

Reviews and New Books

Duncan Sayer with Jackie Hall

Cistercian Abbeys and the secular world

Grenville Astill

Fawcett, R., & Oram, R., 2004,
Melrose Abbey; Tempus: Stroud
ISBN 0 7524 2867 5
Hardback 17 x 25 cms
288pp, 104 figs
£14.99

Coppack, G., 2003, *Fountains Abbey:
the Cistercians in Northern England*;
Tempus: Stroud;
ISBN 0 7524 2546 3
Hardback 17 x 25 cms
160pp, 108 figs
£15.99

Readers of the journal will welcome these two important studies of Cistercian monasteries. *Melrose Abbey* was commissioned by Historic Scotland to provide a more detailed account of one of its major monuments than is possible in a guide book. *Fountains Abbey* is a second edition of a book that is already established as the best account of the monastery, and so will receive less attention here.

Melrose Abbey is a survey of recent fieldwork in the context of past work and is a welcome expansion of the RCAHM's account of 1956. The book has three large chapters: the history of the abbey, followed by an account of the architecture (and archaeological fieldwork), finishing with a survey of Melrose's estates and possessions. The chapters appear as independent pieces of research, and few opportunities are taken to integrate the various data -

hopefully this will be for the near future.

The abbey has an unusual and remarkable history: for the sustained royal support it received from David I's foundation in 1137 to the early 14th century, seen most clearly in the large scale of endowments; for the, perhaps reciprocal, political involvement of the abbots as king's agents, especially in bolstering royal authority where it was weak, and for producing so many bishops from the monastic community. These factors made the abbey an unusually powerful presence in its locality, but this was of course offset by the lowlands being the battleground between Scottish and English forces, with the consequent phases of destruction, particularly in the 14th century, alternating with times when the monastery was patronised by both royal houses - Melrose was often the meeting place for delegations from both sides. The abbey's fortunes failed to improve during the 15th and 16th centuries with the disputed appointments and quality of its abbots, followed by the appointment of secular administrators, before the 1560 Reformation Parliament, whose main concern was to deprive the monastery of its possessions. The community decreased from 35 monks in the 1500s to 20 in 1550 to the one resident monk in 1586 who nevertheless lived a completely secular life until his death in 1607 when the house was formally suppressed.

The monastic precinct was in a characteristic Cistercian location, but it was comparatively small, with no clear division between greater or lesser courts, perhaps explained by its congested nature caused by the proliferation of the secular administrators' new buildings and the

encroachment into the precinct by the surrounding town. Indeed the authors suggest that secular access was common during Melrose's existence with parishioners using the nave.

The main part of Chapter 2 describes the structural sequence of the church, mainly based on moulding analysis, but incorporating the results of the limited past excavations. The form of the 12th-century church is presented and then the eight phases of alterations, centring on the rebuilding of the later 14th century that remained incomplete two hundred years later. The first church provided a constant reference for the rebuilding as the new structure was built round it, and new work proceeded with the progressive demolition of the old. Work seems to have stopped with the near-completion of the continentally-inspired south aisle chapels, leaving the nave incomplete. While the structure provides the chronological framework the internal fittings point to other decorative, and perhaps structural, schemes, such as the 13th century floor tiles.

'These two books give us many insights into the changing nature of Cistercian monasticism'

The methodology for the analysis of the church is made only too clear - that for the claustral buildings, of rubble construction with mainly foundations surviving (on the north side of the church), is not. Yet there was much change in all the ranges, including numerous remodelling of the chapter house, the reorientation of the refectory, and a large extension of the west range. All seem to have occurred in the 13th century, a major period of reconstruction and expansion of the community.

The chapter on monastic lands and possessions considers the estates, urban properties and churches under Melrose's control. This is clearly a vast area for research, and the themes are treated in case studies of particular regions. The properties were very widely distributed and represented a huge endowment. Donated royal estates formed the core of the monastic estates; that is lands which were already well-settled and occupied before Melrose acquired them. There is, then, a *leitmotiv* of negotiation and conflict in the management of the estates which is rarely so obvious in other studies of Cistercian landholding. Conflict is particularly marked in areas where the house wished to expand its holdings in what were clearly intensively-used agricultural areas, such as in the eastern lowlands, a cereal-producing region, or in the pastoral uplands where the main opportunity for expansion was by encroachment on areas of royal forest. That some monastery flocks had 15,000 sheep by the later 14th century indicates the extent of Melrose's success. Urban properties were extensive, some held directly for commercial and residential purposes while others were sources of rental income. Most were concentrated in Berwick and Roxburgh, but during the 1380s there was a commercial shift away from the disturbed borders and Melrose gained properties in Leith and Edinburgh. There is little information about the granges – tantalising references to vaccaries and sheepcotes abound for the upland properties, but here the archaeological potential might be exploited. A hierarchy of granges appears to be better documented here than elsewhere. The widespread nature of the properties obliged the

monastery to develop particular granges to act as an administrative centre from which to control groups of granges and properties. Some centres, such as Mauchline, became regional *foci* for cattle breeding and droving, showing the main priority was to service the local trading networks rather than provide for the distant main community. Mauchline clearly exercised a big influence on the surrounding area: its chapel gained parochial status in the early 14th century, it became a free barony in the early 15th century and by 1510 had burgh status (indeed Melrose developed a similar proto-town at the south gate of its precinct, formalised in burgh status in 1605). Such settlements are crying out for further work in order to help our understanding of the changing relationships between granges and their neighbouring settlements.

Fountains Abbey is the second edition of the book first published in 1993. It has acquired a sub-title of '*the Cistercians in northern England*', but there is very little additional information that would justify its inclusion. The volume has the same structure as the first, and there are few changes, although it is important to know of the discovery of the late-12th-century guest hall. It remains an attractively written survey of the '*most completely understood Cistercian monastery*'. Judging from my copy, the author deserved better treatment of his illustrations, some of which are so pale as to be barely visible while others are so over-inked the detail is lost.

The first four chapters give a chronological account from foundation to late 15th century; there then follows a thematic chapter of agriculture, industry and wealth, and finally an account of the Dissolution

and subsequent history of the site. All the chapters demonstrate an effective integration of the documentary and archaeological evidence, although it would have been useful to have had a fuller explanation of the basis for the site chronology, and why some work can be assigned to particular abbacies. Similarly the imposition of the granges, either resulting in takeover where existing conditions could be accommodated within the Cistercian regime, or forcible depopulation, may need to be qualified in the light of work elsewhere, including Melrose.

In addition to giving a succinct account of information, each chapter challenges preconceptions about the monastic way of life. The speed and intensity of the building campaigns, in the church, cloister and beyond, until the mid-13th century must have had a profound effect on the which may indicate changing dynamics within the community, for example the changing use of claustral areas and the increasing social importance of the infirmary and abbot's lodgings. These two books, with their different emphases, give us many insights into the changing nature of Cistercian monasticism and the relationship between monastery and the secular world, management of the monastic resources and routine, in great contrast to the next two hundred years when little construction took place. It is during that time when we become aware of the more subtle changes that took place in and around the cloister.

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From Minster to Monastery: the development of Eynsham Abbey

Glyn Coppack

Hardy, A, Dodd, A and Keevill, G, 2003, *Ælfric's Abbey: Excavations at Eynsham Abbey, Oxfordshire, 1989-92*, Thames Valley Landscapes Monograph 16: Oxford ISBN 0947816917; Hardback pp xxv + 636, 180 figures, 71 plates £49.95

Hardy, A, 2003, *Eynsham: a village and its Abbey*, Oxford Archaeology: Oxford; ISBN 0904220303 Paperback, pp 28, illustrations throughout £4.50

Oxford Archaeology's large-scale excavations at Eynsham Abbey, occasioned by the appropriate reuse of the site as a graveyard, have provided us with something exceptional: the opportunity to examine under modern archaeological conditions the origins of a minster in the Middle Saxon period, its reformation as a post-*Regularis Concordia* Benedictine abbey from 1005, and its development as a major house of the order after its re-foundation by Henry I in 1109. Such opportunities rarely arise, particularly in post PPG16 archaeology; when they do they should be unashamedly grasped with both hands. The results here are effectively demonstrated in a major academic monograph and a popular account.

At Eynsham the extent and quality of the archaeology are remarkable and can be usefully related to the documented history of the site. This is not an easy task at the best of times

and is less so within the constraints of rescue archaeology. There are some 13 superimposed phases of building, complicated by extensive stone robbing and two sessions of excavation which meant that nothing was seen in its entirety. What is presented is a masterpiece of detective work by Anne Dodd and Alan Hardy using the excavation records of Richard Chambers and Graham Keevill. Understanding the site is enabled by structuring the monograph in five parts:

- Part One sets the scene
- Part Two describes the areas excavated
- Part Three the finds, Part Four deals with the wider precinct
- Part Five presents a synthesis of the data

While this simplifies an immense task, the reader would be wise to start with the popular booklet; working one's way through the monograph is not for the faint hearted.

'What is presented is a masterpiece of detective work'

First, it must be understood that that the excavation at Eynsham was only partial, conditioned as it was by the need to clear space for a graveyard. The monastic church and eastern part of the cloister lay below existing cemetery and were not available. The precinct contains two churches in use, St Leonard's, the medieval parish church, and St Peter's, a Roman Catholic church of the late 1930s. Thus while we have continuity of use there has been widespread damage to archaeological deposits which are likely to remain inaccessible. That said, what was achieved gives a remarkably clear picture of a major late Saxon and post-Conquest monastery, and provides tantalising glimpses of its earlier phases, both secular and religious.

Although the site of the minster church was not located, buildings and

enclosures associated with it were. Sealing early Saxon occupation with some five sunken floored buildings, pits, and hearths, it marked a reorganisation of this part of the settlement which is associated with the coming of Christianity to the *Gewicce* in the 7th century. By the mid-8th century, rectangular post-built structures are apparent with associated pits and hearths. A second phase in the 10th century produced a rectangular building rebuilt once. The south wall of the rebuilt building had fallen and its excavation revealed plaster panels on wattles between squared and rebated posts. There is a slight problem here, for the excavation text identifies the building as earth-fast, but John Blair and Helena Hamerow (Chapter 8) conclude the wall panels come from a cill-beam building. Does this actually mean a third phase of building was not identified in excavation? Elsewhere there was a further phase of timber buildings.

The foundation of Aelfric's monastery from 1005 is marked by a change from building in timber to building in stone, though the same alignment is maintained, presumably because the monastic church occupied the same site and alignment as the minster church. Here we have the regular ranges around an enclosed space as one would expect in a reformed Benedictine abbey of the period. We also have two Northampton-type mortar mixers and, although the structures were thoroughly robbed, evidence of very competent masonry. At this point, there is a problem with nomenclature. The west range is called a late-Saxon hall, possibly two-storied, on little available evidence apart from the fact that it was late Saxon. Associated structures to the west were descriptively called the cellar and north-west building, and the remaining structures the south and north ranges. We have to wait until Chapter 14 to find out what the

buildings were likely to have been. Suffice it to say that the word 'range' has connotations which are probably inappropriate in this setting. What they are not is cloister ranges.

Next comes an exercise in the elucidation of history by excavation, a planned rebuilding of the monastery which predates the great Norman rebuilding. According to the documents, the Norman Conquest had a dire effect on Eynsham Abbey and we are told that the community was scattered. Indeed, Bishop Rémi of Lincoln, himself a Benedictine of Fécamp, removed the community to Stow in Lincolnshire (only to be sent back by his successor Robert Bloet). While there may have been a temporary abandonment, the true story is much more interesting than recorded history. There is a 'transition' (another dangerous word in this context), a re-ordering of the abbey from the third quarter of the 11th century, with buildings on a new alignment suggestive of a new church. Whether these are buildings provided for the builders, or, more likely, temporary accommodation for the community, they are of exceptional significance, in the eyes of this reviewer the first temporary Benedictine buildings to be recorded anywhere. All of this gives the lie to Henry I's re-foundation charter, that the abbey was deserted and its affairs in disorder. Rebuilding was already underway and the removal of part of the community to Stow (where they could serve the bishop's household) was a way of easing that process.

'A largish part of the monograph comprises finds reports, demonstrating the richness of monastic sites generally, and of Eynsham Abbey in particular'

Henry I's contribution seems to have been the kick-starting of the

reconstruction of the main cloister ranges to a standard Benedictine plan. Even this was not straightforward. The primary work was an east-west refectory and the south and west alleys of the cloister, with a detached kitchen of unusual form. This was apparently replaced with a kitchen of more conventional plan before it was finished. To its east was a large domestic range with its own kitchen and latrines; we have to wait until p 502 to learn that it was probably the guest hall. There was clear evidence of reconstruction: two fountain houses in the cloister and evidence of a rebuilding of the cloister arcade, two sets of water-pipes and their associated drains. However, the main cloister ranges seem to have survived barely altered to the suppression, and some structures were retained for post-Suppression reuse. The machine stripping of the site and its excavation in two parts makes it difficult to be sure what was retained and what was immediately dismantled. This is unfortunate, for one of the subjects we desperately need to understand more about is the conversion of monastic sites to domestic use. Surely Oxford Archaeology must have understood this in the 1980s.

A largish part of the monograph comprises finds reports, demonstrating the richness of monastic sites generally, and of Eynsham Abbey in particular. Dealt with conventionally, the significance of the finds is also discussed in the final synthesis. Useful accounts of the Romanesque and earlier (by John Blair with a contribution by Rosemary Cramp) and Gothic (by Richard Morris) architectural detail give evidence of the elevations that did not survive, and indicate the quality of the buildings we have lost. The pottery (Chapter 7, by Paul Blinkhorn) is presented in critical groups, related closely to the excavation narrative. The

medieval material, coming as it does from the service end of the monastery is particularly informative. The small finds (Chapter 9, multiple authors) are exceptional, not least because they were so well stratified and are related back to their context and phase.

Chapters 14 and 15 discuss the Anglo-Saxon and medieval and later sequences and place them in context. For the Anglo-Saxon material this is excellent and draws on virtually the whole corpus of available material. Post-Conquest, I have some reservations. Largely this relates to non-standard terminology. Since when have the courts of a monastery been called 'wards'? The word used historically is either *praecinctum* or *curia*. That the monastery was divided into three discrete parts, house, inner court, and outer court, would not be seen as unusual or hailed as a discovery by anyone who had read Suppression period inventories and surveys. Why should burials in the south cloister alley be members of the community and not patrons? Similarly, why should lay folk not be buried within the monastic cemetery? They certainly were elsewhere. But these are small problems. This is a well considered discussion of the outcome of a major excavation. The authors have served the site well, and both publications make the complex data recovered easy to use and understand. Illustration of both is exceptional. For all this, on a site of remarkable complexity, they deserve to be congratulated.

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An Outstanding Scottish Building

Geoffrey Stell

Driscoll, ST, 2002, Excavations at Glasgow Cathedral 1988-1997
The Society for Medieval Archaeology Monograph 18: Leeds
ISBN 1 902653 66 1
xvi + 172 pages, 159 figures, 25 colour plates

This is the first monograph in the Society for Medieval Archaeology series to be published in an enlarged, new style A4 format. It is also the first in this long-established series to be dedicated to a Scottish subject, much of the excavation programme and the publication itself having been generously supported by Historic Scotland.

That Glasgow Cathedral should be the object of this double first is entirely fitting because, as the mother church of Scotland's second medieval archdiocese (after St Andrew's) and the setting for the tomb of St Kentigern (aka Mungo), this splendid building is arguably the most complete and certainly among the most stylish surviving architectural representatives of the high Middle Ages in Scotland. Yet even as late as the 1960s, when this reviewer was a student in Glasgow, the outstanding qualities of this cathedral were scarcely known or acknowledged beyond the city itself, let alone outside Scotland. In recent decades, thanks in large measure to the work of scholars such as Richard Fawcett, the history, design and detailing of Glasgow Cathedral have at last begun to be recognised and appreciated by a considerably wider audience, much in the same way as the architecture of Victorian and Edwardian Glasgow has come to be 'discovered' by the world at large.

Visited by, among others, the Royal Archaeological Institute in 1986 (Report, 1986), the cathedral formed the centrepiece of the British Archaeological Association's 1997 conference and publication (Fawcett, 1998) and the volume under review clearly marks another significant stage in this wider dissemination process.

This monograph reports on two excavation programmes undertaken in 1988 and 1992-3 respectively by the Scottish Urban Archaeological Trust (SUAT) and Glasgow University Archaeological Research Division (GUARD). The 1988 work, under the direction of Hugh McBrien, was focused upon the sites of two western towers which flanked the main west door until their demolition in 1846-8. The much more extensive 1992-3 excavations, directed by Stephen Driscoll, were carried out in advance of the installation of new heating and electrical systems, and comprised selected areas of the interior, including the choir, crypt, former treasury (now session room) and especially the nave. Supplemented by brief accounts of relatively minor activity in 1994 and 1996-7, these reports also bring together the findings of earlier excavations in 1898 (crypt), 1973 (north-west tower) and 1978 (crypt), thereby creating a synthesis of all that can be ascertained about Glasgow Cathedral from the records of archaeological investigations in modern times.

It is a tribute to Dr Driscoll's editorial skills in the lucid and systematic ordering of the material and in the careful association of text and contextual illustrations that readers are rarely, if ever, in danger of losing their bearings as they make their way through the account, something that can occur all too easily in detailed reports of large-scale excavations, especially of interiors. Accessibility is greatly assisted by the large format and by the quality of the illustrations and of their reproduction, including, notably, a four-page colour

section on the painted late 12th-century architectural fragments.

Overall, the excavations support and amplify the chronology of building suggested by the documented history and architecture of the existing cathedral (Fawcett, 1990, 1996, 1998), filling some important gaps in the earliest phases in the sequence. Evidence of burials testify to the use of the site as a Christian cemetery, possibly from the later 7th century, not long after the era of the historical Kentigern himself (died c 614) when Govan, not Glasgow, was the ecclesiastical centre of this region. The cult of Kentigern almost certainly underpinned the remarkable sequence of cathedral building and rebuilding programmes from the early 12th century onwards. These excavations have revealed *in situ* remains and architectural fragments both of the first cathedral, which was dedicated in 1136, and of its enlarged successor, consecrated in 1197. The new evidence suggests that both schemes were of some scale and ambition, though the indications are that both probably remained incomplete. Of special significance are the 18 newly-discovered fragments of painted stone which, together with the painted voussoir discovered in 1914-16, constitute virtually the entire corpus of early wall-painting in Scotland, all here attributed (by Helen Howard and David Park) to the late 12th century and providing a tantalising glimpse into the colourful interior of Bishop Jocelin's cathedral.

'this splendid building is arguably the most complete and ... most stylish ...yet... the outstanding qualities...were scarcely known or acknowledged beyond the city itself.'

Our knowledge of the structural history of the later cathedral has also been amplified by the excavations of the surviving remains of the two western towers. These investigations confirmed that both towers had been

added to the west front, but they were built almost two centuries apart. The foundations of the northernmost appear to have been laid when the north nave aisle was reaching completion in the late 13th century, the tower itself having probably been erected in the early 14th century. The archaeological and the documentary evidence point to a late 15th-century building date for the southernmost tower.

In addition to the architectural discoveries, important artefacts recovered in the course of the excavations included, in the nave, matching fragments of a 12th-century -disc-headed cross which had probably served as a burial-marker or boundary stone, a late 13th-century bronze seal matrix of one Adam le Porter bearing a clear representation of a gatehouse, symbol of his role, and, buried in the crypt, two massive bronze mortars of late 13th- and 14th-century date associated with a later iron pestle. However, as expected at the outset of the 1992-3 excavations, evidence of burial activity predominated. Together with large quantities of disarticulated remains, the 84 burials recorded during the excavation have provided a significant assemblage of human skeletal remains dating from the 14th to the 19th centuries (55 from the 14th- / 17th-century period), and their analysis by Sarah King has provided useful comparative data on the physical characteristics of Glaswegians sufficiently privileged to be buried in the cathedral. Exactly half of the 84 burials betrayed the use of wooden coffins; most were associated with 18th- and 19th-century burials but three coffins of trapezoidal type certainly date from before 1700, possibly before 1650.

However, in what is an otherwise exemplary report, it is not unfair to point to a contextual gap in the wider

discussion of the medieval burials in the nave. Particularly with regard to the more organised burials at the eastern end of the nave, the report hints (eg pp 9-10, 159-60) at a possible relationship between the locations of the burial lairs (graves or burial plots) and the numerous altars endowed by the laity in the later Middle Ages. Frustratingly, there is no published graphic record of any attempt to explore and test any such possible correlations, which is perhaps a lost opportunity. Even accepting the complexities that surround the physical identification of the erstwhile altars, the commentary on the burials would undoubtedly have been assisted by a more focused discussion of their locations in relation to the likely placing, however provisional, of the altars in the upper and lower church. It is generally agreed that there was a total of six altars in the lower church, but in the upper church it has been shown (Durkan, 1970) that the initial census of 24 altars by Archbishop Eyre (Eyre, 1898) was at least five too many and that his depiction of the positions of those in the nave and crossing requires revision. A true meeting-point of historians and archaeologists, this whole subject-area is increasingly likely to be re-visited by both, and points of reference, whether positive or negative, will undoubtedly be sought of the Glasgow Cathedral evidence.

A second, more general contextual gap concerns the graphic depiction of the cathedral site itself. As can even be detected in Mackintosh's famous artistic view on the front cover, there is an almost seven-metre fall in ground-level from west to east through the cathedral in its fully extended form. This eastward slope has clearly set the physical context for the unusual two-storeyed design of the eastern limb (and of the associated

two-storeyed chapter house at the north-east corner). Given this, one might have expected modern survey techniques to have been applied to the production of a longitudinal section or elevation depicting in schematic form how the progressive architectural development of the building and the different archaeological levels within and around it relate to the natural surface of the ground. Such an illustration would have usefully complemented Figs 1.4 and 1.7, and would have served as a modern counterpart to the 1835 architectural drawings (Collie, 1835, part illustrated in Fawcett, 1996). Among other things, it would also have emphasised at a glance the sheer practicalities involved in extending the eastern arm of the church, a major task which was given such priority and emphasis in the middle decades of the 13th century, and one which, in the creation of a fully developed choir and crypt centred around the tomb of St Kentigern, thereby made Glasgow Cathedral a very special place, even by international standards.

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Decorated Medieval Floor Tiles of Somerset

Evelyn Baker

Barbara J Lowe, 2003

Somerset Archaeological and Natural
History Society and Somerset County
Museums Service

The Cromwell Press Ltd

ISBN 086 183 366X

vi + 160pp, 17 figs, maps and plans

598 catalogue illus

This book is a reminder of how valuable the work of a dedicated 'amateur' can be. The author became involved in floor tile studies over 40 years ago when she volunteered to undertake the examination of thousands of fragments of medieval floor tiles from Keynsham Abbey; and she started from basics, probably the best of training methods, by washing, sorting, collecting, measuring and tracing each one. By this means she came to a deep understanding of the Keynsham assemblage, including reconstructing the designs, and widened this to search for parallels in churches and museums in Somerset and neighbouring counties. The book covers tiles within the pre-1974 historic county, with a cut-off point of 1995.

The long list of acknowledgements shows how widely she sought advice and how freely this was given by local experts and by gurus such as Elizabeth Eames, Laurence Keen, Alan Vince and John Cherry. The principal value of the book is its use as a reference source for museum staff and working archaeologists seeking to understand their material. The work on heraldry will be useful for historians, art historians and archaeologists – their worlds are getting ever closer together.

There has been some attempt at synthesis, in as far as schools of tilers have been identified and their distribution challenged; some of the schools described appear to have no connection with Somerset. The list of tile types (pp8 – 9) is rather simplistic; *sgraffito* is by no means restricted to Tring, and line impressed tiles are much more complex and can appear on pseudo-mosaic tiles for instance. Plain tiles, an important component of many designs and sometimes whole pavements, are not given their rightful place, especially when the author says that Keynsham had 12 different sizes and shapes of plain tile. 'Some were pre-scored divisions of the common c. 130mm (5") square whilst others were fired as individual small tiles.' The pre-scored tiles are pseudo-mosaic and the little ones indicate a greater complexity than has perhaps been recognised, but this is an indication of the date this huge project started. Of great potential interest are the tiles that appear to have been individually made or experimental, and may well indicate tiles being made on the site on which they were used; tiles 134, 137, 292, 485, 551 -553, 558 – 560 all appear from the drawings and catalogue alone to possibly be of individual workmanship, but close examination of the tiles would be necessary to be certain that they are not simply poor representatives of known manufactured types.

'Barbara Lowe is to be congratulated on a dogged determination to see the project through'

Tiles have been ordered by visual type rather than by school, and this makes it relatively easy to track down any particular stamp. Any school attribution is within the simply laid-out catalogue; but why is the chequer design 557 not with its close 'mates' 479, 484 and so on? However, for the most part it works well. The keying is photographed, but it was perhaps too much additional work to make a type

series. An attempt to isolate fabrics where possible would have been helpful, though it has to be recognised that this is not possible with many *in situ* examples and only limited petrological examination has been possible; this might usefully have been published and incorporated as appropriate. The catalogue works well, and it is useful to have parallels listed with the designs, and the gazetteer of sites similarly helpful. Descriptions are graphic and not at all scientific, eg amber or donkey, but they communicate.

The drawings are clear and simple, with no fussiness or embellishment; the stamps used should be easily identifiable, though one does wonder why Mrs Lowe felt that some outer edges should be squared up for publication. Only the minimum have been reconstructed, but this is not consistent overall: why reconstruct tile 382 but not 383 where there is more tile to go on? Why are there two drawings of tile 408 when one reconstructed illustration would do? And the smaller reconstruction has, irritatingly, not been pasted up properly, not being parallel to its squared-off twin. Has tile 488 relied too much on other heraldic information with its three swans, however convincing the reconstruction seems?

Especially impressive are the numerous reconstructions of the tile patterns, and the many, many happy hours must have been spent working these out and drawing them up must have been extremely satisfying. One final quibble: the careful drawings of the Cleve Abbey, Barrow Minchin nunnery pavements, and the fragment from Keynsham have been spoilt by over-heavy lettering; how interesting it would be to see reductions of the designs in the catalogue substituted for them.

Altogether this is a well presented and copiously illustrated volume that should find a welcome place in the library of all medievalists working in

the region, and of all those who like to visit museums and our ecclesiastical heritage. Barbara Lowe is to be congratulated on a dogged determination to see the project through with great thoroughness; the upgrading of recording procedures and the widening of the brief by The Medieval Tile Census clearly left a discouraging mark, but the discipline must move on. I shall certainly value my copy.

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Crusaders Coffers, Knightly Orders and Excavations in London

Christopher Gerrard

Sloane, B, & Malcolm, G, 2004
Excavations at the priory of the Order
of the Hospital of St John of
Jerusalem, Clerkenwell
MoLAS Monograph 20, Museum of
London Archaeology Service, London.
ISBN 1 901992 20 9
21x30 cms, 434 pages
202 figures, 102 tables

The late 11th and early 12th centuries were a time of extraordinary expansion for monastic and canonical orders, a religious renaissance from which emerged wholly new institutions such as the Cistercians, the Premonstratensians and the Carthusians. Among these newly fashionable interpretations of the monastic ideal were the military orders of the Temple and St John of Jerusalem. The latter, better known as the Knights Hospitaller, was one of the groups of fighting monks who emerged in the early 12th century when the Hospital of St John was first established in Jerusalem. There is some debate about exactly when they were militarized, but perhaps by the 1130s their role already blended the life of the monk with that of the warrior whose avowed intention was the protection and accommodation of pilgrims in the Holy Land. These armed brethren very quickly acquired patrons and lands both in the Crusader states and all over Europe, from Sicily to the Iberian peninsula. With its headquarters first in Jerusalem, then Acre, Rhodes and finally Malta, the Order was truly an

international operation which counted on its distant estates for financial support and for inspiring its new recruits.

In Britain there is some debate about which was the first of the Hospitaller houses. Quite possibly it was at Slebech in south Wales, later the largest house of the Order in the west, but it was Clerkenwell, founded in 1144 just outside the walls of medieval London, which became the principal house. The date is no coincidence, for at that very moment, while the Hospitallers were fortifying their newly acquired castle at Crac des Chevaliers to the north-east of Tripoli and building in Acre to take the pilgrims who landed there by sea, they were also reorganizing themselves for what would become the Second Crusade. Ambitious building and military plans required deep coffers and the purpose of the new foundation at Clerkenwell must be seen in this light, as a means of providing resources for the conflict far away. Patrons donated for a variety of reasons, some sought divine favour, others saw a gift as a substitute for active combat. Provision for the poor and for medieval travellers was also a particular feature of Hospitaller foundations.

'It ... revolutionizes our understanding of this important site'

The existing literature on the Hospitallers ranges from the furthest outposts of hardback academia to the downright bizarre. As early as 1594 there were already general histories of the Order and there are now many specific studies of individual houses and regions all over Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean. These largely historical volumes are full of information about patronage, military obligations, administration and land management, all drawing upon the richness of the documentary record. But given the extraordinary public interest it comes as something of a

surprise to find just how little the archaeologist has contributed. Until recently, discussion of written evidence has far outweighed any details of their material culture, economy, and precinct layouts, partly because so few buildings survive in even semi-complete form. From what we know of the physical layout of rural preceptories their character was something of a mix between secular manor and monastery. They may not have had cloisters but they did have buildings such as chapels (as at Garway in Herefordshire) with residential accommodation arranged around a central courtyard. A particular feature is the plentiful storage space provided in the form of barns like those still standing at Cressing Temple in Essex. With the benefit of these surviving buildings and the scattered archaeological evidence, we can build up a decent image of how a typical preceptory might have looked, but until this publication we had little idea about arrangements for the provincial headquarters.

This volume is one of a series of publications by the Museum of London Archaeology Service which draw together recent archaeological results on religious houses in London. Beautifully produced on high quality paper, the text is copiously illustrated with crisp plans and photographs, some in colour. Following an introductory chapter and a short discussion of land use in the Roman and early medieval periods, the bulk of the text concerns the archaeological and historical evidence for the priory from the mid-12th century to the general dissolution. Various aspects of the research are then developed further, namely the architecture, layout and development of the precinct, diet and health, personnel and craft activities. The volume closes with the documentary and archaeological evidence for the post-medieval fate of the site and raises research questions for the future.

Specialist reports on everything from plant remains to pottery are reproduced at the end but accustomed readers of archaeological reports will notice that the main conclusions and much of the evidence for the finds are drawn forward and incorporated into the main medieval chapters. This is unusual but the advantages of this integrated arrangement are that the reader engages with a single chronological narrative and has the benefit of checking on precise detail if so desired. I thought it worked well here, though I did find the ordering of some sections a little puzzling at times. There is, for example, a useful but oddly placed section on round-naved churches right at the beginning of the volume when it should surely have come later on, and in the first chapter we are faced with more detail on the organisation of the report than on the documentary sources. The discussion of previous archaeology work on Hospitaller houses in Britain is also too brief.

The early archaeological evidence for St John Clerkenwell is restricted mostly to the church with its round nave, aisle-less chancel and crypt below. At first the developing complex must have stood in a rural setting, surrounded by fields. This soon changed in 1184-5 when the Priory of England probably became independent and the Order began to profit from a higher profile after the Third Crusade. A much enlarged crypt was constructed for the church with a three-aisled chancel above, creating one of the finest Transitional-style buildings in London. Outside there is slight evidence for conventual buildings, a possible timber barn or stables and yard surfaces with pits. One of these, originally quarried out

possibly for road metalling, contained compacted plant material, the remains of soiled stable bedding which were periodically cleared out.

Expenditure continued into the 14th century with the demolition of the round nave and its replacement with a larger rectangular structure. The new structure may have mimicked contemporary 'preaching naves' of the mendicant orders, or perhaps the round nave was an unwelcome reminder of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem once the Order had left the Holy Land in 1291. Other aggrandisements within the inner precinct included the addition of a formal cloister to the south of the church and further conventual buildings including a 'Great Chamber'. In the outer precinct, plot boundaries were being laid out in order to maximize rentals and there is evidence of both clay digging and horn working, a unique feature among London religious communities thus far, though whether the priory was itself involved or merely rented the land out for this purpose is not known. The latter seems more likely.

Much of the evidence presented here focuses on the two centuries between 1330 and 1540 and there is very complete documentary evidence for the second half of that period.

The outer precinct of the priory filled up with workshops and traders, cottages and gardens, as well as more imposing dwellings set around courtyards. In the early 16th century one of these was decorated with terracotta windows, plinths and plaques, while another had its own chapel, courtyard and stables. Many of these properties were rented out or leased by servants of the Priory and

the character of the housing seems very different to that found in other suburbs of the City of London. Through the Great Gate (the inner gatehouse) lay the inner walled precinct which housed a suite of buildings more akin to a palace than a religious community. Only the prominent church, cloister, refectory and cemeteries marked the site out as something more.

One of the great questions facing medieval archaeology in the present climate of limited excavation is whether anything really new can be added to what we know of medieval monuments. This volume synthesizes the results of no less than 19 interventions from the 1860s to the present day to weave a single coherent story. Anyone who has attempted anything similar, never mind combining the results with the volume of historical and architectural evidence available for an urban site, knows just how difficult a task that is. It is a great tribute to the authors that their work is not only coherent but revolutionizes our understanding of this important site. They admit there is more to be done, on the layout of the early precinct for example. I was struck by the clear parallels between what the authors call here 'a palace-preceptory' and those in southern Europe and, with the publication of this excellent report, there must surely now be scope for a detailed European review of the houses of the Military Orders.

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Experiencing Pilgrimage, to be a Pilgrim?

Tim Pestell

Hopper, S, 2002,
To Be A Pilgrim. The Medieval Pilgrimage Experience
Sutton Publishing: Stroud.
ISBN 0 7509 2620 1
Hb, x+182pp, 101 plates, 86 in colour
£20.00

Morris, C and Roberts, P, 2002,
Pilgrimage. The English Experience from Becket to Bunyan
CUP: Cambridge.
ISBN 0 521 80811 1
Hb, xvi+268, 30 plates, 2 figures
£45.00

Medieval pilgrimage has long been a source of fascination to archaeologists and historians. A sign of the experiential approaches to its study in current academic thought is explicit in the sub-title of both books, yet they provide very different treatments of the same phenomenon.

Sarah Hopper's *To Be A Pilgrim* provides a sensibly rounded survey of medieval pilgrimage, accompanied by a lavish number of colour plates. Curiously, it has also already been remaindered among the bargain books in my local department store. The book begins with what inspired people to undertake a pilgrimage before considering a variety of shrines in separate chapters, ranging from the Holy Land, Rome and Santiago de Compostela. Two chapters then consider the important English shrines of Canterbury and Walsingham, as well as other sites like Hailes. Hopper then returns to the individual, looking at the journey and character of the medieval pilgrim, discussing, for instance, a possible pilgrim burial from Worcester cathedral. Yet this is

where one of this book's failings becomes clear. No source for this information on Worcester is given and comparanda, such as the bodies from Hulton Abbey, are not acknowledged. It is therefore very difficult to use Hopper's work as anything more than an interesting read.

Regrettably, further investigation shows up more serious deficiencies. For instance, Walsingham is poorly served despite being the subject of its own chapter. While its 'remarkable story' is recounted, the evidence for the shrine is simply not discussed critically. Thus the foundation legend of a 1061 establishment by the suspiciously Norman-sounding Richeldis de Fervaques is recounted without the source of this account (Richard Pynson's verse legend of c1496) ever being mentioned. The five footnotes accompanying this chapter actually cite only two works, one a secondary source. The plate showing some of the imposing ruins that survive at Walsingham is misleadingly captioned '*remains in the Abbey's grounds include a large Norman arch*'. They don't, and the ruin in question is the (clearly) Perpendicular east end of the church. The very visual, but ultimately superficial, reach of this book is summed up by its beautiful half-page colour plate (p 143), of a reliquary casket depicting scenes of Thomas Becket's martyrdom. The reference to this important object in the main text is no more than a passing sentence.

In fact, *Pilgrimage* provides a series of contrasts with *To Be A Pilgrim*. It is economically illustrated (all plates and figures are monochrome), essentially Anglo-centric, and costs more than twice as much. *Pilgrimage* is a collection of essays that originated in a conference on English pilgrimage held at the University of Kent in 2000, and which seeks to make '*a distinctive contribution to the growing body of historical literature on the concept and experience of pilgrimage*' (p. xii). All nine contributors are well-established

scholars in their respective fields and the papers presented here frequently build upon themes and ideas presented by them in their published work elsewhere. The authors' experience and knowledge of the primary sources (both historical and art-historical) therefore enables a more critical investigation into what pilgrimage meant, in a variety of contexts. There is space here only to consider a few of the chapters.

Understandably, Becket and Canterbury loom large, featuring specifically in three of the chapters. Two will be of particular interest to readers of this journal. Richard Gameson considers the early imagery of Thomas Becket, as seen through a wide range of media. He concludes that there is a relative stability in the iconography of Becket's martyrdom, particularly remarkable given the huge quantity of early Becket images. The art historical theme is continued in Tim Tatton-Brown's chapter on the architecture of pilgrim shrines at Canterbury and elsewhere in England, in which he charts the structural and decorative developments taking place at other shrines across the kingdom. He concludes by describing Canterbury's Trinity Chapel as '*perhaps the finest architectural setting for any pilgrimage site in Christendom*' (p. 107). The suppression of Becket's cult is dealt with at length by Peter Roberts. He points out that the enforced demise of this most powerful of English cults was necessary not only in the context of Henry VIII's general assault on saints and relics, but to consolidate royal supremacy of the church. Becket, after all, represented the perceived '*triumph of papal over regal jurisdiction*' (p. 199), and Henry was keen to avoid the sort of setbacks the turbulent priest caused to his namesake Henry II.

By contrast, Carole Rawcliffe and Eamon Duffy both use examples from late medieval East Anglia to explore the idea of pilgrimage in the medieval consciousness. Duffy argues that while

pilgrimage has most recently been associated with concepts of liminality, 'removing [people] physically and socially from their normal environments' (p. 165) in fact by the 15th century most pilgrimages were to local shrines by penitents in search of 'Gostly helth' (p. 175). This idea is developed in Rawcliffe's examination of the relationship between pilgrimage and the sick, in which 'medieval men and women drew comfort and reassurance from their communion with the saints' (p. 139). For Rawcliffe, pilgrimage was

one element in a rich diversity of medieval medical practice.

So which book should fill that slight chink still left on your bookshelf? With its readable text and glossy pictures *To Be A Pilgrim* is undoubtedly successful as an 'entry level' work introducing the subject. Unfortunately, it is spoilt by a number of careless slips and scant references, which means that many will find it of limited use. Less broad in scope, *Pilgrimage*, by contrast, is an important series of statements

developing concepts of what the phenomenon was and what it meant and is thus important for anyone researching the subject. Sadly, my local store is unlikely to have it remaindered in the near future.

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Reformation, simply a record of destruction?

Christopher King

Gaimster D & Gilchrist R (eds) 2003
The Archaeology of Reformation
1480-1580

Society for Post Medieval Archaeology
Monograph 1

Leeds, Maney

ISBN 1740 4924

Hardback 25x18 cm, 492 pages

220 line, 4 colour plates and 14

Illustrations.

This volume is the result of the second joint conference of the Society for Medieval Archaeology and the Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology, *The Archaeology of Reformation*, in 2001. The years around 1530 and the process of Reformation are, of course, a long-standing historiographical division, not least in archaeology, where they form the chronological limits between medieval and post-medieval studies. In tackling this crucial transition period the two societies have contributed to breaking down intellectual barriers, asking what changed and what stayed the same in this time of religious, political, social and economic transformation. The volume as a whole is notable for the broad range of religious institutions, monuments and practices which are discussed – including parish churches, monasteries, guildhalls, urban landscapes, domestic space and burials. Whilst the primary focus is England, examples are also drawn from Scotland, Ireland and the continent, providing a vital European dimension. The papers marshal a wide range of sources, highlighting both the diversity of late medieval religious culture and the complexity of religious change. The key aim of the volume, as

expressed by the editors, is to demonstrate that the rigorous archaeological study of physical evidence can provide new insights into the character and chronology of the Reformation. In this aim the volume certainly succeeds.

After a brief introduction by the editors, there are 30 papers (not all of which can be specifically mentioned here) divided between five sections; 1) Public worship and iconoclasm; 2) Private devotion and material culture; 3) Dissolution landscapes and secular power; 4) Corporate charity and Reformation; 5) Burial and commemoration. Within these sections, an initial paper provides a broad overview of the important themes and current research, followed by more in-depth individual studies.

Public worship and iconoclasm:

The parish church is perhaps the most obvious place to begin looking for the impact of the Reformation at a local level. Margaret Aston gives an overview of the complex history of iconoclasm in churches, highlighting the loss of the sensory aspects of traditional worship and their replacement with the Word. Regional variation in the spread of the Reformation has emerged as a key topic of recent research. Niall Oakey identifies broad regional differences in the survival of pre-Reformation church fittings in four English counties, suggestive of a wide range of national and local influences between the 16th and the 19th centuries. This section also contains a series of papers giving a broader European perspective, including the impact on church buildings in Finland, Denmark, and Catholic France. Andrew Spicer compares the adaptation of medieval churches for Protestant worship in Scotland and the Netherlands. In the latter country, magistrates retained control over church interiors, and preserved fittings such as stained glass and organs which were associated with civic authority and pride.

‘[Archaeology]... can do much more than simply illustrate an existing historical narrative of the Reformation’

Private devotion and material culture:

Sarah Tarlow discusses the treatment of Catholic objects at the Reformation. Through various strategies of destruction, concealment and re-use local communities were able to negotiate religious change, and incorporated elements of traditional practice in a Protestant context. David Gaimster extends this understanding of the transition through a study of the iconography of domestic ceramics, which changed from a repertoire based on medieval Catholic imagery to one infused with biblical, allegorical and political themes. Hugo Blake *et al* provide a case study of the development and Reformation of a medieval cult, the Holy Name of Jesus, through its representation in buildings, glass, tombs, jewellery and ceramics.

As well as these discussions of portable material culture, this section includes papers by Paul Everson and David Stocker, and Kirsty Rodwell, on the impact of new religious and political allegiances on elite domestic architecture. In both these papers, as well as Beverley Nenk's fascinating account of London's crypto-Jewish community, the Reformation is shown to have had a dramatic impact on all aspects of the social framework, so that there can be no easy distinctions between religious and secular power and identities

Dissolution landscapes and secular power:

In many ways the Dissolution of the monasteries was the most dramatic physical impact of the Reformation, and a series of papers address the transformation of previously closed, sacred sites into centres of secular and civic power. Maurice Howard describes the varied planning

arrangements that emerged with the conversion of monastic buildings into elite residences. This paper also raises the particular impact of the Dissolution on the urban landscape, and these ideas are further explored through a group of case studies of individual towns; Simon Ward on Chester; Iain Soden on Coventry; and Barney Sloane, Christopher Phillpotts and John Schofield on London. Urban monasteries suffered a wide variety of fates, from conversion into elite residences or civic buildings, to division into tenements, to total destruction and use as a quarry for stone. Ann Hamlin and Nick Brannon reveal a similar experience for the monasteries of Northern Ireland, where the chronology and political context of religious change were of course very different. A key contribution of many of these papers is to demonstrate the complexity of the medieval monastic landscape, which necessarily affects our understanding of the Reformation. Richard K Morris uses the evidence of worked stone fragments to show the continued elaboration of some monastic buildings in the decades before the Dissolution, whilst Barney Sloane and Simon Ward show that many monastic precincts had already become the focus for elite residences in the 15th century.

Corporate charity and Reformation:

Whereas the archaeological study of parish churches and monasteries is long established, many other religious institutions – such as guilds, chantries, hospitals and almshouses – have only recently come under scrutiny. The papers in this section address these vital elements of medieval religious culture. Simon Roffey describes the importance of chantries in the late medieval parish church, and the archaeological evidence for their re-use after the Reformation as private burial chapels for the elite. Kate Giles explores the changing role of urban guildhalls in the provision of corporate charity, showing how these medieval buildings were appropriated by civic authorities to enforce new ideas of secular authority and social control over the poor. These changes are further explored through two case studies of corporate buildings in London, Nick Bateman on the Guildhall library and David Sankey on the Merchant Taylors Hall.

Burial and commemoration:

The doctrine of Purgatory and the practices of intercession were vital to late medieval religion, and the Reformation fundamentally altered the relationship between the living and the dead. Nevertheless, the

archaeological evidence for burial and commemoration shows significant elements of continuity as well as change. Vanessa Harding provides an historical overview of funerary rituals, and argues that some features of Catholic ritual continued to serve important social and cultural needs. Roberta Gilchrist discusses the excavated evidence for 16th-century burials, and despite the methodological constraints demonstrates changes in burial practices, particularly the treatment of the body and in the burial of children, which can be associated with new religious ideas. Changing practices of commemoration are a crucial source of material evidence for the Reformation, and papers by Jonathan Finch, Robert Hutchinson and Jörn Staecker discuss evidence for continuity and change in the form of English and Danish monuments. In both countries monuments were a vital means by which Protestant ideology, secular authority and personal religious identities were established.

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Converting to Christianity

Margaret Faull

Carver, M (ed), 2003

The Cross goes North: processes of conversion in Northern Europe, AD 300 – 1300

York Medieval Press: York.

ISBN 1 903153 11 5

Hardback, xiv + 591pp

49 black and white prints, 87 figures

£75

The Cross goes North, the result of a conference in 2000 to mark the beginning of the third Christian millennium, is a landmark work in the field of studies of Christian conversion and practice throughout northern Europe during a 1,000 year period. The book is divided into four main sections – the general processes of conversion; Christianity in the Celtic lands; Christianity and the English; and Christianity from the Alps to the Baltic – and contains a total of 37 chapters, all of which will be essential reading for those working in the field. There is a very wide coverage, the one area perhaps missing being a general chapter on the conversion of Ireland, unlike for the other major regions covered. Even in an extended review, it is possible only to outline the main themes and to touch on a few particular points. Therefore, in light of the interests of the majority of the membership of the Society for Church Archaeology, this review will concentrate especially on the sections on Celtic and English Christianity.

The ten chapters on the Celtic areas (leaving aside the thorny debate as to what actually constitutes a 'Celtic' area) deal with the conversion of north-western Roman Gaul; the failed promise of Roman Britain; the identification of late Roman cemeteries in Britain; votive deposits as illustrating Christian practice in late

Roman Britain; Christian origins in Wales and western Britain; the conversion of the Iveragh / Dingle area of Ireland; Cogitosus' description of the church of St Brigit, Kildare; early medieval Christian Cornwall; early medieval parish formation in Dumfries and Galloway; and Christian and pagan practice during the conversion of Viking Age Orkney and Shetland. In the space available, I can pick out only one point of interest – the study by David Petts of the disposal in late-Roman eastern England of lead tanks, groups of pewter vessels and precious metal hoards, all with obviously Christian symbols such as the *chi-rho*, by burial in the ground or in a watery context. He suggests that the earlier pagan practice of deposition of valuable items in rivers, bogs and streams or in the ground had been assimilated into Christian practice, divorced from its pagan overtones and seen as a basic way of expressing religious belief.

The 12 chapters on English Christianity cover pagan and early Christian attitudes to the dead; the adaptation of the royal courts to Christianity; control of burial practice in middle Anglo-Saxon England; the conversion of the landscape in the Witham Valley; three ages of conversion at Kirkdale; *Streatanæshalch*, Strensall and Whitby; design and meaning in early medieval British and Irish inscriptions; word separation in Anglo-Saxon inscriptions; the mysteries of Christ in Anglo-Saxon sculpture; Alcuin's narratives of evangelism; Viking burial in the Danelaw; and the body of St Æthelthryth. Again to look at just one question, that examined by PS Barnwell, LAS Butler and CJ Dunn – whether the monastery described as *Streatanæshalch* by Bede is to be identified with Strensall or Whitby, or both. Some convincing arguments are put forward for the suggestion that the monastery may first have been located at Strensall, although the view that eventually its importance was

superceded by Whitby seems probable, if the distances given by Bede are to be accepted. This study does not take into account the possible identification of Bede's interpretation of the English name as *Sinus Fari* 'the bay of the lighthouse' with a Roman signal station on the headland at Whitby (Faull 1978-9, 34-5), while it has recently been suggested that it may have been located in Lancashire. It also seems rather disingenuous to prefer Strensall to Whitby on the grounds that, unless water transport only was used, Whitby was an inconvenient site for holding the 664 Council, unlike Strensall, which was close to the Deiran capital of York; it is known that the early Christian missionaries and bishops made extensive overland journeys between, for example, York and Hexham.

'...the earlier pagan practice of deposition of valuable items in rivers, bogs and streams ...had been assimilated into Christian practice'

Several themes emerge from a number of the papers. The first is the importance of the role of women in the conversion in much of northern Europe; the reasons for this are summarised on pp 9-10, and relate especially to the high standing and independent position occupied by women in many Germanic societies and the right agreed at marriage for royal Christian women married to pagan husbands to continue to practice their religion. In this context it was surprising to see no reference to Christine Fell's important work on Anglo-Saxon women (Fell 1984).

The second theme is the way in which missionaries had to convert the royal house (sometimes aided by the knowledge already gained from those Christian wives) if they were to have any hope of success. Once the king had converted, then a number of different processes led to a complex process of conversion. On the other hand, if there was resistance from the

royal court, then the conversion of the entire region failed, even if some people did convert; this is best seen in the stubborn resistance to Christianity of Birka in Sweden, resulting eventually in Birka being displaced by Sigtuna as the royal and commercial centre and, coincidentally, leaving a feast of sites on Birka for excavation by later archaeologists. In some areas ethnicity played a role, with, for example, the Germanic people of early medieval Jämtland in Sweden converting, but the Saami people maintaining their paganism. A third theme is the extent to which Christianisation led to fundamental changes in the whole way in which society and politics operated, with all areas of social life being affected. Indeed in England it is believed that Christianisation brought about major changes to how land came to be held and transmitted from generation to generation.

The fourth major theme of the book is the degree of survival of paganism within Christianity. In some places pagan practices were Christianised by the Church, while in others the pagan ways continued, as it were, in parallel. This is most clearly seen in Estonia, part of the last area of northern Europe to be converted, in the 13th century. Here, cremation survived until the 16th century, burial with grave goods, worship of local spirits (such as house snakes) and veneration of sacred non-Christian natural sites (such as groves, trees and healing wells) continued until the 19th century, while prohibition of work on the evening of the pagan holy day of Thursday continued into the early-20th century. In most of Estonia pagan and Christian sites never coincided, but in the Orthodox south-eastern corner, the pagan sites were

Christianised. A similar pattern is found in the British Isles, best known in the healing wells of Ireland, now all dedicated to Christian saints or Our Lady, but also documented until the early-20th century in England. Saint Helen, mother of Constantine and supposed discoverer of the true Cross in Jerusalem, was especially popular. The Christianisation of a pagan deity is best seen in the transmutation of the Irish goddess Brigit and her likely shrine at Kildare into that of the Christian St Brigit of Kildare and her church, described by Cogitosus.

‘Christianisation led to fundamental changes in the whole way in which society and politics operated’

The 136 illustrations, plans, line drawings and maps are all clear, relevant and attractive, although a few colour photographs would have been welcome, especially of some of the works of gold or the manuscripts shown on pp 405-7. There are also very few typographical errors in such a long work (womans’ instead of woman’s on p 239 and Pryor for Pryor on p 281). In a work covering such a wide area, both geographically and chronologically, brief notes on the contributors would have been useful.

The only major criticism of the book is that it does not appear to have been edited in the conventional sense of the term, ie ensuring a consistency of style, presentation, referencing, etcetera. Virtually all complaints about the work relate back to the editing or the lack of it. In editing it is essential to insist that all statements of fact are referenced so that they can be followed up (for example, the *ex-votos* on p 38 and the felling of the sacred groves on p 50 are un-referenced, amongst many others) and that every bibliographical

reference has a corresponding entry in the bibliography at the end of the chapter (for example, neither Hooke 1998 on p 34 nor Daniels 1999 on p 35 can be found in the bibliography on pp 52-7). Worse, the index is extremely erratic and selective, with everything in some chapters being included and only a few from other chapters (for example St Geneviève, p 70, is completely omitted and the reference to St Martin of Tours on p 71 is omitted from the references on p 586). There is a complete inconsistency of style, with numbers on occasion being spelled out and on others given as Arabic numerals. Place-name elements are sometimes given in inverted commas, sometimes in bold type, and sometimes in the conventional form of citation in italics. Most disconcerting of all are the variations in the referencing systems used; some papers use the Harvard system (author and date, full details at the end of the chapter); others use the more traditional method of footnotes, but in subsequent citations (*op cit*) fail to give the footnote number in which the original reference occurred. It is a pity that these shortfalls in editing should detract, and indeed sometimes distract, from the very important contents of a book that should remain essential reading for many years to come.

Margaret Faull is current Chair of the Society for Church Archaeology and Director of the National Coal Mining Museum, England.

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Two Medieval Churches in Norfolk

Jonathan Finch

Beazley, O, and Ayers, B, 2001
East Anglian Archaeology Report 96:
Norfolk.
ISBN 0 905594 33 9
£13.00
104pp, 33 plates, 59 Figs, 8 Tables

This latest excavation report in the excellent and affordable series covers the partial excavation of two medieval churches: one, the redundant St Martin's-at-Palace, in the heart of Norwich, between the Bishop's Palace and the river Wensum, the other a ruined church at Bowthorpe, some 5km west of the city. The Bowthorpe excavation was carried out in 1984/5 whilst that at St Martin's was carried out in 1987/8 – both in advance of development that aimed to draw the churches back into use. Both excavations were clearly problematic, as such archaeological projects often are – with time, resources, collapsing section sides and unstable fabric all serving to frustrate the original intentions.

The excavation in the tower, body of the nave and part of chancel of St Martin's revealed three early features: a single late-eighth century burial, and two phases wooden buildings on a roughly east-west alignment. It is suggested that the burial, which was east-west and without grave goods, might indicate the presence of a cemetery or an early church with burial rights. The presence of a residual *tibia* within the grave fill suggested that the burial was not isolated and further burials may exist beyond the excavated area. The earliest wooden structure was represented by three post pits set in a trench, located roughly in the middle bay of the south

nave arcade. The method of construction, a 10th/11th-century knife blade and unarticulated skeletal material, led to the conclusion that it was possibly a church with burial rights in use by c1000 and which may have been demolished in the first half of the 11th century. The evidence for a later building came in the form of seven post holes found in the north-west quadrant of the nave and appear to form the southern edge and south-west corner of a building at least ten and a half metres long. Its date is uncertain, but the use of a fragment of early-11th-century grave cover (unusual in itself for the region, with interlace work) as packing within one of the postholes suggests a construction date of perhaps the mid-11th century. The orientation of the building, the type of construction, and the fragment of grave cover, are used to suggest that this too was an early church.

'Both churches clearly have fascinating histories which have yet to be fully told'

It was however superseded by a large bicellular stone church which forms the core of the existing structure, very probably with its east wall protruding beyond the late 15th-century eastern aisle walls. Sadly, however, the excavations did not extend to the eastern end of the church and so the dating of the eastern wall with its long-and-short work has still not been resolved. The wider foundations of the chancel lead to suppositions about its possible role as a central crossing tower, yet this is not followed up in the stratigraphic interpretation of the external face of the east wall. Thereafter the report deals with the late-medieval and post-reformation periods as a single phase, due to the disturbed stratigraphy resulting from intramural burial. The skeletal remains, coffin furniture and textiles used to upholster the case of the coffin in the 17th and 18th centuries are all

well considered and illustrated. There is extensive documentary evidence for the church which became part of the endowment of the Priory in the late-12th century, and so appears in the Infirmarer's rolls over some two and a quarter centuries. As the footprint of the church expanded beyond the excavated area with the addition of a west tower and north aisle in the 14th century, the development of the church plan is largely derived from the documentary sources. After centuries of neglect, substantial works were undertaken in 1851, during which the chancel arch collapsed bringing down the eastern end of the north aisle. Perhaps worryingly for archaeologists, there was little evidence of this traumatic and well-documented event in the archaeological deposits. However, the perils of relying solely upon documentary evidence are illustrated by the report's assumption that no intramural burials would have taken place after the 1832 Intramural Burial Act. Archaeological evidence from elsewhere, such as the Spitalfields crypt clearance, for example, demonstrates that burial legislation was frequently evaded as burial customs proved stronger, until the foundation of (sub)urban cemeteries provided the middle classes with an acceptable alternative and attitudes began to change.

The excavation at St Martin's is paired with that of the ruined church of St Michael, Bowthorpe just west of the city. A much smaller rural parish church, the round tower, western nave and chancel were excavated. With no earlier features evident in the excavation and little dating evidence, the tower is assigned a date of c1080-1100, largely through comparative examples of church plans in the region. With a 14th-century rebuild of the chancel and the possible addition of a north porch, there was little development at the church and it descended into a ruinous state over the period of the Reformation. In the 1630s the chancel was refurbished as a

chapel whilst the nave appears to have been demolished leaving the free-standing round tower as a steeple or bell tower. The most interesting post-medieval aspect of the site is the subsequent use of the round tower as an oven or corn-dryer. Its brick floor and sides were apparent with a long stoke hole to the east, extending through the tower arch. Unfortunately, the excavators missed an articulated skeleton which had been carefully laid out in the brick floor of the stoke-hole and oven and so its exact deposition and relationship with the process of demolition is unclear. The process of demolition is one of interest and the interpretation offered is that a trench was dug around the outside of the tower and a fire of brushwood set on the north side causing the tower to fall outwards on all sides and 'jumping out of the foundation cut' (p 85). Such attention to the demolition process is unusual and welcome, as assumptions about

the processes and archaeological deposits created need to be questioned.

Both churches clearly have fascinating histories which have yet to be fully told. This report adds to that history and is careful to place both churches within their wider landscape context: St Martin's within the early development of the urban centre that is being pieced together from excavations and watching briefs across the city; St Michael's from the topography and documents of a rural parish. There are minor quibbles – the date of the monument which was moved at St Martin's to reveal an early-17th century wall-painting is not given; the pre-excavation plan of the ledger slabs is reproduced, but the names, dates or inscriptions are not included on the microfiche nor is the whereabouts of the original given. At St Michael's the relationship between the fabric of the tower and the nave is not detailed despite its significance

within the on-going debate about the date of such important regional features. And clearly the post-medieval skeleton within the oven should have been noticed in time to be fully recorded. The main issue must surely be the years that have elapsed between excavation (1984-88), writing (1996) and publication (2001). The latest entry in the bibliography is 1994 and as a result it has missed the opportunity to integrate (or contribute to) subsequent scholarship. It is however a valuable contribution to church archaeology generally and to regional knowledge in particular.

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Landscapes of Monastic Foundation

The Establishment of Religious Houses in East Anglia, c.650-1200

Evelyn Baker

Tim Pestell, 2004
The Boydell Press
ISSN 1475-2468
Hardback, xiii, 279 pp
11 b&w plates, 50 Figs, 3 tables

This essential reading for all monastic scholars has six chapters including Pestell's conclusions. In Chapter 1 *Introduction: Past and Present Approaches to Monastic Studies* he sets out his stall: not case studies of individual houses but the study of the pattern of monastic foundation in an entire region. He starts with a brief look at antiquarian studies and excavations up to the present day across Britain before concentrating upon East Anglia which he defines in terms of geographical spread, as far as this is possible; exactly where are the borders? A number of clear readable maps help, some of which cover the whole of England, Scotland and Wales.

Chapter 2 is *Monasticism in Middle Anglo-Saxon East Anglia* where he starts to explore the relationship between early documentary sources and the landscape; here extensive fieldwalking programmes on a largely arable territory are helped by the ubiquitous survival of Ipswich ware pottery. His discussions include pre-Viking evidence, the definition of minsters and the term *monasterium* and how they might be identified, as well as 'productive' sites (those producing concentrations of early coinage). Literacy and how it related

to the church and the secular world is explored by means of *styli* and inscriptions. Site location, layout and axiality are discussed with the warning note that churches are always positioned along an east-west axis and other buildings would follow suit; he touches on topography – the fens have numerous small, low islands – and the re-use of roman sites.

Chapter 3, *The First Viking Age and its Consequences for Monasticism in East Anglia*, starts with David Knowles' assessment that there was 'a complete collapse of monasticism by the end of the ninth century', and he calls for a re-assessment in the light of its importance for the church in the 10th century. The Danelaw and Scandinavian place-name elements, Viking material culture (and the ten-fold increase in Viking-period finds through metal detecting) are discussed in terms of social impact and impact on the church, and he travels outside his region to places like Repton to make his points; how did the Anglo-Saxons like Edmund and the Viking Guthrum relate to each other, landholding, their peoples and religion? There seems to have been some form of local continuity evidenced by the continued importance of relics and their translation between sites; *monasteria* seemed to have been centred on local aristocratic estates, thus providing some protection. Dedications are a problem area, so many have disappeared or changed.

The fourth chapter, *Monastic Reform and Religious Life in the Later Anglo-Saxon Period* shows how monastic life followed the strict precepts of St Benedict, but perhaps more importantly to the local populace, owned vast tracts of the Anglo-Saxon landscape, and were effectively land barons; the old *monasteria* which survived the Viking age existed alongside these new religious houses. Religious life had always been dominated by aristocratic families, and Pestell argues that King

Edgar's policy of creating religious institutions answerable to the crown, a more unified church with judicial powers and monastic reform, was a means of restricting aristocratic power. The same was happening in Normandy. He posits the case for more detailed landscape studies in order to understand why and where religious houses were founded or refounded, and goes on to describe the early Benedictine foundations Bury St Edmunds, Clare, Ely, Holm St Benet's and Rumburgh, as well as other monasteries in the wider environs of eastern England.

Chapter 5, *The Establishment of Monasteries in the Norman Landscape* begins by asking why we pay so little attention to the tenurial patterns prevailing at the Conquest; East Anglia can be defined more closely as the diocese of Norwich, which he shows with the abbatial liberties of St Edmund and Etheldreda (Bury and Ely). New Orders emerge, and there are many different forms such as hospitals, leper houses and the orders of the religious military; he looks into the complex motives behind patronage: zeal for crusading, vows of thanksgiving and spiritual benefits in an age when religion held a central place in people's lives. There were the less worthy reasons such as publicly advertising conspicuous wealth and status through endowments; he singles out the six families, and Bishop Herbert de Losinga, that were pre-eminent in foundation and the reasons behind their patronage. Some foundations took time, spanning as much as 24 years (West Acre), and Figs 34 & 36 shows both the rate of foundation and its progress in terms of the various orders and in whose reign they were founded; he notes that Cistercian houses are conspicuously absent before 1200 and discusses the reasons why this might be, citing Donkin's research showing that few Cistercian houses were really remote. Spatial distribution depended upon the patrons' generosity and ability to

provide a firm economic base and the terroir available; this is reflected in tenurial organisation and there is a fascinating section on the evolution of monastic settlement, freemen and sokemen, values of monasteries, distribution of single lordships and the influence of the major religious players. He writes concerning the problems of categorising the 22 alien houses in the area and the poor documentation related to them; he dismisses most of them as *'no more than outposts of the mother house, administering grants of land, and acting as granges.'* Most are early and reflect the close ties of their founders with the 'homeland'. Topographical location and re-use of sites for instance the tantalising question of underlying Anglo-Saxon minsters are examined and so is the relationship between castles, lordly sites and monasteries. This chapter is literally packed with information.

His *Conclusions* start by looking back at monastic studies and the biases of antiquarian enquiry and monastic study, and the emergence of wider studies covering monastic precincts and estates and post-

processional schools of archaeological thought. He reminds us of the links between post-Conquest monastic foundations with sites of known importance in the Anglo-Saxon period, the wholesale rebuilding of cathedral and monasteries in order to impose a new set of Norman values. Few key early sites in East Anglia have reasonable documentary sources, and only a few have been excavated – and then on a limited scale without locating the earliest phases. Sanctity of location outlived the Vikings; wider political issues played a major role in the creation of abbeys in the 10th century; the importance of the Anglo-Saxon past began to wane only with Henry I; there is a lack of understanding of secular estate centres as opposed to secondary or peripheral settlement and how to differentiate between them. He gives us the surprising statistic that while over 1000 parish churches were built in the Norwich diocese and were still mostly extant by c 1200, only 74 regularised monasteries were founded in the same area, including alien houses which were effectively grants of land to large Continental mother houses, and gives

a final reminder that *'the role of the founder was crucial – a fact we ignore at our peril'*.

There is an impressive list of printed primary sources separated out from secondary sources. The book is well written and interesting; it is the result of painstaking research, containing as much 'fact' as clearly stated and well argued 'opinion'. Maps, tables and line drawings are of high quality (did Dr Pestell do them himself?), but the plates are rather grey and lacking in contrast; one or two in colour would have been an improvement, particularly Plate 8, a wall painting from the refectory of Horsham St Faith Priory. Another very minor quibble - I just wish he could spell focused, but editing should have picked that one up.

Evelyn Baker is Joint Editor for the Society of Church Archaeology and Archaeological Consultant for the Diocese of St Albans. She has excavated a number of major monastic sites including Warden Abbey and its pavements, and Elstow Abbey with David Baker.

The Architecture of Norman England

Jonathan Finch

Fernie, E. 2000
Oxford University Press Oxford,
ISBN 0 19 817406 3;
352pp. 196 ills.; 4 colour plates; 8
tables
£85

As the author points out in the preface to this volume, there has not been a full restatement of the Norman architectural achievement since the 1934 publication of Clapham's *English Romanesque Architecture after the Conquest*. So when one ponders the advances in understanding made over the rest of the 20th century, a volume on the subject by a scholar of Eric Fernie's reputation and experience is an exciting prospect. The volume divides into four parts: an overview of the architecture within western Europe, both before and after the Conquest; the buildings themselves – organised by type and function; the architectural elements that make up the architectural grammar; and the processes of planning and construction. The first section provides a brief description of the cultural background and architectural tour. There are short sections on the parallel developments in Normandy and Britain during the ninth and tenth centuries, taking in the Carolingian links between the church at Fécamp, urban planning at Rouen, and the Germanic based system in England based on Saxon and Norse traditions, manifest in architecture at Winchester, Canterbury and Deerhurst. Post-Conquest England is then divided into three generations:

1066-1080s; 1080s-1130s; 1130s-second half of the 12th century during which Fernie sees the influence of the Benedictine monastic order and Lanfranc as critical to the first, with less impetus apparent when the second generation, headed by Rufus and Anselm, take over, but a greater exploitation of architectural ornamentation in the building projects at Norwich and Durham, where the 'epoch-making' vault rib set the first step towards Gothic. The last generation was heralded in with the disputed succession of Stephen in 1135, and is marked by increased investment in castles, such as Castle Rising. Church building continued on a grand scale despite the economic and social disruption, with massive rebuilding at Fountains and Glastonbury, for example. Finally, the accession of Angevin Henry II in 1154 marked the architectural transition away from the Romanesque and towards the Gothic. The chronological narrative that Fernie articulates is convincing and carries a momentum that links architectural style to the politics of both crown and church – but it is very much the history of great men and great churches.

“...this is an ambitious and monumental book which will endow the reader with a comprehensive understanding of the great Norman achievement”

This emphasis continues into the heart of the book which deals with building types. There are over one hundred pages on cathedrals, monastic and collegiate churches, compared to 24 on minsters and parish churches. This undoubtedly reflects Fernie's interests in the greater churches and they are served admirably, in discussions ranging from style, form, urban landscape context to geometric ratios. It may also reflect priorities within the Norman enterprise in England. But having attention to both generational and regional differences

within architectural development, the complex regional trajectories of pastoral provision and its architectural manifestation in different regions of the country are less apparent in the section where one might expect them to be most important – in the fluid landscape of the private chapel, field or daughter church, in the nascent parish.

The political symbolism of architectural form is neglected in favour of likely ethnic roots for the East Anglian round tower, and Yorkshire is regarded as architecturally backward following the Harrying of the North. New studies, however, have shown that areas such as Ryedale in North Yorkshire maintained a well-established tradition of stone church building throughout the Saxo-Norman transition. The final section on building types relates to those most reclusive of historic buildings – episcopal palaces. The chapter format then turns to architectural elements – eastern arms, apses, crypts galleries and so forth. Reading as an expanded glossary it perhaps breaks the momentum of the book and its thesis, yet provides an excellent reference source for students of all kinds who need a concise summary and examples of any Norman architectural element, many of which are notoriously hard to date. 'Planning and Construction' forms the final short section and seeks to unite the intellectual and logistical world of the Norman master mason through iconography, geometry and materials. The conclusion declares the extent of Norman architectural investment in England and makes the valuable point that it is unique within Europe both in scale and ambition. It is an achievement that is matched by this volume – this is an ambitious and monumental book which will endow the reader with a comprehensive understanding of the great Norman achievement. Archaeologically minded readers may, however, come away asking questions. It is not a book that ignores the contribution of

archaeological research – Deerhurst, Wharram Percy and Kellington all contribute, as do numerous monastic sites. But it is an architectural study, dealing with features of, predominantly, greater buildings, and not, as Appendix 2 makes clear, one that is deeply informed by archaeological methods or theories.

One might argue that the author's stated intention of making the subject accessible to non-specialists is

somewhat compromised by its £85 price tag, and one might also expect more than four (rather washed-out) colour photographs. But one cannot but argue that it is an impressive book and one that it is hoped will stimulate further debate about Norman ecclesiastical building, rather than being taken as the last word – something I'm sure the author would endorse.

Jonathan Finch is an historical archaeologist who specialises in historic landscape studies and church archaeology. He is currently a lecturer at the University of York director of MA's in historic Landscape and in Medieval Archaeology.

Shorter Reviews

Romans and Christians

Margaret L Faull

Janes, D, 2002,
Tempus: Stroud.
ISBN 0 7524 1954 4.
Pb, 159pp, 31 black and white prints
£17.99

Romans and Christians aims to outline the evolution of Christianity throughout the Roman Empire from the first to the fifth century AD, the story of changing official attitudes to Christianity during that time and how eventually public matters were left in the hands of the government, but private life came under the control of the Church. This is examined through the use of literary texts and images that reflect the ways in which power was displayed and contested (pp 12, 25). The book forms a useful introduction for general readers who have not previously studied this period, but says very little that is new for anyone with any sort of acquaintance with the history of the early Roman Empire.

There is a certain degree of stating the obvious (for example, that villas have to be seen in their social and economic context, p 91). For a book dealing with concepts, it is surprising to find an index concentrating on people and places, with many important concepts missing, for example the iconoclasts discussed on p 68, and even some major figures omitted (for example, Julian, p. 11). It is also unfortunate for a work using images to develop its thesis, that none of the illustrations are in colour.

The book includes discussion of Christianity in Britain, although not

clearly distinguishing for the non-expert between Anglo-Saxon and post-Roman British Christianity (see pp 97-8). Here, as well as images, use should have been made of the place-name and the archaeological evidence, which would have contradicted some of the views expressed. Thus the *eccles* names indicate that British churches, as well as secular buildings, were constructed in wood and that pre-English Christianity was more important than indicated here. Had attention been paid to evidence such as survival of place-names, burial rites, etc, then the author might not have insisted on discontinuity between the British and English periods, nor risked the suggestion that there is 'a powerful academic impetus to emphasise "continuity" from Rome to the Middle Ages' (p 103); when I began work in the late 1960s on the evidence for survival of the British into the English period, my proof came from other sources of evidence than those used by Dominic Janes and my belief in continuity had nothing to do with any powerful academic impetus, in fact quite the opposite, as I was opposed by the majority of scholars at that time.

Christianity in Roman Britain

Martin Henig

Petts, D, 2003,
Tempus Publishing Ltd, Stroud.
ISBN 0 7524 2540 4
189 pages. 76 figures
£17.99

As in any volume of this type, the quality of the individual papers

varies considerably, although they all have some interesting evidence or useful insights to offer. Some are well-argued summaries, others are more speculative descriptions of work in progress. Overall, the volume succeeds both in presenting an overview of the current state of Reformation-period archaeology, and in raising new questions and themes which should stimulate further research. It is clear that even in comparatively well-studied areas, such as parish church and monastic archaeology, there is still a great deal to be learnt about the degree, nature and pace of religious change. In other areas, such as corporate and charitable institutions, or domestic religion, detailed archaeological work is still in its infancy.

The best work in this volume demonstrates that archaeological evidence can do much more than simply illustrate an existing historical narrative of the Reformation; it can extend and sometimes challenge the evidence derived from traditional documentary sources. As the editors make clear in their introduction, a key role for the archaeologist is to assess the impact of religious change at the level of local communities and non-literate groups, in different countries and regions, in different types of urban and rural settlements. Beyond this, we cannot understand the Reformation without a detailed consideration of material culture; medieval religion was so firmly embedded in contemporary life that the Reformation was as much a conflict over space, ritual practice, and symbolic representation in all its forms, as it was about doctrinal and political ideas. Furthermore, as many of these papers demonstrate, space and material culture continued to play a vital role in the shaping of new

religious ideologies and social relationships. Ultimately, the archaeology of 'Reformation' must investigate how religious landscapes, buildings and objects were Reformed and transformed in the establishment of a new and vibrant, if always contested, Protestant religious culture.

The first chapter (*Looking at Christian Roman Britain*), an historiographical survey, is followed by one on *Historical background* which demonstrates that more can be deduced from the references of (mainly continental) writers than is often thought. For instance British bishops attended the Councils of Arles, Nicaea, Serdica and Ariminum, and Christians from the British diocese appear to have played a full part in the life of the church, sometimes orthodox - there are hints of them taking up doctrinal positions, against Arianism - but also taking up more controversial positions; after all Pelagius was a Briton.

Chapter 3 demonstrates that even though evidence for *The Church* is widespread, its buildings are extraordinarily elusive, and several supposed churches, including the small basilica 'church' at Silchester, are conjectural, while the *martyrium* which surely existed on the site of St Albans abbey still escapes the archaeologist's trowel. The one certain church is the painted house-church in the villa at Lullingstone, Kent; on the other hand in chapter 4 (*Becoming Christian*) we find that baptismal fonts both in brick and stone (as at Richborough) and lead (as from Ickingham) predominantly from non-urban sites, provide much firmer evidence. Chapter 5 on *Being Christian* discusses a varied range of

items bearing Christian symbols and iconography, including jewellery and silver plate, amongst the latter being a unique set of Eucharistic plate from Water Newton, Cambridgeshire. Chapter 6, *Dying Christian*, concerns burials where more has to be deduced from the graves themselves than the very sparse survival of grave-monuments. Finally in Chapter 7 of this important and well-written survey, Petts draws together the evidence for this important but idiosyncratic Church together; more rural than urban it was able to weather the apparent collapse of the Roman Imperial political system and play a key part in the evolution of Christianity as it developed in the British Isles.

Celtic saints in their landscape

Margaret L Faull

Rees, E, 2001,
Sutton Publishing: Stroud.
ISBN 0 7509 2686 4
Hb, viii + 216pp, 144 colour plates,
6 maps
£20.00

Divided into five sections - Ireland, Wales, Scotland, Cornwall and Northumberland with the Isle of Man - this book deals in 25 chapters with some 50 major saints of the 'Celtic' (ie British) world. Each chapter follows the same format: a brief life of the saint or (in the case of families or groups of minor religious) saints; a detailed description of the site or sites particularly associated with the

saint, including subsequent history and extant remains of later periods (especially buildings, stone crosses, inscribed stones and round towers); any surviving important books or artefacts, such as crosses or reliquaries; any other important people associated with the site; any destructions, in particular by the Vikings; any interesting anecdotes about the saint; any places to which the saint's name became attached; and any other points of note, especially where there may be pre-Christian elements to the cult of the saint. This is very much the case with, for example, St Brigit of Kildare, who took on many of the characteristics of the earlier goddess Brigh. The pre-Christian origins of the veneration of water, as with the holy wells associated with so many of these saints, should perhaps have been made more explicit.

Celtic Saints in their Landscape is definitely aimed at the general reader, rather than the academic, as many problems of early history are considerably simplified or glossed over. The author's credentials, as a nun with a master's degree from Oxford University, are impeccable, and it might have been hoped that many of the, sometimes contentious, statements would have been better referenced, and that she might have avoided referring to the Angles as Anglians (p 11). The book is beautifully illustrated; it is a pity, with such excellent colour photographs, that there is no list of the illustrations. The publisher's notes suggest that the book takes an armchair tour of the sites, but it would serve even better as a guide for holidaymakers visiting the various western and northern parts of the British Isles.

Scottish Medieval Churches: Architecture and Furnishings

Jonathan Finch

Fawcett, R 2002
Tempus/ Historic Scotland.
ISBN 0 7524 2527 7;
384pp; 367 ills
£17.99

This is a gem. Every now and then you find a book that does just what you want, in the way that you want. Richard Fawcett has, in the scholarly and accessible manner which will be instantly recognisable to those familiar with his work on Norfolk masons, set out the development, style and furnishings of Scottish churches from the 11th century. Unlike in England, churches in Scotland were not subject to the same intense antiquarian ecclesiological scrutiny during the 19th century and so the particular development of architectural styles, plans and furnishings has not enjoyed the same exposure to study. Seeking to export English models has proved as unhelpful in this field as it has in so many others. The book takes the reader through the design and planning process, the exterior and interior elements of the church building (from pier bases to steeples), and then through the full range of furnishings and fittings, including wall-paintings. It is detailed and scholarly and mercifully well illustrated with black and white photographs and exemplary line drawings. There is a section detailing selected churches with important documentary records relating to dating, and a useful site and feature based bibliography. It would have

been tempting perhaps not to produce such a traditional account of architectural development, yet it is its clear format that makes the work so valuable and appealing. This is a firm foundation from which a whole new world of church crawling is opened up to professional and enthusiast alike. Excellent value.

Medieval 'Westminster' Floor Tiles,

Glynn Kelso

Betts, IM, 2002,
Museum of London Archaeology
Service Monograph 11: London.
ISBN 1901992241
Pb, 78pp, 49 figures, 9 tables
£11.95

This slim monograph from the Museum of London Archaeological Service contains information on the manufacture, distribution and design of 'Westminster' floor tiles. Named after Westminster Abbey where they were first recognised, they remain among the most common floor tiles found in London. Over 160 different designs were produced ranging from knights on horseback, heraldic shields, mythical beasts and fleurs-de-lis to abstract geometric designs. These designs are illustrated and a catalogue gives the provenance of each design. Chapters on the manufacture, production sources, distribution and appearance add to the readability of the text. The monograph would appeal not just to London archaeologists and tile specialists but to those interested in medieval representation and its associated activities. 'Westminster' floor tiles are a good example of medieval design and taste especially since one of their

distinct features is an unusually wide distribution, ranging from Canterbury, Kent, in the south-west to Croxden Abbey, Staffordshire, in the Midlands. In addition, examples of tiled pavements at King's Lynn, Norfolk are identified. As a result, the question whether this represents the movement of tiles from fixed points, or whether they are the work of itinerant tile-makers proves important. 'Westminster' Floor Tiles provides value for money while successfully highlighting the need for further investigation.

St Gregory's Priory Northgate, Canterbury Excavations 1988-1991 The Archaeology of Canterbury New Series II

Tim Pestell

Hicks, M, and Hicks, A, 2001,
Canterbury Archaeological Trust:
Canterbury.
ISBN 1 870545 04 4.
Hb, xxvi + 431pp, 17 colour plates,
239 figures and plates;
£55.00 (£40.00 Friends of Canterbury
Archaeological Trust).

This is a monumental book in both senses. First, at nearly an inch and a half thick, one approaches it with the confidence that it will indeed be a full excavation report, rather than one of the increasing number of boiled-down offerings hiding behind the unlikely prospect of interested but non-expert readers

consulting an excavation archive. Second, the volume is dedicated to one of its authors, Martin Hicks, who directed the excavations at St Gregory's, and who died shortly before the report was completed.

As the aerial photograph of the site (Fig 3) demonstrates, the focus of the excavation was almost totally architectural. The site existed as an island surrounded by roads, within which stood the monastic buildings of St Gregory's Priory. In fact this was the second structure on the site as Archbishop Lanfranc had previously used the land for a church dedicated to Gregory to accompany St John's Hospital on the opposite side of the Northgate road, c 1084. Unusually for an urban excavation, good evidence for both buildings survived. The first church consisted of a simple aisle less nave and square chancel, to which were added square transepts with curious two-cell side chapels, and another eastward extension to create a choir and new chancel c 1133-45. When fire destroyed parts of the church in 1145 the opportunity was taken by Archbishop Theobald to lay out a new priory building. This utilised a conventional monastic ground plan, with the exception that the cloister was placed to the north of the priory church. Although a more sophisticated structure in terms of layout and architecture, the priory was still only modest in size compared to many other contemporary monasteries and building work appears to have stretched into the 13th century.

The report is naturally strong on the architectural elements of the church and priory, with extensive discussions of stonework, floor tiles and the petrology of the building materials. However, the preservation of the site deposits did lead to the discovery of other less usual finds, for instance traces of wall plaster preserving elements of a wall painting in the priory chapter house east wall.

Although the price is enough to make even an enthusiastic monastic

archaeologist baulk, this report is long on discussion and well illustrated. As such, it will be extremely useful to all those looking for the detailed analysis of an Augustinian monastery or in the history of Canterbury. And it forms a worthy testament not only to Martin Hicks' memory, but to the labours of all his excavation team.

Excavations at Medieval Cripplegate, London: Archaeology after the Blitz, 1946-1968.

Frank Meddens

G Milne, with N Cohen 2002
English Heritage Archaeological Reports
ISBN 1 85074 771 7
£35.00

This detailed and readable volume re-analyses the results of the excavations of Professor WF Grimes in the Cripplegate area of the City of London. Following the devastation of the Blitz professor Grimes managed the first co-ordinated and large scale archaeological program in the City. The majority of the material produced remained unpublished and only accessible in the archives of the Museum of London. The work presented here, not only brings together Grimes' efforts but re-interprets these from the still available records using up-to-date knowledge of the archaeology of London resulting from the work of Grimes' successors.

Nathalie Cohen completes a detailed reconstruction of the Church of St Alban, in Wood Street. The

archaeological data from the Cripplegate area churches is used in a wide scoping study of the topographical development of the medieval town. The Alfredian town commenced with a settlement core surrounded by a belt of fields used in agriculture, and contained within the former Roman defences. This book provides a good insight into the historical changes in archaeological methods over the last 60 years and how datasets produced by means of approaches which would now no longer be seen as being useful, can be successfully reviewed to produce refreshing and thought provoking new interpretations on the urban development of medieval London.

The Vicars Choral of York Minster: The College at Bedern

Katherine Giles

Richards J, 2001
Council for British Archaeology
ISBN 1902771206
2 vols, 676 pp, 391 plates.

This is an important account of excavations carried out between 1971 and 1980 by the York Archaeological Trust at the Bedern, York, the site of the medieval College of Vicars Choral. The report opens with a useful summary by Rees Jones of the institutional history of the vicars choral and a detailed and systematic reconstruction of the acquisition of the site from the 1240s onwards. The introduction is important in emphasising how the site and in particular, the buildings, of the vicars choral shed light not only on

the changing functions and fortunes of the community but also the changing ways in which such communities lived the 'common life'.

After a brief discussion of the recording methodologies and sampling strategies, the report provides traditional, phased summary of the site. Within each phase, the evidence from different areas of the site is broken down into individual structures and buildings, supported by clear plans and photographs. These sections can be a little dry. The discursive sections which follow therefore help to pull together the archaeological evidence in a more engaging and meaningful way, presenting alternative interpretations of the early domestic accommodation of the vicars and its re-modelling as separate houses in the mid 14th century. The presence of earlier halls and the rebuilding of the common hall during this period is also discussed, as is the evidence of other college buildings including the kitchen, counting house, and latrines. It is in these sections that the life of the college really begins to emerge, through the integration of the building evidence with artefactual and environmental evidence. It is also extremely useful to have the evidence of the standing structures of the Bedern Hall and Chapel re-appraised by David Stocker.

With a site of this size and complexity, decisions have had to be made about the separate publications of other aspects of the excavations, such as the tenement histories (AY 10/2 and AY 20 forthcoming), the Bedern foundry (AY 10/3). Slightly more regrettable is the fragmented publication of the small finds and artefacts (AY 18/1, AY 17/15, AY 16/9) which would undoubtedly have shed further light on the life of the college. Nevertheless, this is an

important and accessible volume, which sets an important agenda for the future study of this often-neglected aspect of church archaeology.

The London Charterhouse MoLAS Monograph 10

Tim Pestell

Barber, B and Thomas, C, 2002, Museum of London Archaeology Service: London.
ISBN 1 901992 23 3.
Pb, xii + 126pp, 95 figures and plates, 26 tables
£14.95

London Charterhouse was founded in 1371 by Sir Walter Manney immediately outside the walled City. Several of its buildings still stand today, incorporated into a Tudor mansion, and subsequently a charitable hospital and school. This report on the excavation conducted in Preacher's Court in the south-west corner of the postulated monastic precinct, also incorporates the results of various small excavations, evaluations and watching briefs carried out by MoLAS between 1988-2000. Considering the Preacher's Court excavation was carried out in 1998, the authors and specialists deserve praise for completing the publication of this monograph in such a short time. Similarly, the incorporation of information from keyhole interventions, frequently so frustrating to try and make sense of or to publish in a useful or usable way, is most welcome.

London Charterhouse is the second of MoLAS's excavation monographs considering London's medieval religious houses (following on from the report on St Mary Spital, published in 1997). Like that report, the style of the current volume attempts to integrate those data more normally covered in specialist reports, within the main descriptive stratigraphic analysis. While the information is all there, and specialist appendices at the end of the report cross-reference to relevant sections in the text, the result can sometimes be uncomfortable for the reader. This is especially true for those who want to 'dip in' and extract the data relevant to their enquiry – which is, I suspect, the majority of people using excavation reports.

Despite this, the report provides a well-illustrated introduction to the excavated evidence for the Charterhouse. It suggests that a grand overall architectural layout was only slowly achieved, the initial foundation actually being quite poorly enclosed for several years. Another important element to the report is the environmental data, mainly food remains, which potentially informs us about the Carthusian diet. While those elements found suggest the monks' restrictive diet appears to have actually been quite wide, it is unclear from where in the precinct much of the waste derived – 'inner' areas occupied by the monks, or from the outer court used by lay brothers, guests and servants.

This report of the archaeology whets the appetite for the promised forthcoming publication of the documentary and standing architectural elements to the London Charterhouse. It may be difficult, though, for the next volume to provide such excellent value for money.

God's House at Ewelme

Jackie Hall

Goodall, JAA, 2001
Ashgate: Aldershot
ISBN 0 7546 0047 5
Hardback, xx + 361pp
8 colour and 91 b&w illustrations.

This book provides a fascinating study of life in a 15th-century almshouse – a life that was run along religious lines, in buildings similar to those of some other religious institutions. The almshouse at Ewelme (Oxon) was founded in 1437 by the Earl and Countess of Suffolk, William and Alice de la Pole, for two priests and 13 poor men who, in return, offered prayers for the living and the dead in a chantry chapel attached to the village church. Shortly afterwards, a school was added. The evidence available includes a wealth of surviving documentation and the still-extant complex of buildings.

The book is divided into eight chapters; the first looks at the contemporary context of chantries, which played a fundamental part in late medieval devotional life. After this the particulars of Ewelme are examined – the lives and homes of the de la Poles, the circumstances of the foundation, the architecture of the buildings, the institutional life of the almshouse and its devotional observances, the chantry chapel. This is followed by nine appendices, all transcripts of documents relating to Ewelme or the de la Poles. By far the most important of these is the statutes, which set out the administration of the almshouse and how each of the members of the community should behave, along with their allowances and fines for misbehaviour.

Perhaps of especial interest to readers of Church Archaeology are the

two chapters that deal with buildings, which together account for well over half of the main text. Handsomely illustrated, Goodall examines the church, the almshouse and the school buildings in turn. The church exhibits its patronal connections not just in tombs and heraldry but in its use of East Anglian forms and even in the manner in which it was built, demonstrated by comparison with the de la Pole church at Wingfield, Suffolk.

Despite alteration and renovation in the 1970s, the timber-framed quadrangle of the almshouse (with a masonry external wall) still presents a coherent appearance, and the original arrangements have been reconstructed on paper. The almsmen each had two room, one upper and one lower, while the master had rather larger apartments, all on the upper floor, where the common hall was also situated. A rare survival today, the quadrangle belonged to a contemporary tradition of both ecclesiastical and secular buildings.

The chantry chapel, where the priest and poor men gathered several times a day to pray for Alice de la Pole and her family, is the liturgical and artistic highpoint of the complex, heavily but faithfully restored. It has an ornate heraldic and iconographic scheme. Despite its dedication to St John the Baptist, the iconography of the chapel – rather ahead of its time – centres on the Name of God, with biblical quotations, the HS symbol and attendant angels. The alabaster tomb of Alice de la Pole herself (died 1475) is one of the most magnificent of late medieval England, with a barely visible cadaver effigy below. The main effigy lies beneath an elaborate canopy and Goodall's analysis of the whole, art historical, historical and liturgical, supplies a satisfying crescendo to a deeply satisfying book. It has breathed life into a subject rarely studied before, even though it was a commonplace of later medieval life.

Cistercian Europe: Architecture of Contemplation

Jackie Hall

Kinder, T, 2002
Cistercian Publications and Wm B Eerdmans Publishing Co: Michigan
ISBN 0 8028 3887 1
Hardback, 405pp
184 plates (many colour) + line drawings.

This book is a welcome translation of *L'Europe Cistercienne* (1998). Although it contains enough glorious photographs to justify the expression 'coffee table book', it is very much more than that. The text is well and simply written, providing an excellent introduction to Cistercian life principally in the Middle Ages, largely using the medium of the buildings used by the choir monks. This material and architectural emphasis is infused throughout by an understanding of many Cistercian texts, particularly the *Ecclesiastica Officia*, the customary followed by every abbey in the order, which sets out the form of every service and how the monks should live their lives in-between.

The first two chapters are introductory, covering the historical background to monasticism and the Cistercians, and the organisation of daily life within the order, while the third chapter looks at the sites of Cistercian abbeys. The following six chapters examine the buildings in turn, starting with the cloister alleys, then turning to the church, each of the claustral ranges and then, in a single chapter, going through a number of other buildings, including infirmaries, abbots' lodgings and gatehouses, to which certain monks at

least would have had access. Kinder does not examine the economic structure underpinning each abbey nor, for the most part, the relations between Cistercian abbeys and the wider world, but that is not her point. The book is as much a celebration of monastic life as it is a clear-sighted analysis of that life and the spaces that contained it.

Given that the author has devoted much of her life to Cistercian studies, it is not surprising that the easy style of the book conceals elements both of the latest research and original thought. This is welcome and frustrating in equal measure. Welcome, as it makes the volume more valuable on the shelves of students and newcomers to the field. Frustrating for the specialist and serious student, because the near-absence of academic apparatus makes it difficult to track down Kinder's evidence and sources. The handful of footnotes seems curiously partial; perhaps it would have been better to omit them (even though they include the reviewer!), and the 'further reading' is a scant two pages. A substantial chapter-by-chapter bibliography could have changed the text from valuable to invaluable, just as the photographs are.

Stoneleigh Abbey. The House, Its Owners, Its Lands

David Stocker

Bearman, R (ed), 2004
Stoneleigh: Stoneleigh Abbey Limited/Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.
290 pages, 131 illustrations
£12.95

Although superficially not fundamental to *Church Archaeology* readers' interests, actually, this affordable book represents an important contribution to the topic. Containing ten conference papers, it offers a comprehensive scholarly account of this Cistercian monastery and later mansion. The first of four sections discusses the standing buildings and is partly based on recording associated with recent rehabilitation; it also includes brief summaries of excavations – perplexingly called 'field archaeology' here. *Church Archaeology* readers will alight on the two papers (by Morris and Ramey) which deal with the extensive monastic remains. Both are important, though with contrasting approaches. Morris presents a carefully argued, authoritative, disentanglement of the monastic buildings from, particularly, the standing east and north ranges. Illustrated effectively with labelled photographs, more detailed elevation and plan drawings might have added further lucidity. Ramey's paper tackles more abstract issues, especially the symbolism of monastic outbuildings. Here, also, is an innovative consideration of the role of the monastic Guest Master, who is located both socially and architecturally. All students of monastic archaeology need to assimilate these two excellent studies. More adventurous church archaeologists will also enjoy subsequent papers by Watkins (on the Abbey's medieval estates), Demidowicz (on the land subsequently within the hunting park), Macdonald (on stolen headstones and coffins) and King (on Jane Austen's association with the house).

The excavation of the Medieval Manor House of the Bishops of Winchester at Mount House, Witney, Oxfordshire, 1984-1992 (2002)

Glyn Coppack

Allen, T with Hiller, J, 2002,
Thames Valley Landscapes
Monograph 13 (Oxford).
ISBN 0 947816 78 X.
Pb, pp xvi + 264, figs 75, 40 plates
£24.95

The rediscovery of a lost palace or manor (both the documentary evidence and text of the monograph are equivocal) of the bishops of Winchester provides a salutary lesson for medieval scholars. Recovered in the course of threatened development over an extended period, it provides the best archaeological analysis of a bishop's house (a much safer name) in Britain to date. Its connection to the as yet unpublished see palace (a palace located at the seat of the bishop) of Wolvesey only extends its importance.

The monograph comprises eight chapters: an introduction which explains the loss and rediscovery of the site; a comprehensive description of the excavated features over ten defined periods; the finds, which include valuable contributions by Cathy Keevill on the pottery and John Blair on the worked stone; the environmental evidence; the use of survey and aerial photography to

extend the interpretation of the wider complex (including an important analysis of the adjacent parish church by John Blair); the documentary evidence; a discussion of the site's development and connections; and a final chapter that puts the site in its national and wider context.

Essentially what was recovered was an early 12th century hall range with a southern chamber tower that was developed throughout the later 12th century; a second hall range to the west was identified from documentary research and survey. The east hall range, built by William Giffard and remodelled by Henry of Blois, which takes the classic form of the *saalbau* (two-storey hall) with a chamber tower, is directly related to bishops' houses in Germany and Italy from the tenth century, and is an incredibly important addition to our knowledge of the early planning of bishops' houses in Britain. Its connection to Norwich, Bishops Waltham, Taunton, and Wolvesey is examined; remarkably the contemporary north hall at Durham built by Rannulph Flambard and remodelled by Hugh de Puiset does not get a mention though it is by far the best survivor of its period. Indeed, the northernmost comparison is with the later see palace at Lincoln, where the writers appear to be unaware of its substantial re-interpretation in the early 1990s by the writer and Martin Brann.

Essential reading for all interested in the development of the bishop's house and high-quality building in the 12th century, the non-archaeological elements of this book are very readable; the archaeology is disadvantaged by its complexity and partial nature. If complex, it is at least clear and concise, and the plans and sections provided are a model of clarity.

The Age of the Cloister: the Story of Monastic Life in the Middle Ages

James Bond

Brooke C 2003
Sutton Publishing, Stroud Paperback
ISBN 0-7509-3288-0
13 x 22cm, 356 pp
13 illustrations.
£10 .99

This book is an updated reissue of a text previously published as *The Monastic World* (1974) and as *Monasteries of the World* (1982). In a wide-ranging discussion embracing art, craftsmanship, theology, literature and the practicalities of daily life, the author examines how the architecture and planning of the monastic orders reflected the religious life of Europe, particularly during the period 1000 - 1300. The erudite but readable text has helpful bibliographical notes. A new introduction highlights changes in perspectives since the book was first written. One inevitable consequence of the cheaper format has been a severe culling of illustrations: of 394 plates in the 1982 edition, 13 survive. The glossary is not wholly adequate: is anyone much the wiser for having 'abbey' defined as 'a monastery ruled by an abbot' and 'priory' as 'a monastery ruled by a prior'? Although some updating of the bibliographical notes has occurred, reference to archaeological literature remains relatively thin.

The publishers have done good service in making available at low cost a classic text which has long been out of print; but prospective purchasers already owning one of the

earlier editions should not be misled by another gratuitous change of title into assuming that this is an entirely new work.

Landscape and Lordship: Exploring the history and development of a military monastic order from the medieval period to the present

Eve Nimmo

Review of *Paisaje y señorío: La casa conventual de Ambel (Zaragoza). Arqueología, arquitectura e historia de las Órdenes militares del Temple y del Hospital,*

Gerard, C, 2003
Zaragoza, Institution 'Fernando el Católico'
427 pages
€16.00

This interdisciplinary case study expands the previous historical scholarship of military orders in Europe by exploring the architecture, material culture, written documents and graffiti of the monastic complex in Ambel, Zaragoza, Spain. Founded by the Knights Templar in the 12th century, the complex was turned over to the Hospitallers of San Juan of Jerusalem in the 14th century. This monastic complex provides an interesting site for such a study as it has maintained much of its original

12th century architecture and remained a religious institution until the 19th century. Gerrard explores the history of the complex in relation to the town in which it was situated, the landscape on which it depended, and the wider social forces of patronage and economic and ecclesiastical change. He uses archaeological work and graffiti to understand daily life within the military orders while aiding in constructing architectural timelines. This study highlights the economic importance of such religious orders within their community and the influence the community and patronage had on the monastic complex. By taking a multidisciplinary approach, Gerrard offers new insight into the daily life of the military orders and the complex economic processes involved in their maintenance.

The Ancient Yew

Nancy Edwards

Bevan-Jones, R, 2002,
Windgather Press: Macclesfield.
ISBN 0 9538630 4 2.
Pb, 205pp with figures and plates
(b&w and colour)
£16.99

The yew is our longest lived native tree. I have often visited churchyards dominated by one or more very large yews and wondered how old such yews might be and whether their presence might be used alongside archaeological evidence to argue for the early origins of the site. This book, which is by a timber specialist, sets out to explore questions such as these. Readers of *Church Archaeology* will be most interested in the first half of the book. After discussing the botanical features of the yew, Robert Bevan-Jones sets out

clearly the problems of dating them. This is primarily done by measuring the girth of the trunk. Carbon 14 dating has been tried but, because the oldest trees are hollow and the centre sometimes regenerates, results have not been encouraging. Only one excavation has taken place, namely at Selborne (Hants). Nevertheless the size of some yews suggests that they may be 1,500 years old or even more. On occasion yews mentioned as boundary markers in Anglo-Saxon charters are still alive today. Bevan-Jones is on much less firm ground when he seeks to link the planting of many old yews with the foundation of the cells of Celtic saints but the fact that the largest may have early medieval origins cannot be dismissed out of hand. Many churchyards in Wales with very large yews also have inscribed stones of 5th – 7th century date, early medieval stone sculpture, curvilinear enclosures and holy wells. The conservation of large yews is therefore of great importance and archaeologists should be aware of their potential antiquity and take the opportunity to investigate them where appropriate. In conclusion, though the archaeological analysis is sometimes insufficiently rigorous and the book would have benefited from more robust editing, it is useful in bringing together much scattered information on the antiquity of yew trees, including a gazetteer of the larger specimens. The illustrations, many by the author, are of high quality.

Image and Devotion in Late Medieval England

Christopher King

Richard, M, 2004
Sutton Publishing, Stroud (Gloucs.)
ISBN 0750914661
24x17cms, 288 pages
82 illustrations
£25.00

This book provides a fascinating and wide-ranging survey of devotional images of saints in late medieval churches. 'Devotional images' are defined by function rather than form or medium; they were intended to prompt an emotive religious response, in both individual and communal devotion. The primary focus is on wall paintings and free-standing sculpted images. The book is arranged thematically. Chapter two is concerned with definitions and historiography. Chapters three to six describe in turn the introduction and elaboration of Marian images in English parish churches, the importance of patronal images, and the proliferation of saints in the later medieval period. Chapter seven discusses the wide range of religious and social practices surrounding images. Chapter eight is devoted to cult images and their shrines, which were the focus of pilgrimage. Chapter nine discusses the production of images, including their cost, manufacture and patronage.

The final chapter gives a brief overview of the destruction of images during the Reformation. This legacy of course means that the evidence for medieval images is fragmentary, but the author combines a judicious use of individual case studies and broader county surveys to provide a well-

argued account from a diverse range of archaeological and documentary sources. Attention is paid throughout to the architectural settings of images as well as to their artistic style, aided by the high quality of the illustrations. This study will be of vital importance to anyone interested in the development of late medieval parish church architecture, and the practice of pre-Reformation religion.

The Green Man in Britain

Margaret L. Faull

Doel, F, and Doel, G, 2001,
Tempus: Stroud.
ISBN 1 888 313 2665.
Pb, 162pp, 80 black and white prints
£12.99

There have been many publications on the foliate heads, carved in wood or in stone and sprouting greenery, often found in medieval churches, so is yet another justified? The authors set out to examine the development of the concept of the Green Man, including up to the present day; to explore the significance of the heads in a Christian context and to look at the wider cultural associations of the Green Man in literature, legends and, particularly interesting for many readers, in folk customs that often survive until today. As well as the ecclesiastical Green Man, the book also, therefore, considers such figures as Robin Greenfellow, the Irish little green people, the poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Jack in the Green, the Man in the Oak, English May customs, and the Scottish Burry Man.

The term 'Green Man' appears to date only from 1939, but the foliate heads seem to begin in the late-12th century, and generally came to an end with the rise of Protestantism; they

were not, however, considered sufficient of a threat to be subjected to the destruction suffered by so many other ecclesiastical images. The heads are always male, perhaps connected with the resurrection of the life force, although their ultimate origins are uncertain. Even when used with a pre-Christian element, there is usually a Christian overlay, as with the *Gawain* poem, which uses the earlier pagan beheading myth to give a Christian message that no-one is perfect and so, implicitly, all require Christian grace for redemption – the authors accuse the librettist David Harsent of misinterpreting the poem's meaning (p 122), but themselves do not appreciate the true basic Christian intent of the poet.

The book is well illustrated, though only in black and white, and contains a gazetteer, arranged by county. Secular examples are rare, although the gazetteer misses the striking wooden examples from the Bolton Percy gatehouse (Yorkshire). The index deals mainly with people and places, rather than subjects. There are some examples of poor proof-reading, Sir Bertilak of the *Gawain* poem has become Sir Bercilac and Anglo-Saxon ? has been transcribed as *p* rather than *th*. Although there is a reasonable bibliography, there are few individual references, so it is difficult to follow up specific points. On the whole, however, the book succeeds in its overall aims and forms an interesting and quite comprehensive introduction to these enigmatic figures.

St George's Chapel, Windsor, in the Late Middle Ages

Glynn Kelso

Richmond, C and Scarff, E (eds),
2001,
The Dean and Canons of Windsor:
Windsor.
ISBN 0953967603 Hb;
0953967611 Pb;
224pp, 25 figures, 12 plates
Hb £45.00; Pb £12.99

This volume examines the late development of St George's Chapel, Windsor, an exceptional architectural monument of the English Middle Ages. Consisting of essays on selective themes, the text successfully illuminates St George's relevance to high culture, powerful religious devotion, and the soaring artistic ambition of the 15th century. This book is for those who want to learn about and appreciate St George's as a popular and grand building for the worship of God in the most glorious way possible. Many leading scholars have contributed to subjects such as the architecture of the 15th century chapel and its environ, on its then novel choir, and the administration of its property.

The text is often supported with illustrations and succinctly combines the interpretation of historical documents and physical remains to provide ideas of environment, medieval thought and commemoration. The choir of the chapel was the best in the country. Its innovatory music set a trend that other choirs eagerly followed. Its canons were intellectuals, administrators and churchmen. St

George's was also a royal foundation in which kings and statesmen were buried and commemorated within magnificent tombs. Other topics include chivalry, the cult of St George, a troubled and troublesome Knight of the Garter, and canons who were royal doctors. This volume provides an interdisciplinary study relevant to historians, archaeologists and all others interested in the study of medieval society and space. By combining readability and value for money, St George's Chapel, Windsor maintains interest in the material manifestation of medieval ideas and practice at its most unlimited.

Bringing them to their knees: church-building and restoration in Leicestershire and Rutland 1800-1914

Jonathan Finch

Brandwood, GK, 2002
Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society;
ISBN 0 9542388 0 X; 146pp.; 53 ills
£15.00

Setting the Victorian boom in church investment within the context of other waves of religious building, this study seeks to illuminate the contribution to the churches of Leicestershire and Rutland from the dawn of the 19th century to the outbreak of the First World War. The book is divided between a largely chronological account that traces the Georgian inheritance through to the first round of restorations of 19th century churches and a gazetteer that

lists significant work carried out at every Leicestershire and Rutland church between 1800-1914. Anyone who has investigated the development of even the humblest parish church will recognise both the value and the scale of such an undertaking. It is vital to recognise the modern interventions upon and within any historic church, both in terms of interpreting medieval fabric and in terms of understanding the modern architectural legacy. The text is written in an easy style and there is a useful mixture of maps, histograms, historic drawings and plans as well as photographs. The quality of the photographic reproductions is, it must be said, poor, by modern desk-top publishing standards. However the text and gazetteer provide an invaluable regional study which should provide the inspiration for others. It also serves as a useful reminder that there is much work to be done on the 19th and 20th-century's contributions to the country's ecclesiastical heritage.

Continental Church Furniture in England: a Traffic in Piety

Jackie Hall

Tracy, C, 2001
Antique Collectors' Club: Woodbridge
ISBN 1 85149 376 X
Hardback, 300pp
20 colour and 350 b&w plates
£50.00

At first sight this book looks as though it is going to be a discussion of 15th century and later trade in wooden artefacts. Interesting though this would be, *Continental*

Church Furniture is more intriguing. In fact, wooden screens, stalls, pulpits etcetera were rather bulky objects of insufficient value for long distance transport, although there are some examples of this. Instead, the golden age of traffic in church furniture was sparked by the French Revolution, the Romantic medievalism of Augustin Pugin and his followers and by the Catholic Revival. This, and the subsequent decline, is the subject of the first third of the book. Despite the re-emergence of Gothic, much of the material brought to England was actually post-medieval and sometimes English Antiquaries increased the impact of the Revolution by ransacking abbeys themselves. Most of the furniture ended in English parish churches, looking equally glorious and out of place, although some pieces ended in secular settings and early museum collections.

Trade slowed considerably after 1860, with decreasing rents and greater control of liturgical practice within the Anglican Church (surprisingly few pieces went to the new Catholic churches). From the mid-20th century until the present, much of this fine continental Catholic furniture is suffering from neglect – damp, beetle, theft and resale – since it rarely fits with modern ideas of liturgy and worship.

The remaining two-thirds of the book is a catalogue of the finest pieces across England – interestingly called 'The National Collection', with descriptions and beautiful photographs. There is also a short gazetteer by county of objects not included in the main catalogue. A major omission is the absence of an index for the catalogue, which is ordered by object type rather than by place. At £50, this book will be bought principally by experts and enthusiasts, but it should certainly be dipped into by anyone who thinks they might have continental furniture in their church.

The Funeral Effigies of Westminster Abbey

Clare Gittings

Harvey, A, & Mortimer, R, (eds)
2003

The Boydell Press, Woodbridge
ISBN 085115879
27 x 21 cms, 220 pp
75 Illustrations

Q. *Where would you find the oldest stuffed parrot in Britain?*

A. In Westminster Abbey among the funeral effigies.

No, this is not from Trivial Pursuit or a pub quiz but from this erudite book, in which a highly distinguished cast of contributors, all specialists in their fields, discuss these important and previously neglected artefacts. The effigies are life-size figures, mainly of monarchs, some with rare original clothing, with death masks for faces. Those effigies, from Edward III to James I, were a focus of ritual at the funeral itself; later examples were added to attract a paying public to the Abbey. This volume, generously funded in memory of a previous Keeper of Abbey Muniments, charts the conservation of the effigies and the information that it has brought to light.

First published in 1994, this revised reprint advertises 'considerable new material'. The most significant recent finding is that the figure of Elizabeth I, previously thought to date entirely from 1760, in fact reuses the original body from her funeral effigy of 1603. Altogether it is an exemplary volume and a model of its kind.

Mausoleums Shire Album

Jonathan Finch

Pearson, L.F. 2002
ISBN 0 7478 0518 0
396 pp; 40pp.; 62 ills
£3.50

Pearson's very brief history of the mausoleum is focused on the buildings. She outlines the main issues leading towards the late-18th century boom in mausolea building, extending her scope to mention early colonial examples in India, where Vanburgh cut his teeth as a funerary architect. The 19th century background continues to pursue Pearson's dominant theme of overcrowded burial grounds and explores the relationship between mausolea and cemeteries. Finally, she bravely ventures into contemporary times bemoaning the 'anodyne postmodern chapel' for Diana at Althorp and noting the growth of websites devoted to mausolea. The last two thirds of the book are devoted to a gazetteer, which is well illustrated (though only two interior shots) and ventures briefly into Scotland and Wales. My only moan is the use of the plural 'mausoleums'.

Death and Architecture

Jonathan Finch

Curl, JS, 2002
Sutton,
ISBN 0 7509 2877
8pp, 415pp; 350 ills
£25.00

James Stevens Curl's *A Celebration of Death* was first published to excellent reviews in 1980 with a

revised edition in 1993. It has remained a stalwart student text book ranging from the pyramids and Maes Howe, Orkney through to memorials to the Holocaust. The need to re-issue the same book under a new title is, the author claims, due to its initial impact and its scarcity. The new hardback does indeed come in cheaper than second-hand copies available on the web. The author also acknowledges the huge amount of work that has been published on the topic since its previous editions. It is disappointing therefore that none appears to have been integrated into the text. Word for word, page for page, this seems to be the 1993 edition, so if you don't have a copy - now's your chance.

Mortuary Monuments and Burial Grounds of the Historic Period.

Duncan Sayer

Mytum, H, 2004
Manuals in Archaeological Method,
Theory and Technique
New York, Kluwer Academic/Plenum
Publishers.
ISBN 0306480751
24 x 17cms, 274 pp
62 Illustrations.
\$127 hardback
\$61 paperback.

At first glance, this book could be regarded as a simple update of Harold Mytum's *Recording and Analysing Graveyards*. However, it is a substantially new book, including an extensive history of mortuary archaeology, funerary and commemorative practices, the funerary industry, the effects of the Great War,

the growth of production and consumption, social structures, and attitudes towards death, the body and remembrance. It also includes slimmed down and much more approachable chapters on methodology and education.

When this book deals with the topic of mortuary monuments it is extremely easy to read, clear and informative, providing a good starting text book for this field. However, there are sections where it is a little difficult to see the relevance of, such as a brief discussion of below ground remains, and what seems to be a slightly unsuccessful attempt to look at currently popular topics such as the human body.

Despite these limitations this book is a good starting point for research. It provides both a theoretical and methodological perspective with an international significance outlining Continental, American and English examples.

Diversity and Vitality. The Methodist and Nonconformist Chapels of Cornwall

Jackie Hall

Lake, J, Cox, J and Berry, E, 2001
Cornwall Archaeological Unit: Truro
ISBN 1 898166 79 X
Paperback, 141pp
124 figures (mainly B&W
photographs).

This is a marvellous book, informative, well-illustrated and interesting. The product of an English Heritage led survey of the Methodist and Nonconformist chapels of

Cornwall (see *Church Archaeology*, Vol 1), this book is much more than an examination of architecture. Each chapter deals with a different theme, in each case developing the historical background, with a generous use of contemporary documents and maps as well as photographs of many of the chapels themselves. Three areas are given particular attention: Illogan, a mining area in the west of Cornwall; Altarnun and Lewannick, agricultural parishes in the east of the county and Newlyn and Mousehole, associated with fishing and town communities.

The first two chapters give an overview of chapel worship and Methodism in Cornwall, its many schisms, revivals and re-unifications (finally forming the Methodist Church, as we know it now, in 1932), the diversity of congregations and increasing tension between a tradition of Cornish independence with a centralising Methodist centre. The third chapter continues with the theme of cultural differences between Cornwall and the remainder of England and the impact of mining on the spread of chapels compared with the Anglican church. Chapter 4, 'Building Zion' turns to the theology of Methodism and relates this to its early buildings (originally not for sacramental use, which was still reserved to the parish church) and the increasing wish by societies to build new chapels, questions of funding, ownership and location. Perhaps the most interesting section is that dealing with liturgy and fabric (chapter 5). The authors show the influence of early Methodist buildings directly connected with Wesley, 'the all-pervasive influence of the auditory plan, in which chapels differed little from more mainstream ecclesiastical architecture in giving clear architectural expression to the importance of the word'.

Style was of less importance than a certain standardisation of plan – a plan which changed from one where the communion table stood behind

the pulpit to one where it stood in front. Pulpits too were changed for rostra, in which the minister and lay preachers might sit. Hierarchy also invaded the chapels in the form of pew rents, charged according to the perceived value of the position and for most chapels an essential way of raising money.

The discussion of design and style (chapter 6) emphasise the need for chapels to be plain and decent. Frequently designed by (now) little-known local architects or even built by members of the society, there was rarely the systematic use of the 'style'. Elements of neo-Classicism and Gothick could equally be used. The book ends with a contribution to the future management and conservation of these buildings, an authoritative bibliography and a series of useful appendices, but, alas no index.

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