

BOOK REVIEWS

Phil Andrews and Andrew Crockett, *Three Excavations Along the Thames and its Tributaries, 1994: Neolithic to Saxon settlement and burial in the Thames, Colne and Kennet Valleys*, published by Wessex Archaeology (Report No10), 1996. ix, 184pp, 82 figs, 24 plates, 28 tables. ISBN 1 874350 18 3; ISSN 0965 5778

To be frank, this partial review took twice as long to produce as it took the authors to publish the three reports in this monograph. They are to be congratulated for doing so. My personal interest is that all three sites were previously known to me, since I regularly sped past Prospect Park and Wickham Fields along the M4 to my family in Wales, and Hurst Park is close to where I lived during the time of its excavation. Of professional interest, however, the reports highlight some concerns about accepted procedures of fieldwork and finds reporting, and the limits of competence of outside archaeological contractors working far from home. Only one of the three is in Surrey, namely Hurst Park, and since those matters can as easily be addressed in relation to the report of the work undertaken there, only that site is reviewed below. The other two in Middlesex and Berkshire seem more appropriate for review in their own county journals, but I would be surprised if those chosen to do so had not been able to deliver their copy more promptly than myself.

The review is in three parts that summarize the main findings of the excavated evidence, discuss the finds reports, and provide a general critique of the Hurst Park project and of a supplementary synthesis within the monograph.

The Findings of the Excavation. An area of 2.8 hectares of (mostly) lowest terrace gravels was excavated at Hurst Park, Molesey, from along the edge of the Thames floodplain 150m south of the present river. At least one Mesolithic struck flint was found on site, but the earliest features belonged to the 3rd millennium BC. Neolithic plain and impressed ware sherds were found in one pit, and parts of a Grooved Ware vessel were retrieved from a 'tree-hole' within the ring ditch circuit of a levelled bell barrow. The ditch yielded few datable finds, but a collared urn in the central burial pit of the barrow contained the cremated bones of two adults — a female and a male — and three segmented beads made of faience. A cremation burial just outside the ring ditch lay within the truncated base of, what may have been, another collared urn, and it is suggested, not wholly convincingly, that a few minor or doubtful features within its circuit may have been contemporary.

The only feature that bridged the chronological sequence across the 2nd millennium BC was a pit containing part of a Deverel-Rimbury cordoned urn that had lain within the western of two clusters of Late Bronze Age features along the terrace edge of the Thames floodplain. This western cluster included two possible ring houses represented by short stretches of curving gullies associated with a few pits and postholes, and 21 pits with ashy fills tightly packed with calcined flint pot-boilers. Only a single sherd of LBA-type pottery was found in all but one of these and the exception contained a complete slack-shouldered jar that had been deliberately placed inside. Many more LBA-type sherds, however, were found in the features associated with the suspected ring houses.

It is suggested that the western cluster may have been an area where food had usually been boiled, whereas baking had been the preferred method of preparation in the eastern group of features. This is largely surmised from the abundance of pot-boiling pits in the former; and the quantity of querns, perforated clay tablets and carbonized grain in the latter. A short stretch of curving ditch in the eastern cluster is interpreted as having been part of a circular structure, and although no finds were associated, it lay adjacent to two postholes, one of which contained an LBA-type sherd. Also close by, but more dispersed than those of the western cluster, were several

pits, and some of these contained relatively large collections of pottery sherds. Fragments of Greensand saddle querns, perforated tablets and cereal grains were also frequent finds. Two LBA pots placed within one of the pits had probably been inverted, with the cordoned jar inside the shouldered bipartite jar. The eastern cluster of settlement features lay next to a series of linear boundary or field ditches that acknowledged the presence of the disc barrow mound, but not its ditch which, presumably, had, by then, been filled.

No later prehistoric features were identified except, perhaps, some or all of eight cremation burials found as a loose cluster towards the west of the site. Each was associated with the truncated remains of hand-made grog or sand-tempered vessels of Late Iron Age or early Roman forms, and one also contained parts of a cremated lamb or piglet. The only certain Roman feature was a corn-drier towards the eastern end of the site, which contained sherds of late 1st or 2nd century greyware, a few rotary quern fragments, and some carbonized cereal grains.

A few late Roman pottery sherds were recovered, but only from post-Roman features, and most notably from the fills of a loose agglomeration of six or seven early Saxon sunken-featured buildings (SFBs). These were sub-rectangular, and with their long axes aligned roughly ESE/WNW, but no trace of hall-houses were found, although these may once have been present. The seventh possible SFB might have been a pit, which is how it is described, although its size and alignment was much the same as the others. It is suggested that contemporary features may include an outlying pit further west with a combed sherd similar to some found in the SFBs, and some ditches to the south aligned roughly parallel, but which contained no dateable finds. Since these had lain at right angles to the East and West Molesey parish boundary ditch sampled in evaluation trenches 200m further west, however, they cannot be assumed to have been Early Saxon.

The Finds Reports. Most finds from the site are unremarkable, and those of some categories seem oddly few. There are only 130 struck flints, for example, of which the 34 retrieved during the trial trenching are not reported upon for some reason. Unfortunately, these include the only Mesolithic find from the site — a late type of microlith, apparently. Twenty-eight struck flints from the barrow ditch include six of the nine cores from the site — which were all for the preparation of flakes — and a small scraper. Little more is said of the 70 struck flints from MBA and LBA features other than that they were very similar to the earlier material. Much burnt flint was found, especially in the western LBA cluster, and a lot more than the 34kg that was collected, although the sampling strategy is not stated. There is also c 0.5kg of burnt 'stone (greensand)' from LBA or undated features that ought to have been described as Lower Greensand stone to distinguish it from the softer Upper Greensand of Surrey. The quern report also refers only to 'greensand', but a reference to the Lodsworth quarry makes it clear that the harder stone is meant. Of fourteen quern fragments from the site, six from LBA features include five of 'greensand', of which three are clearly from saddle forms. The other is of red sandstone, as also a whetstone from a SFB. It is suggested that these, and the other quern fragments of quartzite and quartz grit from Roman and Saxon features, may have a West Country origin. This seems unlikely, however, since at other sites in this part of the Thames Basin, various sandstones used to make querns, including some that are quartzose, derive from sarsen debris — the local stone — as might those from Hurst Park.

Perhaps the most important small finds from the site are the three faience beads from the barrowed cremation burial, and a fragment of groove-worn pumice stone from an LBA pit that was considered likely by Stuart Needham of the British Museum to have been used to polish bronzes.

The fired clay material includes the usual array of featureless fragments, but there are two spindle-whorls from one of the SFBs, and the perforated clay tablets are also included in this category, although these may better have been classified alongside the pottery. Most are calcined flint-tempered, but one has organic inclusions. They are thought more likely to have been used in cooking, 'perhaps as parts of baking ovens' (p 92). One of the largest collections of such

fragments (9kg) has recently been unearthed by the Surrey County Archaeological Unit (SCAU) from an LBA enclosure ditch at Home Farm, Laleham, 8km west of Hurst Park. Mention of this is only made here because, as at Hurst Park, the majority is flint-gritted but a few have an organic temper.

There are few metal finds from the site, and some of the iron objects from the SFBs could be Roman. They include a chisel, heckle teeth (2), knives (2), a latch lifter, a possible strap hinge, a possible girdle hanger, a steelyard and some nails (6). Parts of two burnt copper alloy objects, including a bracelet, were associated with one of the later cremation burials; a possible side-link of a bridle bit from a SFB may be Roman or earlier.

The collection of animal bone is small and worn and provides no useful information. The paucity is because the terrace at Hurst Park is as acidic as the lithologies from whence much of it derives — the Eocene sands and pebble beds of the Bagshot Table. The more important bones from the site, the cremation burials, survived only because they had been burnt.

Reports on burnt cereal grains, other seeds and charred plant remains include the obligatory identification and quantification tables, but there seems nothing unexpected in the results for any period.

The pottery report on nearly 2000 sherds follows the recording methods first devised by Elaine Morris for Wessex Archaeology, and although there are some queries, it is exemplary, especially in regard to its terseness.

In addition to a few Early Bronze Age sherds tempered with grog, a complete collared urn was recovered, but is not included in the quantification details of table 9, and its weight is not given elsewhere. For some, this might have been useful. The only sherd of G4 fabric is probably that described as from the ring ditch fill in association with some LBA sherds (p 83), but this should have been made clearer.

Late Bronze Age pottery represents over 55% of the collection, and was separated into seven fabrics predominantly tempered with calcined flint, and another mostly sand-tempered, but which also contains some flint. The assemblage is said not to have a 'fineware' component, but might not the thirteen burnished sherds represent this, albeit as a tiny fraction of the whole (p 86)? In any case, what is meant by 'fineware' in modern studies of prehistoric ceramics? Form, fabric or finish, or else some unspecified combination of these? I suspect there is no consensus on the matter. There is no doubt about the authors' identification of the assemblage with Barratt's 'plainware' tradition of LBA pottery, and its comparability with other similar collections in Surrey such as Carshalton, Weston Wood and Kingston Hill. Were the author to have contacted SCAU, however, she would have learnt of several more assemblages, including some from sites much closer to Hurst Park.

One undertaking of the post-excavation process should cause some concern, since it has resulted in a quantification table that is misleading, most especially for the Bronze Age and Romano-British material, and perhaps also for the Saxon pottery. All fifteen sherds found with the satellite EBA cremation burial are from the base of a single vessel and yet all are enumerated in table 9; likewise the joining sherds of three near-complete LBA jars. This practice has skewed the figures presented in the table since, as the author admits, although the majority of LBA sherds are in two of the eight fabrics, without the three jars, the 'sherds are divided fairly evenly amongst the other fabrics' (p 85). The same table gives a total of 194 Romano-British sherds from the site, and the text makes it clear that all but 33 came from the Late Iron Age or early Roman cremation burials (p 87). Only six vessels, or parts of vessels, were associated with the burials, however, so the remaining 161 sherds must belong to them. Since they had, quite clearly, originally been *in-situ* single vessels, this is an odd way of counting sherds. The practice of SCAU is different. If sherds of a vessel have clearly broken *in situ*, or if the breakage of sherds has obviously occurred during their retrieval, then the pieces are counted as one.

Of the six vessels associated with the later prehistoric or early Roman cremation burials, four are tempered with grog and two with sand. The only sandy vessel drawn is of a hand-made jar with a simple everted rim (fig.55.2) of a form not known to the reviewer in this fabric from the

early assemblages of nearby Staines (the Roman town of *Pontibus*). At least one of the grog-tempered vessels is a hand-made cordon-necked jar (fig 55.1) of a form only rarely found in the late pre-Flavian and early Flavian deposits of Staines. For these reasons, and because the reviewer has processed some, as yet, unpublished local Late Iron Age assemblages, the authors' indecision about their dating to either the 'late pre-Romano-British [*sic*], Iron Age, or early Romano-British' periods may be more closely defined. They are most likely to pre-date the Conquest, but not by very much, or else have belonged to the earliest Claudio-Neronian phase of Roman occupation. If the author had consulted SCAU, she would have been better informed. In passing, why do some people continue to use the term 'Romano-British' to describe the people and their pottery? It is an awkward five-syllable mouthful that, whenever uttered, converts even the most estuarine of voices into one that sounds fruitily middle-class. Perhaps that is why it is retained. Why not just 'Roman', as most call the period, since it is a long-established truism that few had been truly Roman, and that most were native-born.

The early Saxon pottery from the site is of regional importance, and its reporting was enough to send me hot-foot down to the Wessex Archaeology stores to examine the assemblage for myself. Much of what is illustrated resembles Iron Age forms. These include globular jars with simple-everted rims, one of which has a flat base, a distinct base angle and vertical scoring of the lower body (fig 56.3). There are also some bead-rimmed jars and a carinated tripartite bowl (not biconical as described; fig 56.19 and p. 90). In addition, nearly all are predominantly sand-tempered, and only a little over 4% are heavily tempered with organic inclusions, but in two fabrics with roughly equal quantities of sand. Nevertheless, all the material is, indeed, of Saxon date and of early types. The author expressed some difficulty in dating the assemblage, but ought to have noted the faceted (not impressed) carination of a burnished and sand-tempered bowl (fig 56.20, which is similar to that on the famous bowl from the Mitcham cemetery. Also present is a body sherd from a jar with two cruciform stamps in horizontal alignment and with an indentation in between. Unfortunately, it was the reviewer who discovered the sherd whilst trawling through the collection. Lorraine Mephram was on hand to confirm the identification, but her temporary embarrassment (if such it was) was misplaced. It was not she who failed to spot this archetypically diagnostic sherd of the early Saxon period.

An examination of the Saxon type-series sherds and the illustrated material brought to light a few points of disagreement. The fabric C400 type-series sherd contains abundant spherical grains of tufa — a common component of Thames-side fluvial deposits — and their identification as oolitic limestone is wrong, as is the suggested West Country source (p 88). Tufa accumulating around growing plant material leaves distinctive cavities upon its decay, but it also precipitates around tiny fragments of plant debris in a concentric growth pattern, which is more relevant to the material in contention here. The resultant ooids can look remarkably like the oolites of Jurassic lithologies, but, if not badly crushed, the organic core, now burnt of course, can often be observed at X20 magnification. Small amounts of such tufa were also observed in the type sherds of fabrics Q401 and Q402, and those in the second must, in part, correspond with the 'irregular voids' of the published description (p 87). Tufa grains are also present in two illustrated vessels (fig 56.5 and 7), and in the latter, said to be of the sand-tempered Q405 fabric, it is the dominant inclusion type.

There are only three featureless body sherds of Q406 fabric, described as having sparse flint inclusions in addition to the dominant sand temper, although I considered the mix to be more equal. Since this is the only one of this series of fabrics with flint inclusions, why are they regarded as Saxon and not prehistoric? Concerning residuality, we are told that three vessels represented amongst the 33 Roman sherds from outside the cremation burials were found in the corn-drier, and that the others were in the SFBs. The amount of prehistoric material in Roman and Saxon features is, unfortunately, not stated.

Finally, in regard to the illustrated Saxon pottery, my observations were that the lug is, almost certainly, pierced, rather than as shown (fig 56.27), and that the slashed cordons of another sherd are much more prominent than as drawn (fig 56.26). There is also another sherd in the

collection that has two pronounced cordons above a carination that ought to have been illustrated.

A Critique. Fieldwork began at Hurst Park with a geophysical survey by the late Tony Clark and an evaluation by trial trenching undertaken by the Cotswold Archaeological Trust (CAT) in the spring of 1994. A coring survey at 20m intervals retrieved samples for measuring magnetic susceptibility, and further work involved a more detailed magnetometer survey of a selected area of 7200m². No archaeological features were clearly identified, largely owing to the piped drainage network of a recent racecourse; but the work enabled the detection of the east–west palaeochannel, a concentration of susceptibility in the south-east where much human activity was later found, and the nebulous presence of the parish boundary ditch. The trenching operations sampled the accepted token area of c 2.5% of the whole site with a series of 42 trenches. There were, however, some unacceptably large areas between some trenches that ought to have been sampled, such as the 100m gap between Trenches 14 and 38, and the only slightly smaller gaps between Trenches 5 and 12, and 7 and 9. A group of settlement features like the excavated western LBA cluster would have fitted snugly between any of those, and it is noteworthy that not one feature of that cluster had been exposed by any trial trench.

As a result of the preliminary findings, a specification for future work was devised by Neil Holbrook of CAT, but in his other capacity as archaeological advisor to Wates Built Homes Ltd, the developers of the site. At the time some thought that a little odd. Invitations to tender were invited from the Birmingham University Archaeological Field Unit, CAT itself, the Museum of London Archaeological Service, the Oxford Archaeological Unit, South-Eastern Archaeological Services and Wessex Archaeology; but not SCAU. Dinah Saich, then Archaeological Officer for Surrey County Council, pointed this out, with the result that the invitation to tender was extended to the County Unit. Having looked at the CAT report and the details of the specification, however, SCAU declined to tender, as it was felt that the evaluation had not fully determined the possible extent of surviving archaeological evidence. The Unit would have been in peril of being swamped with work that it was unable to match by either budget or timetable. In hindsight that decision seems right.

Subsequent to the trial trenching no further work was undertaken on the eyot north of the palaeochannel, despite ‘a small quantity of (Neolithic) flint’ having been found there. Although it was probably re-deposited in a ditch of much later date as suggested, this can surely not have been the excuse for the lack of subsequent fieldwork. Residual or not, the material is unlikely to have moved from the other side of the palaeochannel and, as even the author admits: ‘the presence of this flint might indicate activity on what has been interpreted as a former eyot’ (p 61). My rough reckoning suggests that the available area of the eyot lay close to 1.5ha. Also disturbing is the lack of any further work on the palaeochannel; not even a section is provided from the four trial trenches that were cut through it.

Notwithstanding the absence of features in trial trenches 23 and 24, the T-trench extension of the excavated area seems an inadequate response to the possibility that other major earthworks as important as the barrow may have lain at the eastern end of the site. This also ensured that the Bronze Age field system, proven to have extended there by the T-trench, was not fully mapped. It is also a sobering thought that if the distance between the two clusters of LBA features were part of a regular pattern of settlement along the terrace edge, then the next clusters east and west could easily have been missed by the few trial trenches in those areas. It is also astonishing that no archaeological features were noted during the topsoil and sub-soil stripping by the contractors of the entire site west of the excavated area. This may amount to as much as 8ha, and such an extraordinary absence of settlement or other usage of this, usually most-favoured, riverside zone is, if true, worthy of special note in future syntheses of Thames-side archaeology.

About 20 irregular features are said to have been found in the north-west corner of the excavations close to the palaeochannel. It is suggested that these were ‘tree-holes, possibly representing Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age vegetation clearance’ (p 61), but they are

shown on no plan. Only three were excavated and produced no finds, but some of the others might have, like the other 'tree-hole' within the ring ditch that contained the only Grooved Ware from the site. Because of the importance suggested for them, it is surprising that no environmental sampling was contemplated.

In the description of Structure 1 of the eastern LBA cluster, two seemingly very relevant postholes, 479 and 153, are not mentioned (pp 64–5). Their omission is curious, as they lay along the projected line of the ring-ditch with their centres c 1m apart, and there seems little doubt that they represent the twin posts of a south-east facing doorway. One of them, pit 153, contained 46 sherds from a single vessel, raising the possibility that it had been whole when placed in the pit after the posts were lifted and the hut abandoned. Pit 153 is described elsewhere, where the only mention of its relationship with Structure 1 is to say erroneously that it lay north-east from it (p 66).

The Discussion begins with some speculation on the nature of Neolithic tree clearance and settlement, and even suggests that this would have looked out over the palaeochannel (p 99). This only serves to remind the reader of how little fieldwork or sampling was undertaken on the earliest features.

Only 25% of the barrow ditch is said to have been excavated although, by my rough calculation, nearer 33% of its actual length was dug out. Nevertheless, it seems unreasonable to suggest that 'it is considered unlikely that any others [burials] lay undetected within the fill of the ditch' (p 101). It is a maxim that the best finds are in the bits left undisturbed, which might have been so for the ring-ditch henge at Staines Road Farm, Shepperton, where the two burials would have remained had there not been a decision to excavate the remaining 50% of the earthwork. In any case, the possibility of more Beaker sherds might have been worth the effort of digging out more at Hurst Park.

Most other misgivings about the Discussion concern the omission of references to sites excavated prior to the release of the Hurst Park report, and for which full or interim accounts were available as publications. These can, instead, be raised in regard to the 'discussion of discussions' of the volume: the third part of the monograph that compares the settlements and landscapes of both Prospect and Hurst Parks (Part 3).

In that account of the Neolithic presence in the district there is no mention of Grimes' Mixnams Farm discoveries, or of SCAU's excavations at Lower Mill Farm, Stanwell. Furthermore, on fig 58 the ring-ditch henge at Staines Road Farm, Shepperton, is shown 1km south of its true position. This seems an appropriate place to note that the scales provided on map figs 58, 59 and 60 are wrong.

The Middle Bronze Age section makes no reference to the rectilinear settlement enclosure and possible shrine excavated by SCAU at Church Lammas, Staines. In addition, although the small-scale work at Muckhatch Farm, Thorpe, is listed and appears on fig 58, no mention is made of the settlement and associated co-axial field system of Thorpe Lea Nurseries that were excavated by SCAU in the adjacent fields. Both sites are surely worthy of being included in any serious synthesis of the period.

Even more important LBA/EIA sites appear to have escaped the authors' attention, such as the evidence of dense settlement revealed by SCAU within the circuit of the hillfort enclosure at St Ann's Hill (although no contemporaneity should be presumed from this). Of its hinterland, no mention is made of a plethora of settlement sites examined by SCAU prior to the publication of the synthesis. These include the Matthew Arnold School, Laleham; Thorpe Lea Nurseries, Thorpe; Home Farm, Laleham; Vicarage Road, Sunbury; Staines Road Farm, Shepperton, and Bemonds Farm, Chertsey.

One could be forgiven for thinking that the author regards the Early Iron Age as having run on until the 'Romano-British' period in these backward parts, since there is no account of the archaeology of the intervening centuries. Just because there were no finds or features of the period at either of the Park sites, however, seems no reason to have ignored it. If the author had wanted to fill the gap, he would have learnt of SCAU's discoveries of two settlements at Thorpe Lea Nurseries; two new settlements at Brooklands, Weybridge; another at Wey Manor Farm,

Chertsey; work on the defences at St Anne's Hill, Chertsey; and on significant objects newly-raised from the Thames.

Roman settlement sites not included are those of Thorpe Lea Nurseries, Brooklands, Wey Manor Farm and Thorpe church.

General confusion about the early Saxon settlements and cemeteries of the district is apparent, but is even more remarkable since the many errors were pointed out to Wessex Archaeology by Dinah Saich of Surrey County Council after she had read the first draft. Of the sites marked near the confluence of the river Wey with the Thames on map fig 60, the only settlement symbol is shown where some Saxon swords were retrieved from a palaeochannel. Upper West Field is marked almost correctly, but the other cemetery symbol is shown close to War Close, near Shepperton church, where there is only a tradition of Saxon weaponry having been found. A corruption of Weir to War may best explain this bit of folklore. The settlement and cemetery of Shepperton Green is not shown, and the barrow burials said to have been there were at a completely different site, also not shown, near Walton Bridge. Staines, with two sherds recognized by the late Lady Briscoe as being early Saxon, is also not shown as a settlement site.

The omissions listed above are an indictment of the authors' lack of knowledge of the local archaeology of the district, and demonstrates that little attempt was made to engage with those who have worked there for many years. Such a synthesis ought not to have been released by a professional unit of international renown. The lesson to be learned, not just from such omissions, but also from mis-identifications in the finds reports, is that local knowledge matters a lot. This ought to be accepted much more readily now, seven years on, and with up to twelve outside archaeological contractors touting for business in Surrey — not including the free-for-all in its south-west London boroughs. My worst nightmare features twelve different type series being elaborated for the study of pottery from the county, but, alas, there are currently no constraints on that actually happening.

As for the fieldwork undertaken, the reviewer remains unconvinced that enough was done at Hurst Park to recover all of the more important archaeological information. If this was because of the original specification, it would reflect badly on the archaeological advisors to the developers.

PHIL JONES

Alan A Jackson, *The Railway in Surrey*, published by Atlantic Transport Publishers, Penryn, Cornwall, 1999, price £25. Hardback, 240pp, illustrations, maps, appendixes. ISBN 0 906899 907

The railway history of Surrey is sufficiently varied and interesting to justify a book of itself. The extensive network of surface electric services, developed chiefly by the former Southern Railway, has largely obviated the need for anything comparable to the tube network which is found north of the Thames, while enabling and encouraging the suburban development which is so characteristic of much of Surrey. The book covers the present administrative county while placing the local rail system within the context of that of the nation as a whole. It fulfills a long-felt need and, despite delay in publication, is a most welcome addition to the definitive books on Surrey. The author is ideally suited to write such a book. He has a wide and deep interest and knowledge of suburbanisation, particularly before the Second World War; as is evident from his *Semi-Detached London* (1991). His extensive knowledge of related aspects of transportation is ably shown (with Desmond F Croome) in *Rails Through the Clay* (1993).

The opening chapter sets the physical, social and economic scene against which the development of the railway network must be seen. Detailed histories are given of the through and local lines, within the context of the originating companies, such as the London & South Western Railway and the London & Brighton Railway. Due attention is given, for instance, to the rivalry between the former and the London Brighton and South Coast Railway, for traffic to Portsmouth, via Guildford and via Horsham respectively. Coverage is given also to the Great

Western Railway, a company often overlooked in relation to Surrey, and its line to Staines. An examination is made of electrification, from the first services on the Shepperton branch from 1916 onwards. From 1927 co-operation took place between the railway and builders for the development of new stations, such as West Weybridge (now Byfleet and New Haw), to serve the commuting public. At some, such as Stoneleigh (1932), the cost of stations was minimized by the provision of island platforms. Modernization, which included further electrification and the introduction of diesel locomotives, continued after the war. For the sake of economy, station reconstruction was often carried out with factory-made units, as at Ashted in 1969. New services, such as Thameslink, which connects areas north and south of London, were introduced, although with a changing pattern of demand, some services and facilities, such as provision for goods traffic, were reduced.

As would be expected from the author; there are exemplary studies of the relationship between railway development, residential development and commuting, and of the settlement patterns and population growth generated in response to the spread of the railway. It is most unfortunate, however; to quote (p 109) as for Leatherhead, population figures for 1921 and 1938 which relate to the five parishes of the urban district!

Further influences upon the railway have been exerted by the military concentrations around Camberley and Aldershot, which have required special provision at irregular intervals. Heavy demands were made on the Tonbridge-Redhill-Reading line following the evacuation of troops from Dunkerque in 1940. Provision of transport for race meetings, for example at Epsom and Sandown Park, has created further demand for specialized rail services in Surrey. Leisure activities, particularly walking, have produced additional traffic for the railway. An unusual service provided by the railway has been in respect of Brookwood Cemetery which was developed jointly with the Necropolis Company, whose plans could have had an even greater effect on the Woking area. Despite its largely suburban character; Surrey has had sufficient specialized and varied industrial and freight sidings and rail systems to justify a separate chapter. These included those serving public utilities, such as the Metropolitan Water Board, and institutions such as the former mental hospitals at Epsom. Proposed lines, some of which did not materialize, are also considered, together with suggestions which are under consideration for the future. Appendixes cover opening and closure of facilities, modernization of signalling, accidents etc.

A major strength of the book is the fine collection of photographs which it contains. Many of these are of early date; the majority of which are reproduced to a high standard. Of particular interest are the photograph (p 147) of the motor bus run by the railway between Farnham and Haslemere in 1912, and the photograph (p 196) of the 'Coffeepot' engine at Dorking Greystone Lime Works in about 1938. The absence of a list of the illustrations, however; is a serious drawback, which it is hoped can be rectified in later editions. Additional maps showing the growth of the rail network, or the development of specific lines in relation to settlement would have been helpful. It is unfortunate that the general map of Surrey Railways on the endpapers does not differentiate the proposed railways sufficiently. There is a useful list of sources and a select bibliography, in addition to helpful notes to each chapter. An extensive Corrigenda and Addenda is available which it is hoped will be incorporated in future reprints or editions.

ALAN GILLIES

Surrey's Industrial Past, edited by Glenys Crocker, published by the Surrey Industrial History Group, 1999, price £12.95. Softback, x, 150pp, 56 b&w illustrations (including 4 half page maps and 1 table), colour illustrated cover. ISBN 0 9523918 8 0

Since 1990 the Surrey Industrial History Group (SIHG), a Group of the Surrey Archaeological Society, has published a series of district guides to sites of industrial history interest in Surrey. These are in the form of gazetteers. This new book is an overview of the industrial history of Surrey as a whole and is a valuable companion to the guides.

Many people living in the County today will be surprised at the number and variety of industries formerly taking place in Surrey. To quote the introduction to the book, 'before the industrial revolution, when heavy industry became established in the North and Midlands, Surrey was a considerable manufacturing county'. To this could be added that it was a considerable source of raw material and of food. The book starts by surveying the Extractive, Clay, Woodland and Metal industries. These include, among other things, building and other stone from underground quarries and the mining and processing of iron: areas of Surrey were part of the Wealden iron industry, the major English source of the metal from Tudor to early Georgian times.

Following this Food and Drink are examined. This part includes sections on water and wind mills which lead into descriptions of the manufacture of Textile and Leather goods. Sections on the gunpowder and paper industries are included in the chapter on Chemical and Process Industries. Transport looks at Roads, Railways, Waterways and Aviation. It is interesting to note that the world's first public railway was located in Surrey and that Gatwick Airport had in the 1930s the precursor of all modern terminal buildings with covered walkways to the aircraft and served by a railway station. Aircraft and motor manufacture are covered in the chapter headed Engineering. One of the oldest purpose-built car factories in the world is the Rodboro Building in Guildford. Utilities include communications as well as water, sewage, gas and electricity. The first public electricity supply in Britain was in Godalming. The book concludes with chapters on Defence works and Entertainment. The latter has a section on race courses. Two of the oldest and most famous horse races in the world are run at Epsom, the Derby and the Oaks.

The text is complimented by a well chosen and comprehensive series of photographs, some from the archives and some specially taken for the book. Although there are several half page maps showing specific subjects, railways and canals for example, a more general map, possibly full page or even double page, showing all the places mentioned would be useful for readers not familiar with the geography of the county.

All in all this is an excellent introduction to the industrial history of Surrey. In conjunction with the district guides it ensures that Surrey has a better documented industrial past than most other counties in Britain.

The book is the work of some fourteen authors. The fact that it reads as a seamless whole is a credit to its editor.

RICHARD MUIR

David C Taylor, *Cobham houses and their occupants, a thousand years of history*, published by Appleton, Cobham, 1999, price £14.95. 180pp, illus. ISBN 0 9536976 0 6

To quote the introduction, this is Cobham's book for the millennium but, unlike many millennium books, it is written on the basis of original research by a local historian. With four other books on Cobham to his credit, David Taylor believes in publishing the results of his research.

The book covers 50 houses (as opposed to other buildings) for which documentary evidence about the history of the house and its occupants was available. Most importantly it includes a number of significant buildings which have been demolished and which otherwise would quickly be forgotten. The book, which runs to some 180 pages, is large enough to enable each section to be well illustrated with photographs, sketches and maps. The result is a series of fascinating snapshots of many aspects of Cobham history relating to both people and events, many of which are of more than local interest. Some information, based on the reports of the Domestic Buildings Research Group, is given on the physical development of the building. This often covers the early history of the building for which little documentary evidence has been found.

It is probably impossible to write a definitive history of any parish of any significance, certainly in anything much less than a lifetime. As a result many potentially worthwhile contributions based on extensive research never get written or certainly not published. One way around this

problem is to publish a series of books on various aspects of local history that can serve as a source for a more general history. The best of such interim histories also provide a useful source of information for research and publication related to a wider area.

Clearly then this book is to be recommended to anyone interested in Cobham but how far might it be useful for those with wider interests? For one with an interest in the buildings of the county as a whole, in the way they differ from those in other parts of the county at various periods and why, I found much of interest. Looking just at the pictures: a quick browse through suggested that Cobham was particularly rich in Georgian and Victorian buildings of some style. Pictures of various owners indicated the sort of people they were. Such indicators can of course be fairly superficial but they did suggest that it would be well worthwhile reading the text and so it proved to be. As an example, the attraction of Cobham to naval officers and others travelling between London and Portsmouth quickly becomes evident.

The location of all the buildings is indicated on a sketch map but it would have been particularly useful to a 'stranger' at least, for an early edition of an Ordnance map to have been used so that the buildings could have been seen in their landscape context. Indeed the very landscape location can be useful in understanding the building although sometimes its location throws up as many questions as it answers!

The book then is a very useful contribution to our knowledge of the history of Surrey. Hopefully it will encourage others to make similar contributions for their own areas, which in total will make a significant contribution to a greater understanding of the history of the county.

PETER GRAY

Brian Taylor, *Abbot's Hospital Guildford*, published by St Thomas's Trust, Sutton Park, 1999, price £4.20. Paperback, 169pp, illus. ISBN 0 9520140 4 1

Abbot's Hospital stands on Guildford High Street as it has done for nearly four centuries. Still in use for the purpose for which it was built — a home for elderly men and women — it is a greater memorial to George Abbot, archbishop of Canterbury, than either his magnificent tomb in Holy Trinity Church across the street or the statue of him nearby. It is perhaps remarkable that only now has a full-length treatment of its history been published.

Brian Taylor is an experienced local historian. When rector of St Nicolas' he produced what will surely be the definitive story of the church. A former governor of Abbot's Hospital, he has made use of the extensive records that survive. The author was assisted in finding his way through the mass of material by the detailed notes made by Philip Palmer, who was Master of the Hospital from 1913 to 1926 and an active member of the Surrey Archaeological Society. The result is a detailed and painstaking account, perhaps inevitably with an emphasis on finance. The appendices include a list of the Masters of the Hospital and the statutes. The notes and bibliography are what one would expect of a thoroughly academic piece of work. The author's approach is essentially chronological, and begins with an excellent short biography of George Abbot himself. Brian Taylor does not shrink from recording the less edifying moments in the Hospital's history, in which quarrelling and drunken behaviour were not unknown. However, what emerges is a picture of a community supported and sustained over the centuries by charity and benevolence.

The fact that Abbot was an actor on the stage of national politics during the reign of James I and Charles makes this book more than simply a contribution to the history of Guildford. It has much to tell us about the piety of his age — and that of subsequent ages.

MATTHEW ALEXANDER

Lyn Clark, *Stoke next Guildford: a short history*, published by Phillimore, Chichester, 1999, price £14.99. Hardback, xii, 100pp, illus, maps. ISBN 1 86077 122 X

Stoke is an extensive parish that embraces to the north and east the much smaller area of the town of Guildford which as it has grown has absorbed parts of its neighbouring parish but while

Guildford has not lacked its historians it has remained to Lyn Clark to produce this welcome account of Stoke next Guildford. On the grounds that there is already published material on the history of Stoughton, a significant part of Stoke parish, Miss Clark does not concern herself with repeating this and concentrates on what is left of the village and parish. As she admits there are many unanswered and probably unanswerable questions about the early history of the parish; eg was Stoke the site of an early Minster Church? Was it of earlier origin than Guildford? How and why did it become one of the two Rural Deaneries of Surrey?

There are chapters on early history from Saxon times, including early manorial courts, St Thomas's Hospital and the Manor of Poyle. There follows a full account of the Parish Church of St John the Evangelist, then of the Wey Navigation with its paper and corn mills. Next comes a discussion on some of the families and houses of the village, the new road and the bridge. Stoke Park and its occupants are dealt with, including a mention of the eighteenth century novelist, Charlotte Smith, and ending with the construction of the Lido in the 1930s. The vexed question of the boundaries between Stoke and Guildford are discussed separately together with the various sites of Manorial Courts and the difficulties of drawing up and interpreting the Census Lists.

The Wooden Bridge and the Woodbridge area with its two estates of Woodbridge House and Woodbridge Park and the important part played by the Mangles family in Guildford and in Western Australia merit another chapter which is followed by the history of Parson's almshouses and other benefactions. The most influential of the rectors of Stoke was Francis Paynter whose family lived at Stoke Hill and was responsible for the construction of the churches of Christ Church, St Saviour's and Emmanuel, Stoughton.

The closing chapters deal with breweries, inns, malhouses and beershops, and a penultimate chapter on odds and ends such as the Mad House, the Workmen's Home and Coffee Palace, and the gallows at Ganghill. The book closes with a brief account of that part of Stoke within the Borough of Guildford that is limited by North Street.

In view of the current controversy concerning school reorganization in Stoke it is a pity that there is no section on education in Stoke but the book is very fully illustrated and produced up to Phillimore's high standard for books on local history.

MARK STURLEY

Pat Ashworth and Jack Kinder, *Westwood, Normandy, the story of a Surrey estate*, published by Westwood Place Management Ltd, Normandy, Guildford, 1998, price £9.99. Softback, A4, 116pp, 27 figures, 33 b&w plates. ISBN 0 9533906 0 8

Many members of the Society will remember Pat Ashworth, the principal author of this book, who for several years was our Assistant Librarian. She and her co-author Jack Kinder both live at Normandy, now part of Guildford Borough, and they have written an excellent account of the Westwood Estate, its house, the Coussmaker family who lived there for over 200 years and their contributions to the local community. Those who know Pat will expect that the book will have been meticulously researched and such is the case. The authors were fortunate in that they were able to use the Coussmaker family papers, now deposited at the Surrey History Centre, and also discovered many other relevant documents. Details of these sources occupy six pages of the book but, although they are numbered, no reference numbers appear in the text. I understand that they were removed following a well-meaning recommendation but it is most unfortunate for a book which is essentially scholarly. There is also a very thorough seven-page index, including 50 entries for members of the Coussmaker family. They purchased the estate in 1720 and it grew to occupy one-quarter of the present parish of Normandy. However, the general agricultural depression of the late 19th century led to a decline in the family fortunes, parts of the estate were disposed of and the house itself was sold in 1961. Finally in 1996-7 the last four fields owned by the Coussmakers were sold. However, members of the family still live in the village and the house, converted into five apartments, has been saved. The book is packed

with detailed but readable information and is a model of its kind. All copies were sold within a few months of publication but it is available in the Society's library.

ALAN CROCKER

Neil White, *Weybridge Past*, published by Phillimore, Chichester, 1999, price £14.99. Hardback, xii, 132pp, illus. ISBN 1 86077 086 X

The ever-lengthening local history lists of publishers cover styles ranging from the academic to the overtly populist. While Messrs Phillimore are to be congratulated on their commitment to the propagation of a range of local history formats, it may be regretted that the publishers of *Weybridge Past* did not exercise a decisive editorial overview of the author's historical accuracy. As many of these titles become the standard work of reference for the non-specialist local population, errors and omissions become a continuing source of aggravation and concern for other historians of the area.

Neil White is to be congratulated on producing a wide-ranging account of the area within the publisher's familiar format, and for the well-chosen illustrations. There must however be serious concerns about a number of basic errors and oversights. The important Iron Age site at Brooklands excavated by the Surrey Archaeological Society has been completely overlooked and the repetition of archaeological pioneers' descriptions of 'unbaked clay pots' (p 3) suggests that the author has made little effort to assimilate recent publications or modify the views of local antiquarianism. Other significant caveats occur in the section covering industrial Weybridge, where a number of fallacies are repeated.

Most troublesome for this reviewer is the publication yet again of the erroneous statements that Coxes Lock Mill (actually in the neighbouring parish of Addlestone) was used as a silk mill prior to its establishment by Alexander Raby (p 54), that iron was smelted at north Surrey ironworks, and that iron ore was carried on the Wey Navigation (p 40). Other readers with a passing knowledge of Weybridge may find other inaccuracies which mar an otherwise well-presented and readable account of the area. A map of any sort would have been an advantage, as would a comprehensive index.

DAVID BARKER

Alexander Raby, Ironmaster: Proceedings of a conference held at Cobham on 28 November 1998, edited by Glenys Crocker, published by the Surrey Industrial History Group, 2000, price £7.50. Softback, A4, iv, 44pp, 21 illus, full-colour cover map. ISBN 0 9523918 9 9

An economic historian, George Buttriss, began to collect information on Alexander Raby, a Surrey ironmaster, with a view to compiling a biography. Buttriss died before he could complete his task and the papers were deposited in the Research Collections of the Surrey Archaeological Society. In default of completing the biography, a one-day conference was held in Cobham in 1998 at which six papers were read. This A4 volume contains these papers, together with a selection of the illustrations which were shown at the meeting.

After an introduction by the chairman of the conference, Alan Crocker (President of the Surrey Industrial History Group), Jeremy Hodgkinson (Chairman of the Wealden Iron Research Group) deals with the history of the Raby family from the 16th to the end of the 18th century. The Rabys were both makers and dealers in the iron industry in the Weald as well as the Midlands and London. In the middle of the 18th century, Alexander was deeply involved in the casting of guns for the Board of Ordnance and, in common with other gun founders, was having difficulty in obtaining payment. His Wealden ironworks are reputed to have been the first to cast guns with integral lifting loops (dolphins). This may be so for cast iron, but dolphins were cast on bronze guns in the early 16th century.

'Iron Working in Northern Surrey' was the theme of John Potter's paper. As a geologist he dealt with both the locations of iron deposits, which would appear to show there was iron

working in the locality from the Iron Age to the 19th century, and explained the circumstances which led early authors to assume, incorrectly, that local ore was used in later periods. He also dealt with the water supplies, from the rivers Wey and Mole, which were so essential for water wheels powering bellows, hammers and rolling mills.

A Cobham local historian, David Taylor, dealt with Alexander Raby's effects on Cobham in the buildings of Cobham and Downside Mills, housing for his workers and the diversion of the river Mole. This paper is well supported by two good-scale maps and by the attractive cover of the volume that comprises a coloured plan of 'Cobham Mills' (ie Downside Mills), a plan that once belonged to Alexander Raby, in 1798.

Alan Crocker contributes a history of Downside Mill from the early reference to three water mills at Cobham in the Domesday Book to the conversion of the mill to offices at the end of the 20th century. Over that time zone the mill had been used for corn milling, paper making, rolling sheet copper and iron, casting and forging iron products, flock milling, a saw mill and, for a short time, generating electricity. Raby was not popular during his tenancy of the mill because of the noise from the hammers and the flooding caused by his watercourse diversions.

Raby built an iron mill at Addlestone in 1776 and the development of this was the subject of the paper by David Barker of the Addlestone Local History Society. This mill was built at Coxes Lock on the Wey Navigation and the cutting of new channels together with the use of the Navigation's water resulted in some legal wranglings.

The final contribution is an account of Raby's iron working in the Llanelli area after he left Cobham. This paper by Lyn John closes the history of an entrepreneurial family with the inevitable bankruptcy caused by misuse of the funds of the Carmarthen Rail Road Company. Was that company 'the oldest public railway in use in Great Britain'? The Surrey Iron Railway Act received assent in 1801 and was opened in 1803.

Peter Jenkins contributes a summary of Raby entries in London trade directories for the years 1749–1811.

Glenys Crocker has produced an informative work on one of Surrey's characters and industries with a very full index of persons, places and organizations. It is unfortunate that the discussions following the conference were not recorded, as they would have added yet more to an important document. This book should prove of great interest to local, iron and ordnance historians.

JOHN DAY

Peter Gray, *Farmsteads and farm buildings in Surrey — a preliminary survey*, published by Environment Department, Surrey County Council, 1998, price £5.00. Softback, xvi, 66pp, maps, tables, figures, glossary, bibliography

Changing features of the regional landscape have much to reveal about our farming past; more specifically, farm buildings provide evidence of agricultural practices and farming methods over time. Original buildings and those which have been altered provide a rich source of information about our rural and social history.

The landscape can change rapidly and this survey of farm buildings provides a valuable data source and historic record. The author's preliminary survey of farmsteads and farm buildings in Surrey has been meticulously conducted and set in the context of local geography, geology and agricultural history. The survey contents cover siting of farms, farmsteads and farmyards with an overview of materials and construction. Categories of barns, barn-like buildings, animal houses and other structures are described in relation to location and structural features with map grid references where appropriate. Origins, purpose and character are described in detail, together with a commentary on conservation and conversion options and constraints.

In the final sections of this survey report, due emphasis is given to conservation issues, with recommendations that a proper assessment of their historical importance is vital to the satisfactory conservation of these agricultural sites and buildings. The survey recommends that

District Councils should add such sites and buildings to local lists where they are not already statutorily listed, or designate conservation areas. The importance of identifying conservation constraints at an early stage of any proposed development is also noted, as is the necessity of making careful and accurate records before any such development takes place. Extremely helpful information on the need for further research, with a glossary and bibliography, conclude the report.

This preliminary survey provides a rich source of data and stimulus, which will be of great interest to conservators, architects, planners, local historians and subject enthusiasts. It is strongly recommended with the hope that its plan for ongoing further research and publication will be quickly and successfully accomplished.

IAIN MCLAREN

Gertrude Jekyll, *Old West Surrey*, published by Phillimore & Co, Chichester, 1999, price £25. Hardback, 258pp, illus. ISBN 1 86077 095 9

Gertrude Jekyll first published *Old West Surrey* in 1904, some notes and memories of the village life which had been such an enchanting part of her childhood in Bramley. As the 19th century drew to a close, she, in common with many of her contemporaries, deplored the disappearance of the quiet old country ways. Unlike most of them, however, she was not content simply to complain. She actively recorded the vanishing way of life through her skill as a photographer and her collection of cottage furnishings, notably objects connected with domestic lighting and the great open fireplaces that were being replaced by oil lamps and iron ranges. She donated this collection to the Surrey Archaeological Society in 1907, and in 1911 a new gallery was built at Guildford Museum to house it. Part of the collection is on display at the Museum today.

She was as much devoted to the occupants of the cottages as she was to their contents. The clothing, the dialect and the traditions of the Surrey country folk were each lovingly recorded. She was to the manor born, however, and one should not be surprised at a somewhat condescending tone towards her informants.

A facsimile edition of *Old West Surrey* was published in 1978 by Kohler & Coombes of Dorking but the photographs, which form such an important part of the book, were poorly reproduced. In this edition the photographs are magnificent. Virtually all of them have been rescanned from her original prints held at the Surrey History Centre, and Jane Brown of the Jekyll Trust has contributed notes on them and an introduction.

This new edition of a classic work is very welcome. It highlights Gertrude Jekyll's pioneering work as a social historian, which has tended to be eclipsed by her wider fame as a garden designer. Although the price may be a deterrent, the book deserves a wide readership.

MATTHEW ALEXANDER