

## REVIEWS

A HISTORY OF MALDEN. By the Rev. Kenneth N. Ross. 162 pp., 12 ill. Vizetelly & Co. Ltd., 1947. 15s.

This book, the outcome of much devoted work, well exemplifies some of the dangers which beset the local historian. The price, for card covers, is far too high ; the index is inadequate and so worse than useless to the serious student ; the excellently drawn maps ought all to have been printed to the same scale ; misprints are too frequent. But having said so much in criticism, there remains much to praise. The general layout is good, and many of the chapters especially those dealing with the often neglected period between 1650 and 1900, are excellent in their lively approach and the amount of interesting and valuable information they contain.

The frequent extracts from the registers and parish accounts are particularly useful, and the documents quoted in full include the free and copyholders from a rental of 1457 (p. 45) ; a Land Tax Assessment of 1751 (p. 97) ; list of inhabitants liable to duty to the Highways in 1768 (p. 101) ; and there is an appendix giving lists of the Vicars from c. 1200, Curates in 1550 and from 1756, and Churchwardens complete from 1836. In spite of the modest disclaimer of the author's foreword, this is likely to remain the classic on Malden for a long time to come.

J. H. H.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEATHERHEAD AND DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY.  
Vol. I, No. 1, 1947. 16 pp. Price 3s.

We welcome this publication as an expression of the spirit of enquiry and recording so essential to research. It is the report of the Leatherhead Society covering their numerous activities during 1947, and we wish the Society a long series of equally interesting numbers. Originated in 1946, the Society established six groups of specialized enquiry among which Group A (Historical Records) and Group D (Archaeology) have rapidly assumed importance. One of the activities of Group D was an excavation of "The Mounts," Pachesam, commenced in 1947 and continued in 1948, under the direction of Captain A. W. G. Lowther, the Group Leader. The Proceedings contain a full interim report of this excavation and, incidentally, this report is excellently illustrated. A historical note of great interest and dealing with "The Mounts" is contributed by Mr. John H. Harvey.

The Leatherhead Society is clearly not lacking in enterprise or courage, and with a network of similar organizations over the whole county, Surrey would indeed be a hive of research.

W. F. R.

SHORT HISTORY OF EWELL AND NONSUCH. By Cloutesley Willis.

The first edition of Mr. Cloutesley Willis's *Short History of Ewell and Nonsuch* appeared in 1931, when a critic of that time wrote of it : "This history of a Surrey village is a very attractive and well-written book ; a good deal of its attraction it owes to the fact that Mr. Willis has been able to draw on family memories of four generations"—covering a period of over 160 years.

Mr. Willis writes in this book of 1931, of smugglers and their ways, of Derby Day crowds, of folklore and old and vanishing customs, and stories of Dr. Corbet, the High Church Bishop of Oxford and Norwich, who was born in Ewell. His father was a gardener and a friend of Ben Jonson.

There was also much in this edition about the Royal Palace of Nonsuch, of which Mr. Willis has very special knowledge. In his new book he records the results of recent excavations in and about Ewell and Nonsuch. The Roman Stane Street has been proved to have its course through the village,

and remains of a small Romano-British town has been found there ; Anglo-Saxon burials have been discovered, and prehistoric remains, Mesolithic, Bronze and Early Iron Age.

Much has been learnt in recent years about Nonsuch, its exact position, its plan and the material of which it was built, and Mr. Willis has much to say about the apartments of the King and Queen and of officials and guests, and of the gardens. The foundations of Cuddington Church have been found, and we get a glimpse of Queen Elizabeth one Sunday morning at her devotions, which she cut short before Archbishop Whitgift had finished his sermon.

Readers of this History in 1931 will hasten to read it again and without doubt will advise others to do the same.

J. H. G.

**A HISTORY OF THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE, RICHMOND, SURREY.** By A. Cecil Piper, sometime Borough Librarian of Richmond, Surrey. Richmond : R. W. Simpson & Co., Ltd.

This is a well-written and attractively illustrated book, with an index and a plan of the Parish Church measured and drawn by Mr. G. E. Chambers, F.S.A., and a Foreword by the Rev. Canon G. H. M. Gray, Vicar of the Parish Church from 1928 to 1946.

The book is the outcome of the writer who, during his twenty-five years as Richmond's Borough Librarian, made use of his opportunities of acquiring knowledge of his subject from various sources, including the minute books of Richmond Vestry from 1596, and the Richmond Parish Registers from 1583. So it puts on record much useful local history which might never have been compiled in such a pleasing form but for the patient and valuable researches of Mr. Cecil Piper.

Although Mr. Piper tells us that "the oldest portions of Richmond Parish Church date back only to the Tudor period, and that it has no outstanding architectural or archaeological features," he has succeeded in producing a most interesting history of the evolution of the Parish Church, and of the people who worshipped in it in the past, which the present members of the congregation will be very pleased to read, and from which the casual visitor will be inspired to make more careful examination of its features and memorials, all of which tend to link up the religious lives and aspirations of those who have worshipped there in the past, with the religious lives and aspirations of those who worship in the Parish Church at the present time.

Mr. Piper has divided his book into twelve well-chosen chapters, in the first of which he traces the evolution of the Church from 1211, when Gilbert the Norman, the Sheriff of Surrey, having founded Merton Priory in 1126, bestowed upon it the advowson of Kingston and its four dependent chapelries, each of which had an endowment ; they were Ditton, East Molesey, Petersham and Shene, which was renamed Richmond by Henry VII. The parish of Kingston and the four chapelries within it were in the diocese of Winchester, and Mr. Piper tells us that in 1368 William of Wykeham announced that he had heard "that the roofs and chancels of Dytton Moleseye and Schene were extremely defective and notoriously in need of repair" ; the Prior of Merton was ordered to restore them. From evidence of wills, Mr. Piper shows that the chapel at Shene was in use in 1487, and that the four chapelries paid their Peter's pence to Winchester Cathedral in 1510. The Vicar of Kingston appointed the chaplains, parish clerks, and other officers in all these chapelries until 1849, when Richmond became a separate vicarage.

Mr. Piper tells us that Richmond Parish Church dates from the reign of Henry VII, but that little trace of the original church remains except the fine Tudor arch at the west end within it, and the much restored west tower.

Quoting from the Vestry minute-book, Mr. Piper tells us that in 1624 the tower was in a bad state and needed rebuilding or repairing, and on 14th July in that year a contract was made with Henry Walton, a freemason : "First he is to make the Tower table a plaine plinth, and make the upper table plaine with such stone as we shall find there in the Church Yard."

Examination of the stones inside the tower on the second landing reveals that some of them have been axed, and not shaped with a chisel, indicating that they date from earlier than 1200; further examination, with the aid of a good torch, may reveal information concerning the conditions in the tower in 1624.

The other chapters deal with "The Church Clock and the eight bells," "The Church Plate and Ornaments," "The Pulpit and the Font." In 1673 money was spent on repairing the font, which seems to have been "the font with a fluted bowl and pedestal, now in the chapel at the Grove Road Institution," which may have been Richmond's thanksgiving offering at the Restoration of Charles II, like many others of that date, which replaced the fonts destroyed during the Civil War, and resembling the Wren font in Kingston Parish Church.

Other chapters deal with "The Organ and the Organists," "The Stained Glass Windows." Mr. Piper says that those in the chancel, chancel aisle and side chapels at the east end are all by Burlison and Grylls. Then follows a chapter on "The Monuments and Memorials," which Mr. Piper describes as "the most interesting feature of the church, erected to the memory of people notable in many walks of life, statesmen and courtiers, soldiers and sailors, writers and actors, as well as the humbler local worthies. Many of the monuments are of artistic merit and some have coats of arms originally blazoned in heraldic colours; much local history may be learned from these memorials," and "it would require a volume to deal adequately with all the monuments and memorials in the church; the earliest is the Cotton brass on the north wall."

There is also a bronze tablet to the memory of Miss Braddon, the novelist, who died in Richmond in 1915. The remaining chapters deal with "The Church Yard and Burial Ground," "The Parochial School," "The Vicarage and Vicars," and "The Churchwardens."

Mr. Piper's book, which is "the first complete history of Richmond Parish Church," will be a welcome addition to the library of anyone interested in the history of Surrey. Since it was published in 1947, Mr. Piper has issued it in an abridged form, a sixteen-page pamphlet obtainable from the verger for 1s.

N. E. ST. L. F.