

## REVIEWS

TOWN AND COUNTRY IN ROMAN BRITAIN. By A. L. F. Rivet, M.A., F.S.A., Assistant Archæology Officer, Ordnance Survey. Pp. 195 with 1 plate and 6 maps or plans. Hutchinson University Library, London, 1958. 10s. 6d.

Roman Britain nowadays is a popular subject, and most counties have something to show. Surrey is less fortunate than some, since visible Roman antiquities are not well preserved. No villas remain open, field systems are scarce, the settlements tend to be built over today (as at Ewell), and many of the discoveries were made in the early days of investigation. Stane Street is perhaps our best known and most worth-while monument.

Surrey lies in the civil zone: the military tide soon swept over it and passed on. Thus this book, dealing with the problems of this zone, should be of great interest to members. It is not a history book of Roman Britain, nor does it deal with the Army or with problems of Art or Religion, but with the economic bases of life in our area, the towns, villas, and peasant farms. It is a sane balanced book written in non-technical language by an expert, and its intrinsic value is more than doubled by the inclusion of (a) detailed bibliographies at the end of each chapter, so that those interested will have no difficulty in following up lines of research, and (b) an introductory chapter on the British Iron Age, clear, up-to-date, and remarkable for its breadth of view, so that at the outset we know the native background on which the Romans were to impose their pattern. Then follow chapters on Roman Administration, Romanization (Towns), Romanization (Countryside), and Political Geography. This last chapter contains the very interesting suggestion that Surrey was one of those areas bestowed on king Cogidubnus of Chichester after the conquest. It had earlier, we are told, been a non-Belgic enclave which had maintained itself against its powerful Belgic neighbours in the years before the conquest; certainly it never became a Roman *civitas* of its own right, and we have no tribal capital or walled town in the county. But in spite of being a peripheral area, tied politically to Sussex and doubtless economically to the growing city of Londinium, Surrey contains sites sufficiently significant to find mention in a book of this scale, notably Ewell, Ashtead, Farley Heath and Titsey. Indeed, there is the suggestion (p. 140) that at Farnham a Roman town may await discovery. This is therefore a book which can be recommended to all interested in the early history of our county and its surrounding areas, and which should do much to spread understanding no less than stimulate further work.

S.S.F.

HASLEMERE IN HISTORY. By G. R. Rolston. Published by the author in association with the Haslemere Educational Museum. 1956. 15s.

For the second time the admirable museum at Haslemere has been instrumental in bringing out an important work on local history. *Bygone Haslemere*, by the late E. W. Swanton, was published in 1914, and has in no way been superseded by this shorter and more popular work by Mr. Rolston. The present intention was to set out the story of the town in chronological order, linking its tale to the outside world. This the author has duly done in little more than 100 pages, though he assumes an intimate knowledge of the ground not likely to be possessed by a new resident. What is wanted is a modern outline map marking some of the old sites, though the composite plan of the borough in the seventeenth century is certainly a help. Morley's plan of 1735 has come out well, though that by Cotes is a disappointing blur.

As a result of the author's own researches much material appears in print for the first time, and the story is continued down to the present day. It is therefore a little surprising to find no mention of the distinguished Dolmetsch family or the Haslemere musical festival. The place of references in a history of this kind is always something of a problem, one which Mr. Rolston solves by omitting them altogether, a solution which may not commend itself to some of his more serious readers.

The author is our local secretary at Haslemere, and has been a member of our society for more than a quarter of a century. We hope he will not wait too long before bringing out another work of local history.

T. E. C. W.