follow over fifteen references to different chapters, many of which contain little more than a sentence, although the primary discussion on

the Black Death as a disease (but not covering its impact) is in Chapter 52 'Medieval Medicine, Public Health, and the Medieval Hospital'.

This multiple inclusion of topics can also result in an odd mixture of bibliographic references, some referring to earlier works, others to more recent papers. Whilst a common bibliography for the whole volume would save some space, the provision of a bibliography after each chapter does make the book much easier to use.

Readers of this journal, who may have a primary interest in the archaeology of Wales, are, unfortunately, not particularly well-served by the handbook. Some authors are familiar with the medieval archaeology of Wales, and when that is the case, as in the chapters on the pattern of medieval settlement and peasant housing, then coverage is appropriate. The chapter on field systems, however, contains nothing beyond a reference to infield-outfield practice, and an incorrect interpretation of the term *Tir Corddlan* referenced to G. R. L. Jones (rather than G. R. J. Jones), though this is one of few typographical errors noted in the work. There is no discussion of the system of Welsh courts (*llysoedd*) and their demesne townships (*maerdrefi*) which provisioned them with the assistance of bond townships, nor of the burgeoning Welsh towns such as Llanfaes and Nefyn. The native Welsh castles barely feature, nor the impact of the Norman invasions on a native Welsh society and economy.

The handbook, however, is a major achievement. It is as clear a synthesis of current thinking on later medieval archaeology as one could hope to achieve, and will be of use to all students of the period, whether archaeologists or those in other disciplines who wish for an authoritative guide to interpret and inform future studies.

Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, Bangor ANDREW DAVIDSON

WELSH WITCHES. NARRATIVES OF WITCHCRAFT AND MAGIC FROM 16TH AND 17TH CENTURY WALES. By Richard Suggett. 160 × 241 mm. 249 pp. 11 illustrations. Atramentous Press, 2018. No ISBN. Price £55.00.

A decade ago Richard Suggett published an excellent history of magic and witchcraft in Wales. Based on an intensive study of unpublished assize records, his book showed that, during the two centuries when it was a capital crime, only thirty-four cases of alleged witchcraft, involving forty-one suspects, came to the Court of Great Sessions. Only eight of these cases resulted in convictions and only five persons were sentenced to death. His new book adds one more suspect to these figures, but his main point still stands. There was no witch hunt in Wales; and there were relatively few suggestions that witches were devil-worshippers in the manner described by learned demonologists elsewhere.

Yet though Welsh witch-trials were rare by comparison with those in England and lowland Scotland, they are particularly interesting because their highly informative pre-trial documents still survive. These depositions, made by witnesses in response to interrogations by justices of the peace, flesh out the bald indictments for witchcraft by narrating the circumstances in which they came to be made. Such evidence is usually lacking for English witch-trials, whose historians have to depend heavily on the occasional pamphlet accounts of particular cases. Richard Suggett has therefore had the admirable idea of publishing the full text of these Welsh depositions. All of them are in English, most of them translated from Welsh at the time. He also provides a calendar of witchcraft cases at the Court of Great Sessions, including not just indictments for the crime, but also actions for slander brought by those who claimed to have been defamed by malicious accusations of witchcraft. His accompanying commentary, however, though perceptive in itself, goes over much of the ground already covered in his previous book.

The depositions include allegations of killing or injuring people and animals by occult means. This is what historians normally mean by witchcraft. But Richard Suggett's other cases are prosecutions of 'cunning' men or women for practising love magic or claiming to be able to heal or to find lost goods or, more vaguely, engaging in 'enchantment' or 'sorcery'. By bracketing these different activities under the single heading of 'witchcraft' Suggett blurs the familiar distinction between black and white magic. In doing so, however, he has a good deal of contemporary opinion on his side. Many educated clergy of the time believed that the cunning folk were only able to help their clients because they were tacitly in league with the devil and therefore as deserving of punishment as those who murdered by magical means. This was the view of 'T. P.', the author of *Cas gan Gythrau* (1711), a valuable account of popular magic in early eighteenth-century Wales, edited in 2015 by Lisa Tallis for the South Wales Record Society. Similarly, many ordinary people assumed that the magical powers of healing and harming went together: it was not uncommon for charmers and soothsayers to find themselves accused of maleficent witchcraft.

This overlap is well illustrated by the case of Gwen ferch Ellis, to whose story Richard Suggett devotes a separate chapter, although he has already told it in his earlier book. A poor woman living near Abergele, Gwen supplemented her income by treating sick animals with medicines and quasi-religious charms. She also had an extensive practice as a magical healer of men and women. More sinister was the allegation that she had a familiar, 'a great fly of the bigness of an umble bee, great and ugly to behold' (p. 64). Moreover, two of the people with whom she had quarrelled had become lame and a third had died. For that she was hanged in 1594. Her case is notable because it threatened to incriminate Jane Conway, a member of a gentry family, two of whose sons, Robert and Henry Holland, both published anti-witchcraft tracts in the 1590s. They too thought that white witches were as bad as black ones.

The depositions are highly informative about the reasons which led contemporaries to accuse others of doing harm by magical means. They reveal that witchcraft was sometimes assumed to go in families. They also show that reputed witches were greatly feared. To injure or quarrel with one of them was to invite subsequent misfortune; and it was common to give them alms, 'out of feare [they] might doe them or theire cattell hurt'. Welsh accusations of witchcraft frequently conformed to the familiar English pattern whereby the suspected witch was someone who had been refused charity by her accuser.

The depositions also reveal the ubiquity in early modern Wales of cunning men and women. Charmers, healers, fortune-tellers, blessers and cursers were widely consulted. Some claimed that their healing powers were a gift of God. Others, including some obvious confidence tricksters, claimed to obtain their knowledge from the fairies, known in Welsh as '*y tylwyth teg*' ('the fair family'). This obvious translation of the English word 'fairy', suggests that the belief in these little people was not indigenous, but had been imported from England.

Finally, the depositions are valuable because they offer much incidental information about the social life of the time. They show how, in an age without safety matches, it was a common practice to fetch fire from a neighbour's house. They also reveal that a goose was already regarded as the appropriate dish for a Christmas dinner, that a bad boy's idea of fun was to piss down an old woman's chimney, and that some families slept with their ducks at the foot of their bed (p. 174). These documents are an indispensable source for the study of early modern Wales, and not just for those interested in the history of witchcraft.

All Souls College, Oxford KEITH THOMAS

A WILDER WALES. TRAVELLERS' TALES 1610–1831. By David Lloyd Owen. 145 × 223 mm. 457 pp. Parthian, Cardigan, 2017. ISBN 978 1910901960. Price £20.00.

Accounts by visitors to Wales and, more grandly, travellers' 'Tours' are currently the subject of much academic research which is readily accessible on various websites, as are the images produced in travellers' publications — mainly engravings of castles, abbeys, rivers and bridges, country seats, and scenic 'views'. The subject has its own journal: *Studies in Travel Writing*. Whilst aware of all this current work David Lloyd Owen makes it clear that he is his own man. His career background is that of an environmental biologist, an equity analyst and now a consultant on water policies. He describes himself as 'an engaged returnee' to Wales, specifically the Ceredigion of his childhood.

Disavowing any academic 'discourse', Owen has produced what might be seen by some as an old-fashioned book of extracts of travellers' accounts, grouped under thematic chapter headings. There is only one monochrome illustration opposite the title page, appropriately the frontispiece of the *Cambrian Register* for 1794, a publication intended 'to lay the literary treasures of the Ancient Britons before the world'. Consequently with no need for heavy coated paper, Parthian — a new small publishing house in Cardigan — has produced a nicely bound volume almost of pocket-book size. David Lloyd Owen's purpose in the book is two-fold: to encourage readers to go from the extracts to the original accounts and, more didactically: 'to appreciate the generosity of spirit and open-mindedness reflected in many of these passages'. Certainly this aim is helped by not including satires and polemics. He further limits his choices by omitting specifically historical, or natural historical or geological accounts which thus robs him of the chance, for example, to extract accounts by Richard Fenton and his fellow traveller Sir Richard Colt-Hoare of their journeys and antiquarian investigations. The author feels that the tendency to assume that English writers visited Wales only to comment disparagingly has been exaggerated. The choice of a 'cut-off' date of 1831 also helps his second aim. It does not exclude accounts of industrial Wales but, he asserts, precedes the political unrest and popular movements of the later 1830s and 1840s and the official hostility to the Welsh language unleashed by the *Brad y Llyfrau Gleision*/The Treachery of the Blue Books.

Owen cites Diana Luft's list of 153 English travel books dealing with Wales, numerous only in the second half of the eighteenth century and even more numerous in the early nineteenth century. Overwhelmingly these were written by non-Welsh speaking Englishmen with only two female travellers (Celia Fiennes in the seventeenth century and Mrs Morgan in the early nineteenth) included. This makes the accounts by Welshmen, mainly Thomas Pennant, the main subject of the current Welsh/Scottish 'Curious Travellers' project, especially valuable. Owen gives extracts from thirty-eight accounts by thirty-six authors.

Most local historians (including this reviewer!) are accustomed to using the better-known and readily accessible travellers' accounts as quarries for their own locale and do not read the 'tour' from beginning to end. In structuring his book of extracts around a number of themes David Lloyd Owen provides a bridge for the general reader to the complete works. There are eleven chapters in all — 'Early Visitations' to begin and 'A Riposte' to end. Between them are thematic sections such as 'Setting Out', 'The Journey', 'The Sublime, Romantic and Picturesque', ending with two chapters on North and South Wales respectively. The reader is further guided and informed by the author's introductory paragraphs to the extracts and captions taken from them. There are short biographies of the various authors. The summaries (as for example that prefacing Chapter 7 on Religion) do not assume any prior knowledge of the subject by the reader and are not burdened by references or indeed equivocation but are succinct and informative.

There can be no doubt that despite their stylistic tropes, the prejudices, preconceptions and moralising, the authors of these tours and descriptions of Wales were 'curious travellers'. There is an immediacy and sense of discovery to many of their descriptions. The mountain scenery excited them. Their encounters

with the Welsh, especially the *gwerin,* surprised, sometimes horrified but often intrigued and impressed them. In the concluding chapter ('A Riposte') the apt choice of Theophilus Jones' ('Cymro' of the *Cambrian Register*) review of contemporary travellers' accounts of Wales provides criticisms with which modern readers can agree. 'Whether it be from a want of knowledge of the language, or from too transient an acquaintance with the inhabitants . . . we have nothing like a resemblance to the men and manners of Wales'. Jones excepts Pennant from his criticism but has some trenchant comments of Samuel Pratt's *Gleanings through Wales* (1795), excerpts from which have been included in the chapters 'On Setting Out', 'The Journey', and 'Manners and Customs'. A concentration on the difficulties of travel, the costs and quality of accommodation and somewhat contrived encounters are, however, the stuff of most travel literature, even today's often more introspective accounts of journeys immersed in the culture of the country visited. David Lloyd Owen is on occasion not able to refrain from his own criticism of these self-confident English gentlemen on their 'Tours' as in his preface to one of the many accounts that comment on the poverty of the peasantry encountered in the hills and mountains of both North and South Wales: 'There was little more reassuring to a traveller than to know that people were content with their destitution, doubly so when they were not distracted by "the habits of thinking" '. The collective value, for this reviewer, of the various accounts of life in the hills and mountains of Wales is to put some flesh on the bones of the last decade's archaeological study of the deserted upland settlements of Wales. Particularly notable (despite the moralising,) is the extract from John Evans' *Letters written during a tour through South Wales, in the year 1803* describing in detail a Welsh 'cot' near the Teifi pools, and conversation (in Welsh) with its owner 'a stout fresh-coloured woman with dark sparkling eyes and black hair' and her children 'though thinly clad, ruddy and smiling'.

This book provides an excellent introduction for those unfamiliar with these travellers' accounts. The author's comments are both informative and thought-provoking and complement the extracts given. This a book to take on travels and to dip into — or indeed to devour — it is very readable!

Carmarthen HEATHER JAMES

CHARLEY'S WAR. THE DIARY OF CHARLES PARKINSON HEARE, 2ND BATTALION, THE MONMOUTHSHIRE REGIMENT, 1914–1919. Edited by Christabel Hutchings and Richard Frame. 148 × 210 mm. xvi + 190 pp. 8 illustrations. South Wales record Society, Swansea, 2018. ISBN 978 1 9998326 2 9. Price £12.00.

The centenary of the November 1918 armistice (or 'twenty year truce' as Joffre called it) saw a huge range of commemorations of many kinds. For Wales, and Monmouthshire in particular, one very worthwhile example was the publication of the journal of Charley Heare, a private soldier in the Second Battalion of the Monmouthshire Regiment. This was a Territorial unit, descended from the Victorian Rifle Volunteers. The older county regiment, the Monmouthshire Light Infantry (43rd Foot), had become the First Battalion of the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry in 1881 and went on to fight at Pegasus Bridge on D-Day. After a foreword by Professor Chris Williams, a very thorough introduction sets Charley Heare, his diary and the history of the Second Monmouthshires in the wider context of the war and of Charley's life story.

The second battalion of the Monmouthshires was raised around Pontypool and Blaenavon. Charles Heare was born in Griffithstown near Pontypool in 1891. He left school aged ten, later to work as a 'collier's helper' in Tirpentwys colliery. In 1911 he joined the Territorials. When war broke out he was in summer camp in Weston-super-Mare. My father, at the age of eight, made the identical journey back

to Newport from Weston and an interrupted summer holiday, since my grandfather was also a reservist. Charley describes the 'excitement everywhere', with crowds cheering his train at stations. His tragically optimistic comment 'all looking forward to a grand holiday and hoping it will last a month of two' (and the war would be 'over by Christmas') shows that the journal, though written up after the war, was based on contemporary notes.

The horrors of the succeeding four-year stalemate do not dull with repetition, though the diary makes plain that the ever present lice and mud were an equal tribulation. Often the best known memoirs of the war are by officers, middle class and frequently privately educated. Though similar accounts by private soldiers also exist, this fluent and vividly written text gives a fresh first-hand perspective to such mythologized events as the 1914 Christmas truce or the first day of the Battle of the Somme, though Charley's spelling sometimes needed correction by the editors.

Charley is shown on the book cover with his bicycle. The bicycle may well have saved his life, for he was given a job as an orderly or runner, carrying messages between officers. Though still highly dangerous, this saved him from the suicidal mass assaults of the war. His duties brought him into contact with soldiers of every rank, including generals. His relationships with individual officers and generals varied, though his differing experiences provide a useful corrective to some more clichéd accounts. The editors have added to the value of the book by identifying in footnotes individuals in the Second Monmouthshires mentioned by Charley, emphasising how the war affected all classes of society within the county. Colonel Alfred Bowen of Usk, killed in March 1917, was the father of a future President of the Cambrians (himself wounded whilst serving with the regiment).

Charley survived the war and a photograph shows him, bowler-hatted and with medals up, though unemployed for the previous six years, chatting to Edward VIII during the King's visit to South Wales before his abdication. Strictly speaking, his journal is a memoir, written after the war in a large exercise book, rather than a diary written up each day. It was probably based on diaries or contemporary notes however, since the chronology is accurate and there is little hindsight.. The only errors noted by the editors concern anecdotes which could easily have been detached from their contexts. Charley died in 1985 at the age of 93. At the launch of the book, his original manuscript was presented by his grandson to Gwent Archives, for permanent preservation. The South Wales Record Society has performed a notable service by making this moving account available to the wider public.

Caerphilly JEREMY KNIGHT

THE TRADITION. A NEW HISTORY OF WELSH ART 1400–1990. By Peter Lord. 235 × 278 mm. 400 pp. 405 illustrations. Parthian, Cardigan, 2016. ISBN 978 1 910409 62 6. Price £40.00.

The Tradition is a landmark in Welsh art history, a single-volume synthesis of more than two decades of research that began with the Visual Culture of Wales project led by Peter Lord at the Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies. It is a beautifully made hardback, replete with excellently reproduced, well-placed reproductions.

The scope differs slightly from the three volumes published as *The Visual Culture of Wales*, now out of print. Rather than include the medieval period in full it begins with the destruction wrought by both sides during the Glyndŵr revolt and it extends onwards by thirty years to add important material about state patronage and changing practice from 1960 to 1990.

The focus is chiefly painting and sculpture, widening where relevant to printing and photography, and touching on high-status furniture, the graphic arts and stained glass. It does not venture into folk art or the

distinctive craft traditions of Wales. It takes a necessarily liberal approach in determining what might be Welsh. It admits works commissioned outside Wales by Welsh patrons, such as Memling's altarpiece for Sir John Dwnn, and works by Welsh-born artists who spent most of their lives elsewhere, such as Penry Williams in Rome and Gwen John in Paris. It also gives space to visiting artists whose engagement with Welsh subjects was influential — for example Turner, Sutherland and David Jones — and to non-Welsh artists who, like Henry Clarence Whaite, Josef Herman and David Tinker, made lives in Wales.

There are as many ways of writing art history as there are of writing history of any other kind — psychoanalytical approaches, feminist approaches, studies of iconography, style, technique, and so on. M. Wynn Thomas highlights this in his foreword to *The Tradition*: 'In its mode of procedure it is clearly indebted to that revolutionary turn in art history towards the material, social and cultural.' It is a materialist history, highly informative about art as a mirror of society, about the wealthy and powerful who were able to buy or commission it, and about the origins and fortunes of artists. The claim in the foreword that the book teaches us how to read the language of images needs qualifying. It is right in so far as to understand images requires us to know why they were made and in what conditions, and how they were received. However, 'reading' the images themselves, their idiom, expression, motifs or composition, or how they may move or inspire today's viewers, is outside its remit.

Stimulating themes rise through the factually rich narrative, which draws extensively on primary sources. Peter Lord identifies portraiture as the foundation of gentry patronage for 300 years after the Reformation; he finds Tudor artists to be the first recognised as not just tradesmen but occupying a hierarchy of talent. He quantifies the predominance of Wales as a destination for landscape artists during the French Wars: in 1805 the Society for Painters in Watercolours exhibition showed fifty-two Welsh views compared with ten of Scotland and one of the Lake District. He charts the rise of artisan portraitists in the nineteenth century and the effect on them of the coming of photography; he relates visual art to the cultural revolution of Welsh nonconformity. He explains the interventions of the Arts Council in the 1960s and 1970s as driving an outward-looking agenda that marginalised Welsh imagery.

The fascinating idea of 'tradition' is stated squarely on the cover, so it is a surprise to find it not advanced in any over-arching thesis, especially given the author's contributions elsewhere as theoretician and polemicist. The chronological narrative has no introduction or conclusion in the conventional sense (what is titled an introduction is a preface and acknowledgements). Fortunately, Peter has elucidated his intent in talks, in particular alluding to how the recognition of Colonial-era art in the mid-twentieth century grew cultural roots for the United States. Above all, the title is a rebuttal to David Bell's assertion sixty years ago in the first history of Welsh art that 'at no time since the Norman Conquest, at any rate, has the Welshman had any visual artistic tradition'. Bell was widely interpreted as meaning that there was no tradition in Wales of making or acquiring art, though he was speaking principally in terms of art historical 'schools', of the handing-down of styles developmentally from one artist to the next. *The Tradition* makes it clear that Welsh people have long been making and acquiring art. It also goes some way towards teasing out plural stylistic traditions, for example in the group who followed David Cox to Betws-y-coed or artists who came out of the South Wales coalfield.

Peter Lord has said a tradition depends on who constructs it, and it will change across the generations. Inevitably, different tradition-makers might feature episodes omitted, such as the early landscape tours of Francis Towne, the twentieth-century stained-glass tradition of Howard Martin, John Petts and others, the radical graphics of Paul Peter Piech or the paintings of Glenys Cour. Others might seek to distinguish the average makers of images that tell us about contemporary society from (in John Berger's terms) those who broke through the expectations of their time to be creatively exceptional; but this tradition is about a common visual culture not a canon. There is no shortage of opinion to respond to. Is there 'soapy complacency' in Gainsborough's portrait of Thomas Pennant? Can Eric Ravilious have subscribed to

a ‘nostalgic Neo-Romantic agenda’ when he painted so many modern interventions in the landscape? Collection information and a bibliography would benefit anyone who wants to see the original works of art or explore the literature — perhaps these could be added in a second edition to help coming generations keep the ideas moving on.

The Tradition should be studied by anyone interested in the art history of Wales. It has brought forth an immense new understanding of art in society that will help Welsh culture better understand itself. What is now re-found cannot so easily be forgotten.

Llanilar PETER WAKELIN

THE ARCHITECTURE OF WALES FROM THE FIRST TO THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY. By John B. Hilling. 250 × 226 mm. xvi + 302 pp. 268 illustrations. University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 2018. ISBN 978 1 78683 284 9. Price £27.00.

The Royal Society of Architects in Wales (RSAW) and the University of Wales Press have proposed a series of books on the architecture of Wales, an admirable aim in present straitened circumstances. Historical architecture in Wales has been in the recent past well served by the Royal Commission in Aberystwyth with the magisterial works of Peter Smith and Eurwyn Wiliam and exceptional monographs by such as Richard Suggett and Adam Voelcker. The Buildings of Wales series was completed with Robert Scourfield’s revision of Richard Haslam’s volume for Powys in 2014, and this journal has published important contributions on Welsh architecture, notably Stephen Hughes on the chapels of the Reverend Thomas Thomas. Modern architecture in Wales has been upheld bravely and intelligently by Patrick Hannay and *Touchstone* magazine. Where then to position a new series? The names of the editors, Mary Wrenn, Director of the RSAW, Bella Kerr, David Thomas, and Jonathan Vining, suggest an openness to architecture as it is practiced now in Wales, and the eminent names on the advisory panel — Irena Bauman, Richard Parnaby, Alan Powers, Ian Pritchard and Damian Walford Davies, reinforce this, with hints of a glance back to the twentieth century. May we therefore be looking for overviews of the current state of affairs in Welsh architecture, or studies of the late behemoths of the Welsh scene, Percy Thomas, Dale Owen, Alex Gordon?

The editors have launched the project with a general history of the architecture of Wales from the Roman occupation to the present day, by John Hilling whose *Historic Architecture of Wales* has been the standard volume on the subject since its publication in 1976. Long out of print, this was a treasure, the format and black-and-white photographs redolent of the period, the text thoughtful and measured in its progress from the beginnings to 1939. The new volume is a revision in depth, each chapter revisited and the illustrations mostly replaced in colour. Two chapters are added to continue the story from 1939, the second for the period 1985 to 2017, contributed by Simon Unwin.

The first nine chapters, covering the story up to 1700, are enhanced by plans and distribution maps, the maps telling stories at a glance — the distribution of castles and monasteries, distinguishing those of Welsh or Anglo-Norman foundation, of stone-vaulted churches (almost exclusively in South Pembrokeshire), waggon-roofs (south-east Wales and following the Usk to outliers on the Teifi and Towy), timber belfries (Powys) and saddlback towers (south Wales). Hilling highlights the highlights of medieval Wales, the carved screens, the quality of Tintern, the Margam chapterhouse, the walled towns. He sets lightly but effectively the historical context, sometimes illuminating an unexpected point, such as that the greatest houses of the greatest Welsh families of the sixteenth century are in England, those of the Herberts at Wilton and the Cecils at Burghley and Hatfield. The Herberts employed Wales’ most famous architect at

Wilton. Hilling makes a case for the lovely bridge at Llanrwst being the sole Welsh work of Inigo Jones.

Hilling follows Pevsner in looking at later architecture through building types, a valuable lens in a general survey. A disadvantage is that the work of Edward Haycock for example ends up separated in chapters on country houses and civic buildings, and some Cardiff Civic Centre buildings (the University, the National War Memorial) stray from the main group. Hilling covers particularly well the industrial buildings and planned towns, making the case for the exceptional importance of developments in Wales. The section on chapels does seem to have missed updating, reliant too much on Anthony Jones' work. The role of ministers in designing chapels is exaggerated, and some chapel architects named as important are very minor (William Gabe) while important ones are omitted (Richard Davies, Owen Morris Roberts). There is more to be said about architectural style in different denominations. More crucially omitted is the evolution of chapel interiors in the later nineteenth century — the platform pulpit, the deep galleries, the introduction of organs — as chapels grew to house not only communal worship but communal music-making.

Momentum picks up again with the civic buildings and indeed with the twentieth century. Hilling, having recently published on Cathays Park, is able to let enthusiasm loose on Cardiff's great City Hall and Law Courts combination. His description of the National Museum as 'sphinx-like', at first odd, is felicitous when combined with the photograph beneath. The inter-war civic buildings of Swansea and Newport are examined with sympathy, pushing aside the sneering comparison with fascist buildings of Italy and Germany with the neat point that the Welsh buildings pre-date both the EUR and Reich Chancellery. The new chapter on 'Late Modernist' buildings from 1940 to 1985 will surely send readers in search of things little known, the works of Bowen, Dann, Davies in North Wales, private housing estates in Dinas Powys, council housing in Cwmbran and Newtown, council schools in Anglesey and Montgomeryshire.

Some remarkable and even great public buildings appear in Simon Unwin's final chapter (written with Patrick Hannay) on 1985 to 2017; the Great Greenhouse in Carmarthenshire, the Senedd, the Millennium Centre, and the College of Music and Drama, all in Cardiff, and arts centres at Aberystwyth, Caernarfon and Ruthin. Lottery- and European-funded smaller public buildings have appeared all over Wales, some very good (the Cilgerran Wildlife Centre, the Llandegfedd Watersports Centre). The probable end of European funding bodes ill for such projects, indeed for the whole public realm in Wales. Absent from Unwin's story is public housing, withered since 1987, replaced by small private houses, modernist or futurist miniatures. The suspicion that the holiday house may be the principal vehicle for advanced architecture in Wales after 2019 is unworthy, but Unwin's 'maybe social housing will come back into favour' hardly rings with confidence. The great success of this book is that it puts these questions into the context of the long story of architecture in Wales, which is not finished.

Bradford on Avon JULIAN ORBACH

AVANKE, BEVER, CASTOR: THE STORY OF BEAVERS IN WALES. By Bryony Coles. 200 × 240 mm. 114 pp. 59 illustrations. Wetland Archaeology Research Project, Exeter, 2019. ISBN 978 0 9540224 1 9. Price £10.00.

The Wetland Archaeology Research Project at Exeter, founded by John and Bryony Coles in the 1980s is well known for its work on the archaeology of wetlands both in the UK and internationally. The understanding of this precious resource adds incomparably to our appreciation of prehistoric settlement and the skills in woodworking, fishing and housebuilding of early prehistoric people in Wales. Influenced by the Coles' work on the Somerset Levels, excavations on the Severn Levels, at Llangorse Lake crannog,

and on prehistoric and medieval trackways in Abercynafon and Llancyfelyn, to mention but a few, have opened our eyes to the importance of the study of this resource; it is immensely fragile and subject to destruction from erosion or desiccation.

This delightful and well-illustrated little book builds on this work. Since she first came across beaver-gnawed wood in the Somerset Levels, Bryony Coles has been interested in the presence of beavers in the UK, their gradual extinction and now the attempt to reintroduce the animals in selected regions. The book presents a study of the beaver itself with its well-known characteristics of wetland living and dam building, the history of its life in Wales, and the folklore attached to it.

The earliest known evidence for beavers in Wales comes from Pontnewydd cave, Denbighshire where two teeth may date from 225,000 BP, and the species probably continued living in the country in the late Palaeolithic. By later prehistoric periods from Cowbridge and Caldicot comes evidence of the co-existence of beaver and human, the latter perhaps exploiting beaver dams as convenient causeways or their pools as watery areas suitable for ritual depositions. Evidence then evaporates — could beaver skins have been a prized item for export to the Roman world? — but they were evidently present in medieval Wales. The Welsh laws tell us of the value of the warm waterproof coats of the beaver, ten times the worth of the stoat, while Giraldus Cambrensis speaks of the Teifi as the only river in Wales that has beavers, describing, rather inaccurately, their dam-building activities and repeating the erroneous classical tradition of the beaver habit of self-castration when hunted, the animal knowing that, alongside his fur, his castoreum, used to scent its territory, was prized as medicine.

It remains uncertain when beavers became extinct in the UK. Coles questions the established assumption of this happening in the late Middle Ages by suggesting that descriptions in some sixteenth-century writing, such as that of Humphrey Llwyd and William Harrison, imply that, though scarce, they may have survived in places. Whatever the truth of this, the Welsh name '*afanc*', usually associated with lakes and moorland, referred by the seventeenth century to monstrous beings and demons, the stuff of legend and storytelling. I'm glad that she mentions one of my favourite '*afanc*' sites, Bedd yr Afanc on the boggy lower slopes of the Preselis in Pembrokeshire, where an isolated Neolithic chambered tomb could well, we would imagine, have housed the resting place of just such a demonic spirit.

Coles' fieldwork to search for traces of beaver-associated features, such as ancient burrows or dens, took her to places in Wales with the '*afanc*' component, such as Llyn yr Afanc, near Bettws-y-coed, Nant Ffrancon, near Bethesda, and Llyn Ebyr and Llyn Dwr in mid-Wales. The latter two are close enough to permit contact between groups, and Coles believes that beaver activity may have indeed caused the formation of these small lakes by damming the streams flowing into a natural hollow. No indisputable evidence was found, though several potential features would merit further work. Archaeologists, too, should become more aware of the characteristic appearance of beaver-gnawed wood and new techniques such as aDNA analysis should further assist our quests to discover former beaver homes in Welsh lakes.

A historic introduction of the species into Wales was that of the Marquis of Bute who in 1874 imported two pairs, one of which was kept in his newly renovated castle at Cardiff for fifteen years. A more scientific attempt at reintroduction was initiated in Ayrshire, in 2008 with successful releases into the wild resulting in several families being reported along the Tay. In England, large enclosures have been established by the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust at Slimbridge and Martin Mere, and the Boldventure project in Devon has resulted in beaver colonies settling along the tributaries to the Otter. In Wales, meanwhile, the Welsh Beaver Project has produced a feasibility study for reintroductions to Wales. As yet none has been approved, but enclosures have been established near Machynlleth, Llangorse and in Carmarthenshire. Advocates, like Coles herself, stress the environmental benefits of such reintroductions, as beavers' activities contribute to ecological diversification and can help control flooding. Some fishermen and farmers are less sure, worried about the impact of the tree felling and alterations in river flow.

It will be interesting to follow the progress of such projects. I came across a large family at Halle in east Germany. It was enchanting watching them in the river; as some climbed the bank and waddled towards me, I did wonder how wild they really were. And I confess that I retreated onto a handy bench to get out of their way. There was something about those large, yellow incisors.

Raglan SIAN REES