



## REVIEWS

*The Archaeology of Essex: Proceedings of the Chelmsford Conference.* Edited by Nigel Brown, Maria Medlycott and Owen Bedwin. Transactions of the Essex Society for Archaeology and History, Fourth Series 3, 2012. Pp vii + 166, many colour figs. ISSN 0308 3462. Price: £15.00 pb.

This volume opens by setting the scene of the conference, followed by the meat of the volume: ten papers covering the Neolithic to the post-medieval period, including a case study of Colchester. It is lavishly illustrated throughout, with plenty of maps, diagrams and photographs. The conference took place in 2008, taking several years to publish. Some of the papers may be a little out of date, but the conference focused on archaeological endeavour since the preceding conference, known as the 1996 Writtle volume after the conference location (O Bedwin (ed) *The Archaeology of Essex: Proceedings of the 1993 Writtle Conference* Essex County Council Planning Department (1996)). The conferences have been well spaced out and provide an important insight into how fieldwork and analysis has changed and responded to changes in archaeological practice and the planning system.

The volume opens with an examination of Neolithic material by Frances Healy and comes in the light of the major projects undertaken by Healy, with Alex Bayliss and Alasdair Whittle, examining the Neolithic across England. She includes an extremely detailed table of dates in the Essex Neolithic in addition to a very extensive bibliography. She examines the enclosures particularly, with additional sites, including cursus monuments and ring ditches, managing to discuss previous interpretations, updated thoughts and chronologies. It is a masterly

essay which underscores the significance of the region in the Neolithic, and the importance of undertaking analysis on a regional scale, including even the smallest sites.

David Yates examines Bronze Age discoveries, looking particularly at the period 1500–700 cal BC which saw extensive expansion of settlements and field systems, not just in Essex, but across Europe. Yates examines the position of the Essex sites and landscape within this context, contrasting coastal sites with the continental perspective, with inward looking riverine sites. Comparison is made with Kent, which shares both riverine and coastal sites. Some London sites sneak in as well, as the Thames and Lea valleys are incorporated, examining the role of ritual deposition of artefacts (particularly weaponry) and the rivers as connecting coastal and inland sites. One key question he raises is the role of exchange and trade networks with the Continent, and that a priority for Essex should be to consider this, through skeletal analysis.

The Iron Age is examined by Paul Sealey and is a direct update on his contribution in the Writtle volume, concentrating specifically on new finds and new interpretations. The first of these is redating the onset of the Iron Age to 800 cal BC on the basis of new dating of metalwork, and examination of hoards. This tends to be more broadly across the wider region, as actual iron objects are scarce in Essex. A major new site to be discussed is Stansted Airport. The themes of settlement, population and links with the Roman Empire are updated, but only briefly. Death and burial is touched upon, as are field systems, but these themes are somewhat disjointed and a little unsatisfying.

Philip Crummy then examines fieldwork



in Colchester between 1993 and 2008, starting with new information on the oppidum including the first Iron Age round houses from Colchester. A great deal of new information about the Roman settlement has been uncovered and this is examined by site type: cemeteries, urban, mural, public buildings and of course the famous circus. Frustratingly, post-Roman sites are just a footnote.

Maria Medlycott and Mark Atkinson then examine settlement across Roman Essex, made possible by both developer funded archaeological projects, and synthetic projects. It is an important examination of new information from sites including Chelmsford, Great Chesterford and Heybridge, and particularly Stansted. However, it is the examination of farms, field systems and enclosures that really unpicks the landscape and interprets how settlement and agriculture unfolded from the Iron Age through the Roman period. Stephen Rippon continues this theme across Essex and the neighbouring counties of East Anglia building on his paper at the Writtle Conference. The paper takes the reader through the relationship of the Roman farms and field systems and examines how these are replaced and develop through the Saxon and medieval periods, with colonisation of previously uninhabited areas and shifts in the number and dispersal of villages and farmsteads.

The Saxon period is also examined by the late Martin Welch, considering the Kingdom of the East Saxons. The survey of sources provides important context for Essex within the wider Kingdom. Mucking is cited as the key cemetery to have been published recently, with at least 745 individuals, although Springfield Lyons, Rayleigh and Heybridge are also discussed as part of a wider discussion of cremation cemeteries, contrasting with the 'special' burials of which Prittlewell takes centre stage. Welch indicates nothing yet matches Mucking, but he remained hopeful that publication of previously excavated sites such as Wicken Bonhunt or new evidence would challenge Mucking's pre-eminence and redress the unbalanced distribution of high and low status sites in the county.

Adrian Gascoyne and Maria Medlycott continue the landscape analysis in the med-

ieval and into the post-medieval. One important point stressed, and not touched upon earlier, is the increased understanding of the need to manage and conserve the landscape. In combination with some antiquarian quotes, including that of Norden, comparing Essex with 'Palestina, that flowed with milke and hunnye' the authors' passion for their subject is very clear. The county is examined by geology and settlement type, largely agricultural, but taking in some industrial sites from recent projects such as the A120 excavations.

The coastal zone is picked up in some of the earlier papers, but is tackled by Peter Murphy, Ellen Heppell and Nigel Brown. The paper proceeds chronologically, with key sites (such as The Stumble) and densities identified through the coastal surveys mapped, including estimations of the coastline before sea level rose to current altitudes. Coastal zone economy is a major theme, with evidence for fish and shellfish examined, and more topically, sea defences, which can be dated to at least as far back as the 15th century. As with the previous paper, conservation is highlighted, but the specific problems in the coastal zone acknowledged and therefore the importance of continued survey is stressed.

The volume concludes with a paper by Alison Bennet and Paul Gilman on the Historic Environment Record (HER); how it has changed and its future. The key change of course is from Sites and Monuments record to Historic Environment Record, reflecting the importance of documenting the built environment and the increasing interest of a public with enormously improved access to digital information. A crucial point made by the authors is that at the time of the conference, the Essex HER was one of the 'best and most comprehensive records of its type in the country' but that this status is under threat owing to resourcing.

One of the great strengths of this volume is that there are two types of paper: one where contributors have often been working on much larger synthetic projects, and have extracted elements of particular relevance to Essex; and the other where the authors have focused specifically within Essex; both give broad and fine perspective to the interpretation. Many cite the greatly

increased dataset since Writtle, mainly through developer funded fieldwork, but also publication of old sites, aerial mapping and even field walking. Urban archaeology is lacking in the volume and could have been included in more detail. Many authors have included research priorities, so we have not only a superbly detailed volume of landscape change, but also a regional research agenda. The book is a model for other counties.

*Jane Sidell*

*Roman Roadside Settlement and Rural Landscape at Brentford: Archaeological Investigations at Hilton London Syon Park Hotel, 2004–10.* By Robert Cowie, Amy Thorp and Angela Wardle. Museum of London Archaeology, Archaeology Studies Series 29, 2013. Pp xiv + 114, 78 figs, 22 tables. ISBN 978 1 907586 19 4. Price: £15.00 pb.

This volume is an important exploration of a Roman settlement within the hinterland of Londinium, all too rarely seen under the sprawl of modern Greater London. The settlement at Brentford lay *c.*15km west of the Roman city, at a crossing point of the River Brent, close to the confluence with the Thames, and developed on the strategically important road to Silchester and the west. At its height, in the 2nd century AD, the settlement extended over 1km along the road.

The excavations at Syon Park make a significant contribution to our knowledge of this settlement. The site yielded a good sequence, from the mid-1st to early 5th century AD, with the excavations forming a transect of the settlement, extending some 150m back from the road, at the north end of the investigated area. The detail of the sequence is discussed in chapter 2.

The main east–west road through the settlement is suggested to date to the early 2nd century AD (p 14), although the dating evidence for this is unclear. Early and mid-2nd century AD pottery is present in the fills of the street-side ditches, but there appears to be no dating evidence from the earliest street surfaces/construction levels themselves. To the south of the road, Open Areas 3 and 4 (pits and field systems) were dated to the mid-1st century AD, and it is hard to believe

that the road was not already in existence at this point. The authors acknowledge this in their later discussion (pp 46–7), but the presentation of the dating evidence and phasing here is confusing (see below).

There is an interesting sequence of subsequent activity, including modifications to the road, and the development of adjacent field systems and, in period 3, two timber buildings which were destroyed by fire. Again, the dating of these buildings is difficult to unpick: the suggestion that these were constructed in the late 2nd century AD (p 29ff) seems to be based on material from floor surfaces (but on a floor; within a floor construction; within a sequence of floors; in the primary floor; etc?). There were ‘considerable amounts of residual pottery’ (p 30) but the only material attributed to a constructional phase ‘from a posthole’ (p 30) is simply dated to post AD 120. The destruction is suggested as post-dating AD 150–200 (pp 32 and 34). The site appears to have continued in use, with the road continuing to function, and pits, ovens, burials and a possible sunken-floored building extending the sequence into the later 4th or perhaps early 5th century AD.

The wider discussion of the settlement, in chapter 3, places the excavations in an excellent wider context (3.1 and 3.2). This is followed by very useful discussions of the layout and organisation of the settlement (3.3), buildings (3.4), water supply (3.5), rubbish disposal (3.6), dress and personal possessions (3.7), crafts (3.8), food preparation, cooking and consumption (3.9), agriculture (3.10) and burials (3.11). It is good to see the results of the work being synthesised in this thematic manner.

The important and large assemblage of finds and environmental data are discussed in specialist appendices (ch 5). These provide an important opportunity to review material from the hinterland of Londinium and merit the scale of presentation afforded to them. Indeed, one might have hoped for more, as some of the material is somewhat dissipated by its inclusion in the structural sequence, where the detailed evidence is somewhat lost: it could simply have been cross-referenced from the specialist reports. The plant remains are particularly useful, and the pottery, glass and metalwork all

help to show the penetration of high quality material into the hinterland of the city – perhaps unsurprising along such a strategic route. In general, the report is well illustrated (as we have come to expect from a MOLA report), with clear figures and a good use of colour throughout.

The major problems with this report are the difficulties in the presentation of the stratigraphic sequence and the dating evidence. Overlong descriptive text tries to set out the dating evidence, but this would have been much clearer in dating tables (an elegant expression of the evidence, enabling the reader to understand the scale of residual material, the material seen as crucial to the assigning of a date range, etc). It was also difficult, and in many places impossible, to relate this to processual events (eg the difference between fills of roadside ditches and material in the road construction, crucial to considering the date for the layout of the road; or the dating of a building from constructional, as opposed to use or destruction processes). Again, a dating table could effectively present this evidence with clarity, supported by a more focused discussion of residuality and intrusive material (the latter seems to be used to dismiss evidence on a number of occasions). Similarly, the abandonment in MOLA reports of land-use diagrams, to demonstrate stratigraphic sequence and land-use development, makes the understanding of the relationship of different elements only presented in plan difficult.

A more general complaint is that of quantification. Sherd count is used in places, but this is not as useful as Estimated Vessel Numbers (EVNs), which surely should by now be standard recording procedure if we want to be seriously able to integrate this data. The report states this was undertaken (p 73), but we are not presented with any of this (and only a few weights). Tabulated data would be so much more easily used, as opposed to sprawling narratives and only lists of illustrated material. This does not help with the reuse of data. Similarly, the ceramic terminology, developed using the Museum of London fabric collections at its core (R Tomber & J N Dore *The National Roman Fabric Reference Collection: A Handbook* Museum of London Archaeology Service (1998)), is

not used. Why now different codes, with no reference to how these build on, or differ from, the accepted codes developed in that study? There may well be a need to refine and develop the coding, but there is also a basic need to explain, so that this data can be compared with earlier published material. The whole strength of this important study of Brentford lies in the ability to compare material with Londinium, other settlements in its hinterland and further afield (eg D Perring & M Pitts *Alien Cities: Consumption and the Origins of Urbanism in Roman Britain* SpoilHeap Publications (2014)). Overall, this is a very important report, but it is let down by the failure to clearly present the data, especially aspects of sequence and ceramics, undermining its value.

*Tim Williams*

*The Upper Walbrook Valley Cemetery of Roman London: Excavations at Finsbury Circus, City of London, 1987–2007.* By Chiz Harward, Natasha Powers and Sadie Watson. Museum of London Archaeology Monograph 69, 2015. Pp xvi + 210, 141 figs, 60 tables. ISBN 978 1 907586 25 5. Price: £25.00 hb.

This handsomely produced volume is the 69th in the Museum of London Archaeology Monograph Series and presents the results of six excavations carried out between 1987 and 2007 in the Finsbury Circus area of the City of London. The main focus of the report is of an extramural Roman cemetery that was established on poorly drained land crossed by meandering streams to the north of the Walbrook valley. Around 125 inhumations and ten cremation burials were recorded, broadly dating between AD 43 and AD 400, with the main period of use being between AD 120 and AD 200.

The main body of the report presents a site description in a series of six chronologically based periods, the first relating to pre-Roman land use, three periods relating to the Roman cemetery and two to medieval and post-medieval features. This is followed by a general discussion, a catalogue of the Roman burials and specialist appendices relating to the finds assemblages, palaeoenvironmental remains and human skeletal material.

The elegant report modestly masks the



complexity of the interventions and the stratification it presents. The six excavations were conducted by two different organisations (Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA) and the Department of Urban Archaeology (DUA)) over two decades when no doubt approaches to recording stratigraphy and artefact assemblages changed (for example it was not possible to integrate the animal bones or plant material from the DUA sites because of the recording methods employed). The excavations themselves were not simple open area exercises, but highly fragmented into small blocks of strata separated by the basements, foundations and services of the standing buildings. Moreover, the stratification was complicated in itself in that much of it was waterlain and subsequently repeatedly eroded and otherwise modified by the action of the stream channels that characterised the area in the past. This reviewer's experience of excavating and recording fluvial and reworked deposits at the Thames riverside in the early 1980s suggests that the deposits described here would present a challenge in correlating and articulating the stratigraphic sequence.

That the authors have managed to overcome this challenge and present such a clear and lucid description of the archaeological sequence is highly commendable. Indeed, the overwhelming impression given by the entire volume is that of consummate professionalism, clarity and the desire to communicate results without obfuscation. The site description takes the reader through the developing story of the site clearly and unambiguously, integrating information about finds, pottery, human and animal bone and palaeoenvironmental data as it goes and (importantly) rigorously cross-referencing such data to the appropriate specialist reports, figures and tables. Where used, technical terms are explained in plain English.

Another attractive aspect of this report is that it does not assume a detailed knowledge of London's topography or history from the reader. References to other sites, street names and natural features are clearly explained, aided by some very useful maps. The figures throughout are excellent, with good use of colour, and in particular the use

of a mini 'key map' on each of the detailed plans, allowing the reader to orientate the position of the detail to the overall site plan works very well. The decision to print the long, linear site plans across two pages rather than rotate them through 90 degrees and present them landscape on a single page also helps the reader follow the descriptive narrative, whilst the quality of the binding is such that little, if anything, is lost in the printing gutter. Photographs have been intelligently selected and complement the text; being in full colour they also contribute to the attractiveness of the volume. Thus this report is a model of lucidity and presentation, accessible to a broad readership and thus able to communicate its complex story of site development with clarity and simplicity.

The story it has to tell is fascinating. In the pre-Roman period the area was characterised by several meandering stream channels; these were subject to repeated water management initiatives throughout the Roman period with only limited success, the area continuing to be prone to erosion by water channels and perhaps seasonal flooding. It was in this landscape that a Roman cemetery was established, for reasons that remain unclear. A simple road was created running parallel to a major drainage ditch, around which a series of burials were made, mostly in the 2nd century AD, but continuing into the 4th century AD. There was no particular burial rite, though many of burials had some intriguing individual features. A cluster of cremation burials was positioned on a patch of slightly drier ground in the 3rd or 4th century AD.

What was remarkable, however, was that the cemetery was established in a landscape that was still being actively eroded by meandering stream channels and seasonal flooding. Thus many burials were disturbed by water action, and analysis of the quantities of disarticulated human bone recovered suggested that parts of the bodies were being washed downstream. This presents a macabre picture of funerals taking place in an area where decomposing bodies were in plain view, revealed in the sides of stream channels, offering fertile ground for discussion about Roman attitudes to death and burial.

This is particularly relevant to the well-

known preponderance of human skulls found in the Walbrook valley which, as every schoolboy knows, represent the beheaded victims of Boudica when she sacked London in AD 60/61 (though several other more sober interpretations have been offered over the years). In the light of this study, the skulls may best be understood as the heads of bodies inhumed in the wet, waterlogged cemetery to the north of the Walbrook valley, eroded from their erstwhile last resting place and water-rolled some distance downstream. All of this and more is discussed most fully, drawing on data from other sites and the antiquarian material contained in the archives of the Museum of London.

In summary, therefore, this volume is an articulate, well presented and valuable contribution to the study of Roman cemeteries in London and issues of Roman death and burial more generally. Its clear and accessible structure also makes it an enjoyable and informative read to a very wide audience who might not have specialist research interests or knowledge of the period. It can thus be recommended unreservedly, and the authors should be congratulated for such a professional and articulate achievement.

*Peter Clark*

*Ivy-Mantled Tower: A History of the Church and Churchyard of St Mary, Hornsey, Middlesex.* By Bridget Cherry. Hornsey Historical Society, 2015. Pp 133, 199 figs. ISBN 978 0 905794 53 2. Price: £19.50 hb.

Everyone who has studied historic buildings will be familiar with the name of the author of this book. She brings her considerable knowledge to the study of what are really three now lost church buildings, the churchyard and the tower, the lone survivor of the medieval church of St Mary Hornsey. The volume also covers community efforts to secure the conservation of the tower and the maintenance of the churchyard.

A major focus of the book is on the medieval church; the tower represents the only surviving fabric from this building. The author has assembled a wide range of illustrative material from numerous archives and museum collections, firstly to demonstrate the romantic, rural focus on the

church and churchyard as an area of natural beauty and antiquity on the edge of London during the 18th century, and secondly to use the illustrations to assess the built fabric of the lost building and most impressively how the medieval church changed over time.

The documentary evidence for the medieval church is limited, with the first historical reference dating from 1291. Much of the evidence for investment in the fabric and the presence of a chapel dedicated to the Holy Trinity in 1401 comes from wills specifying burial locations, donating funds for building work or paying for requiem Masses. Building works to the Trinity chapel received gifts in 1428 and 1452. Donations in 1460 then refer to the Trinity aisle. Architectural evidence from the many illustrations suggests the south aisle as the most likely candidate.

Later chapters cover the adaptation of the medieval building following the Reformation, after an interesting discussion about the decoration of the early 16th-century font. The church in the 17th century is interpreted from records of the monuments sourced from a variety of archives and identified on many of the internal views. Biographical details of rectors in and around the restoration of the protestant settlement under Elizabeth I and the impact of the Commonwealth on the fabric of the church, the clergy and community are placed in context with the study of the church fabric and references from church records.

The same approach is taken for the 18th century where the rectors and illustrative material provide a framework for the interpretation and development of the building. It is during this period where the availability of well-kept records document a building programme starting in the 1770s, that included work to the bells hung in the tower where the bell frame has an inscribed date of 1775.

The proposal for the demolition of the medieval church inspired new antiquarian interest that provided many of the records of the monuments and the interior. The late Georgian church is significantly better documented than the medieval church. Illustrations show the ground plan, seating arrangement and crypt as well as a range of information about the fundraising for the new building, the installation of many of the

monuments from the medieval church and raising the height of the tower by an additional stage. This church stood until 1927 when the body of the church was demolished, leaving the tower standing for the church bells.

The third church was built in 1889 outside the churchyard, on a scale to support the population of a London suburb. This church suffered war damage from an incendiary bomb and blast damage caused by a nearby V2. This damage was compounded by settlement, and by 1965 underpinning and various extents of demolition were presented as options to preserve the building to some extent. The church was demolished in 1969.

The final chapter of the book examines the community's role in raising funds for the conservation of the church tower and managing the churchyard as an amenity space for the people of Hornsey. As such it provides a useful case that other communities could follow to help secure historic buildings that are unlikely to find a commercially viable use. This volume is an excellent example of a knowledgeable author efficiently mining the information about lost buildings and integrating the different sources. Beyond any interest in the Hornsey churches themselves this book is a valuable, accessible example of how to go about this type of study.

*Chris Constable*

*The Building Accounts of the Savoy Hospital, London, 1515–1520.* Edited by Charlotte A Stanford. Westminster Abbey Record Series VIII, The Boydell Press, 2015. Pp xxvii + 462, 18 figs. ISBN 978 1 783270 66 9. Price: £60.00 hb.

Henry VII's Savoy Hospital of 1520, a large complex south of the Strand, is little known. It is said that the king himself drew up the plan of several large ranges, influenced by contemporary Spanish and Italian models. He endowed it well, but it failed as a hospital and dwindled into obscurity and other uses within 50 years. The only surviving fragment is a chapel, rebuilt several times. One welcome compensation, therefore, is this publication of detailed building accounts, that is workers' wages for almost three years from September 1512 to July 1515, and details of materials and piecework on the site

for almost seven years from August 1513 to April 1520. They are in Westminster Abbey Muniments (WAM 63509).

In her introduction, Professor Stanford describes the history of the site from its origin as the palace of Peter of Savoy, uncle of Eleanor of Provence, which was partly blown up during riots in 1381; then Henry's project and the buildings of the hospital, as far as the accounts illuminate them, which is considerably. The master carpenter was Humphrey Cook, who also built the surviving hall roof at Christ Church Oxford, so the Savoy roofs, which are almost totally unknown, must have been special.

More than half the book is taken up by a transcription of the fastidious records by the clerk who paid the workers' wages every fortnight. Scores of masons, joiners, carpenters and bricklayers are named. For a missing day, a black mark. From this we learn much about the ebb and flow of craftsmen and labourers on a major building site – and the frequent interruption of holidays. In the first few weeks of the account, for instance, the majority of workers were absent (and were presumably told to be) at Michaelmas, 29 September, at the Feast of Edward the Confessor, 13 October, and at the Feast of SS Simon and Jude, 28 October.

The accounts of materials and work from 1513 to 1520 will be of wide interest. The prices and methods of transport of various stone types are catalogued: Caen, which was first landed at St Katharine's near the Tower, Burford which came via Culham (Oxfordshire), and Reigate which came overland to the wharf at Vauxhall. Tiles came from Marlow (Buckinghamshire), many loads of timber from St Albans Abbey (Hertfordshire). Lead and plaster were bought in bulk at Billingsgate. Ironwork is given in detail, including nearly half a million nails, but not its sources. The study also contains a useful glossary of medieval building terms.

This publication provides a glimpse into a large and well-run construction workshop on a royal site at the end of the medieval period. For London, it helps to fill the long gap between published accounts of medieval works at Westminster and the building accounts of Wren's St Paul's in the late 17th century.

*John Schofield*

*Shakespeare in London.* By Hannah Crawforth, Sarah Dustagheer and Jennifer Young. Bloomsbury, 2015. Pp x + 262, 8 figs. ISBN 978 1 408145 96 8. Price: £16.99 pb.

It is well known that Shakespeare set most of his plays in exotic locations such as Athens, Verona, Illyria and the like rather than London – or did he? The authors of this stimulating book show that London ‘became a part of him and his writing’. As befits a trio of literary scholars, the three authors write seamlessly. All three have Kings College London links and London is clearly as important to them as it was to Shakespeare. The book presents a new way of looking at the plays – and perhaps a new way of looking at London. Regardless of where the discussed plays are set globally, there is a relation to London.

The book is very much a literary, linguistic and historical (though not archaeological), one but its topographical nature certainly contributes to our understanding of London in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. Historians and archaeologists know what a pulsating metropolis London was in the 16th and early 17th centuries. It was not only the largest city in the realm, but as the capital it was also the centre of political, economic, legal and religious life. Shakespeare arrived in London in the late 1580s and was certainly a power to be reckoned with by 1592.

The authors have chosen eight plays set chronologically and in eight locations across London – specifically from west to east – to illustrate themes ranging from violence in Tyburn to science in the City ending up with an epilogue in the Tower. The first chapter takes *Titus Andronicus*, one of Shakespeare’s bloodiest pieces, to look at the downside of Tudor life and death. The range of ‘entertainments’ available to Londoners included dramatic and real violence. Tyburn is indeed the most famous venue for executions, but there were also gallows in Finsbury Fields next door to the Theatre in Shoreditch, and the cruel animal baiting could be seen near the Rose and Globe. *Richard II* is chosen to illustrate court life in Whitehall, where Shakespeare explores social unrest, protection and patronage of playwrights as well as aspiring politicians. The play itself took on political

meaning as the Essex conspirators paid to have it played by Shakespeare’s company at the Globe. Class differences are illustrated in *Romeo and Juliet* in the Strand, the highway between court and commerce and thus a cauldron of change. *The Merchant of Venice* was almost certainly first performed at the new Blackfriars theatre just east of the Inns of Court. This ‘third university’ area not only was the focus of legal training but provided ready audiences for the nearby theatre. The Shakespearean theatre and its managers, writers and players were constantly embroiled in lawsuits and contract disputes which has incidentally provided a wealth of information on the subject. St Paul’s is the appropriate venue to discuss religion within *Hamlet*. However, St Paul’s itself was a well-known meeting place and its churchyard was the centre of the printing, publishing and book selling trade – the emerging power of the printed word was harnessed by God and Drama. Although *King Lear* is used as the vehicle to discuss medicine, the chosen venue of Bedlam (recently excavated by MOLA) concentrates on mental illness – with the interesting notion of ‘Bedlam as theatre’! Lear was as disturbed as the inmates at Bedlam and witchcraft was never far away in the Tudor mind. *Timon of Athens* is used to look at economy but chooses the King’s Bench prison in Southwark to explore the murky world of excess, downfall, debt and poverty. Again there is a comparison between the Southwark that hosted playhouses and prisons almost side by side. Again these were venues known by playwrights such as Dekker incarcerated in the King’s Bench for years. The chapter on ‘experimentation in Shakespeare’s London’ uses Prospero’s magic in the *Tempest* to look at the hub of scientific investigation centred in Lime Street though the play was performed at the Blackfriars where Shakespeare was able to provide dazzling musical and visual effects. It is also a play that illustrates the desire and knowledge of exploration and travel. The epilogue discusses the little known *Henry VIII*, whose actions ‘spans the trajectory of this book’ from Whitehall to the Tower of London representing another, darker, aspect of power. We might note the irony that a performance of *Henry VIII* at the Globe brought about its destruction in 1613.



London therefore, could provide a cosmopolitan quarry of personae, plots and actions from all aspects of the fickle population – high and low. Shakespeare's acumen and observance of his own surroundings provided all the necessary clothing for his myriad plots.

*Julian Bowsher*

*The Spitalfields Suburb 1539–c 1880: Excavations at Spitalfields Market, London E1, 1991–2007.* By Chiz Harward, Nick Holder and Nigel Jeffries. Museum of London Archaeology Monograph 61, 2015. Pp xx + 361, 264 figs, 24 tables, CD supplement. ISBN 978 1 907586 29 3. Price: £35.00 hb.

Over a 20-year period (1990–2010) an enormous (4ha) extramural site lying between Bishopsgate and Spitalfields Market was redeveloped. In one of the largest and longest-running archaeological endeavours ever undertaken in Britain, more than 150 MOLA field staff excavated the site's Roman, medieval and later archaeological deposits. The monograph reviewed here deals with the period after the Reformation; it is one of four which will in due course present the full range of evidence from the site. The excavation of this extraordinarily interesting area – the enclave of rich Tudor Londoners which descended into the notorious slum depicted by Gustave Doré and was made famous in Jack London's *People of the Abyss* (1903) – offered an opportunity to throw fresh light on the lives of the people of Spitalfields whose remains in death were studied so memorably by J Reeve and M Adams (*The Spitalfields Project: Vol 1, the Archaeology, Across the Styx* Council for British Archaeology Research Report 85 (1993)) and T Molleson and M Cox (*The Spitalfields Project: Vol 2, the Anthropology, the Middling Sort* Council for British Archaeology Research Report 86 (1993)).

The volume first describes the development of the suburb from the dissolution of the priory and hospital of St Mary Spital in 1539 to c.1660. It shows the manner in which the complex sequence of property transactions which followed immediately after the Dissolution defined the pattern of land ownership, and thus the layout of the

area, for the next four centuries. Initially the extent of demolitions and changes to the priory buildings was surprisingly limited; the canons' infirmary, for example, a large timber-framed complex, survived largely unaltered into the 17th century. Interesting continuities emerge across the Reformation; they include the retention of the cemetery chapel and Spital pulpit cross, where Easter sermons had been preached since the 14th century. The chapel was rebuilt in the 1580s and 1590s with its open-sided two-storeyed viewing gallery with banks of tiered seating, reminiscent of a theatre, where the mayor and aldermen of the City could listen to the Easter sermons delivered from Spital cross. As the late Christopher Phillpotts shows in a fine essay discussing the governance and administration of the area, its former monastic status also had a significant bearing on the subsequent character of its population; the fact that it remained an enclave immune from parochial authority attracted protestant nonconformists, Quakers and Huguenot settlers, whilst the right of sanctuary which obtained there until 1697 made it attractive to criminals, prostitutes and debtors.

The section describing the developments before 1660 also includes a notable collection of plans of pre-Great Fire houses, with valuable evidence of construction practice (many of the structures were timber-framed), internal features (garderobes, fireplaces, floors) and external structures, yards, cesspits and wells. Other highlights include an account of Artillery Ground (Ben Jonson's 'seed-plot' of the Civil War) where a firing range where cannon were proofed has been identified. A small but massively defended star-shaped defence found there is seen as a practice fortification of the 1630s rather than a Civil War fort. Here the account of the archaeology is enlivened by documentary evidence for the firework displays which took place on the site in the early 17th century, leading on to the story of the firework-maker killed there in an explosion in 1669.

In Part III the development of the area after 1660 is described – much of it taking the form of streets of low-cost and moderately sized row houses of brick with standard two-roomed plans, built on former fields from the 1680s, but including some properties of

much higher status, notably the houses of wealthy silk merchants in Spital Square, and with a chapel and the cruciform predecessor to Spitalfields Market. The publication of dozens of late 17th-century and 18th-century house plans is a valuable addition to the corpus of records of the London house, especially as the publication is rich in fascinating details of their construction, such as the creation of basements by raising the new roads on burnt debris derived almost certainly from the clearances following the Great Fire of London.

There is much to enjoy in these site narratives. They successfully integrate a series of clearly structured accounts of the excavated evidence (no doubt selected from a vast mass of detailed information) with a masterly command of a wide range of documentary and cartographic sources. By the early 19th century the historical accounts become evocative descriptions, drawing not just on commercial and legal documents but on such enlivening sources as the Proceedings of the Old Bailey Criminal Court. Thus an excavated foundation becomes a pub where a blind fiddler performed and a stolen painting hung in a first-floor room. Throughout, the excellent series of coloured site plans (a great bonus of the move to full colour publication), intelligently grouped with extracts from historic maps and closely integrated with the text, is an admirable feature, as is the skilful balance of telling detail with the ability to present the big picture.

In the style now well established in MOLA reports, the artefactual and environmental evidence is presented as part of the site narrative, rather than taking the form of separate appendices, thus achieving a close match of object, environment and context. Where the evidence is not especially remarkable, the account moves along swiftly; some buildings are simply published as block plans. By contrast, in those instances where good assemblages of artefacts or ecofacts were recovered, much fuller documentation is published and a concerted effort made to interpret the context with the full range of evidence. Just occasionally the summary treatment can be frustrating; this reviewer, for example, would have liked to learn more about the interesting floors of reused

medieval decorated tiles and later paving tiles in the house of the Master Gunner and in Building 501, which are given only short descriptions and are illustrated only by general site photographs (pp 79, 83). On the other hand, the reader will need patience to follow the fulsome accounts of the 70 selected contexts whose artefactual and environmental contents are presented, and this reviewer would sometimes have preferred a photograph to a paragraph of detailed description of objects which are not illustrated (failing that, it would have been useful to see some of these objects in the accompanying CD). Nevertheless, the accounts represent a high level of finds identification, including full publication of the 19th-century material which has only recently been the subject of much serious attention in Britain, and are often enriched by wide-ranging references to parallels elsewhere in Britain, in continental Europe or in North America.

The final section of the volume (Part IV) takes the form of a series of extended essays which draw together the main themes of the project: governance and administration; sanitation and rubbish disposal; household economy (including botanical evidence); leisure (in which there are excellent accounts of the glass by Lyn Blackmore and clay pipes by Jacqui Pearce); the working life of the area including its silk industry; its Huguenot and Jewish communities; the religious life; and the physical growth and architecture of the early suburb. All are valuable; I will mention three specifically.

First, Nigel Jeffries' wide-ranging account of household economies, which builds on work in North America, is a significant development in the study of post-medieval finds in Britain; here the treatment of the 19th-century ceramics is particularly notable. The excavation yielded the largest collection of post-medieval artefacts ever recovered from London, providing a succession of groups well suited to this purpose. Jeffries uses it to discuss not just such matters as the growth in drinking coffee and tea, but such niceties as the question of whether changes in meal times are detectable in the archaeological record. Here the specialist will use the accompanying CD-ROM, in which the mass of supporting data is tabulated.

Second, the systematic study of a huge collection of botanical remains, including some as late as the late 19th century, is a notable feature of the excavations, brought together in Anne Davis' discussion. It shows the ever-widening range of plants consumed by Londoners in the post-medieval period; alongside the strawberry, raspberry/blackberry and fig commonly found throughout the period, she charts the arrival of – for example – rice, tobacco, black pepper and even such exotica as allspice from the West Indies.

Third, Nick Holder's discussion of the houses of Spitalfields is a memorable concluding essay. It shows that, when the principles underlying the arrangement of the house are understood, much more can be inferred from the archaeological evidence than excavators commonly realise.

Over the last decade and more Museum of London Archaeology's impressive output of volumes has been unequalled in Britain. This volume is of international importance. It is difficult to think of any piece of post-medieval urban archaeology conducted on such a grand scale, and published to such a high professional standard, anywhere on earth.

*John Allan*

*St Marylebone's Paddington Street North Burial Ground: Excavations at Paddington Street London W1, 2012–2013.* By Michael Henderson, Adrian Miles and Don Walker. Museum of London Archaeology, Archaeology Studies Series 34, 2015. Pp xiii + 135, 124 figs, 55 tables. ISBN 978 1 907586 38 5. Price: £15.00 pb.

This volume is packed with information and delivers a good narrative of the lives of the 18th- and early 19th-century population whom the burials excavated here represent. On one level this volume works as a companion to the earlier and longer MoLAS monograph from 2008 which deals with the St Marylebone church and churchyard (A Miles, N Powers, & R Wroe-Brown with D Walker *St Marylebone Church and Burial Ground in the 18th to 19th Centuries: Excavations at St Marylebone School, 1992 and 2004–6* Museum of London Archaeology

Service Monograph Series 46 (2008)); both the documentary and osteological aspects show great similarities across the two burial grounds. The new volume is also very good as a stand-alone volume which is accessible to the general reader as well as those with particular historical, documentary or osteological interest.

The presence of known individuals is also a powerful tool for the osteologist and one of the most interesting parts of the book is the comparison of osteological age with actual age (given in the breast plates or other records). For individuals under 25 years old the actual and osteological age agrees very well. By the time that osteological age of 36–45 is reached this can include individuals with actual ages of as young as 30 or as old as 77. And the final group of 46 and older osteological age includes a few individuals with an actual age up to 80.

At the other end of the human life span, a study uses dental radiometry to investigate the stages of development and eruption of the teeth of the subadult individuals, who had been identified via the breast plates. The illustrations of radiographs showing the milk teeth with the permanent teeth still developing within the jaw below them are of great interest to those interested in dental morphology and development. This technique helps to refine the accuracy of the dental age assigned by the osteologist looking at the visible dentition. This is important for the continuous testing and improvement of the methods which are commonly used on populations for which we may have no breast plates or personal documentary evidence. It was also reassuring to see that the osteological section included a test of inter-observer error, which is important and not always covered in publications.

The population revealed is of a higher social status than many of the burial grounds excavated within London in recent years, with skilled tradesmen, clergy and gentlemen amongst the professions recorded. The osteological analysis reveals interesting evidence of various conditions which show visible changes to the skeleton. Several toe and finger joints show arthritic damage consistent with gout which, historically at least, was thought of as the rich man's disease. Other conditions such as rickets were once

thought to be the curse of poorer children in urban areas. The incidence of rickets here is quite high, as it was at Marylebone church and churchyard. There are signs of rickets in older individuals indicating that the condition was regularly survived. It would seem that middle class children of the W1 area are suffering the results of their parents following fads in terms of diet and time spent outdoors, but their otherwise privileged lifestyle means they have a far better chance of surviving the condition and growing into adulthood.

*Sylvia Warman*

*Bankside: London's Original District of Sin.* By David Brandon and Alan Brown. Amberley Publishing, Stroud, 2013. Pp 288, 79 figs. ISBN 978 1 4456138 04 0. Price: £12.99 pb.

This is a thematic history of Bankside, the south bank of the Thames between Blackfriars Bridge and London Bridge. 'Bankside has a rich and diverse history and has over the centuries reinvented itself on many occasions. It changed from the early residential area of ecclesiastical houses and mansions to brothels, bear-baiting and theatre, which in turn gave way to' industrialisation; now it has been transformed from industrial dereliction to a major tourist destination. This book offers a readable history of this remarkable area of Southwark from the Roman period until the present day, highlighting the 'remarkable renaissance' of the area over the last 20 years with the building of the Millennium Bridge, the construction of the replica Globe and conversion of Bankside Power Station into the Tate Modern. Great attention is paid to the low life aspects of the area's history, including its brothels, inns, playhouses and animal-baiting. However, there is a chapter on places of worship and another on railways and industrialisation. There are a few doubtful claims, such as that there is evidence for Roman prostitution on Bankside (p 85) and several incorrect statements such as a 10th-century witch being drowned at London Bridge (see D Hill, 'London Bridge: a reasonable doubt' *Trans London Middlesex Archaeol Soc* 27 (1976), 303–4). It is a pity that the numerous

illustrations are not linked to the text and the bibliography is not subdivided into individual chapters, making it very hard to identify sources. While the book mentions all the major buildings and monuments, such as the remains of Winchester Palace, within the area, there is no detailed map of the locality or even a list of places to visit, which is a pity as I would imagine that this book is aimed at the numerous visitors to the area.

*Bruce Watson*

*Britain's Forgotten Film Factory: The Story of Isleworth Studios.* By Ed Harris. Amberley Publishing, 2015. Pp 256, 63 figs. ISBN 978 1 445648 22 4. Price: £9.99 pb.

This book is about the Isleworth film studio in West London which was in operation for nearly 40 years between 1914 and 1952. Bertie Samuelson set up the film company and studios at Worton Hall, Worton (Middlesex). Following on from the first film about Sherlock Holmes, *A Study in Scarlet*, the outbreak of the War led to a two day sprint to prepare a script, props and costumes for a film entitled *A Great European War*, which was completed in two weeks. The cinematic successes during World War I were followed by a decline through the 1920s, and Worton Hall was sold on several occasions, all of which is explained in readable detail.

Many of the great directors and actors worked at the Isleworth Studios at some time. The film director Alexander Korda purchased the lease on Worton Hall in the 1930s. During this time the actor Douglas Fairbanks Junior became involved with Isleworth Studios, making films to attract larger American audiences. A full roll call of British actors appeared in films made at Isleworth, many later becoming well known through their work in television. One of the great films made here was *The African Queen* with Katharine Hepburn and Humphrey Bogart. It was completed in 1951 and only a further five films were made before the studios closed in 1952.

This book contains a tremendous amount of detail about the history of the studios and chronicles the demise of the British film industry after World War II. It includes a full filmography of all the companies that



used the studios and the films they made at Isleworth, in addition to a source list, bibliography and index. The 63 images depicting sets, actors and scenes as well as some of the surviving studio buildings (in 2011) are placed within one section of the book. Sadly they are printed on the same paper as used for the text when a whiter, better quality stock would have improved the contrast and clarity of the archival prints. However, this is a most interesting book relating a little known aspect of British cinematic history. It will be of great interest to residents of Isleworth and the environs, those interested in British cinema and film historians.

*Steve Sherlock*

*Around Pinner Through Time.* By Pinner Local History Society, 2013. Pp 96, 181 figs. ISBN 978 1445618 88 3. Price: £14.99 pb.

*Around Pinner Through Time* is a book of images illustrating the changing face of Pinner during its transition from being a small village in the countryside to becoming a part of Greater London. Pinner's early origin is recorded as the largest settlement on the Archbishop of Canterbury's Manor of Harrow with its own church and fair. A brief overview of its history in the introduction explains that many of Pinner's street names today are thought to derive from the layout of this settlement. A map of the parish dating to 1900 gives a useful visual reference for the reader. The remainder of the book is filled with high quality photographs, paintings and drawings of Pinner as it appeared then and now, often with a dated historic photo above a modern photo for comparison. An accompanying brief text gives some background on each of the sites shown and their development over the intervening years.

Personally, as an archaeologist working in Historic Environment Assessment, or desk-based site assessments, I find such local history books treasure troves of information. When researching a site we attempt to trace its history, decipher what archaeology may have been present and how much of that could have survived the more recent changes on a particular plot. In Pinner's

case an archaeologist's job has been made much more straightforward with archive photographs and drawings clearly located, dated and described for numerous sites. It is clear intimate local knowledge, which could otherwise be lost in time, has been included. The oldest surviving timber-framed dwelling house Middlesex at Headstone Manor and the survival of the deer park at Pinner Park are noteworthy survivals of its medieval heritage.

Local and social historians will enjoy the views of existing or more recently lost buildings, seeing the well-known and forgotten faces of Pinner alike while following changes in clothing styles, architecture, transport and even forms of entertainment and shopping habits. The final two images of Pinner fair perhaps indicate the difficulty of maintaining traditions in a small pocket of Greater London. This charming publication will no doubt help the people of Pinner to hold on to and share its fascinating heritage for some time to come.

*Sinead Marshall*

*A Victorian Street Through 130 Years: Monserrat Road, Putney.* By Dorian Gerhold. Wandsworth Historical Society, Wandsworth Paper 28, 2015. Pp 60, 62 figs. ISBN 978 0 905121 35 2. Price: £5.00 pb.

Local history publications cover a wide range of subjects with studies of places often focusing on a particular region, village or even individual buildings. This book, more unusually, traces the history of one single street over the course of 130 years. This scope is intimate enough to allow known people and personal stories to feature while leaving room for details of gradual changes on Monserrat Road through time.

Monserrat Road was built in the 1880s following an explosion of development in Putney, including the arrival of a new railway link serving East Putney Station. From the beginning the road has presented a relatively unified picture with two Victorian housing developments dominating the streetscape. It has been designated as part of the Oxford Road Conservation Area since 1989. This interesting book presents the stories of the street's residents, builders and developers.

Photographs, portraits, house plans, sales catalogues and even 'rooms to let' and 'help wanted' advertisements help us to understand the life of the people who lived and worked on the street. Changes to the houses from subdivision into flats and later conversion back to family homes as well as changing functions of rooms, such as former sculleries and extensions to the rear and below ground, are all detailed. The book is well referenced with appendices listing the occupants of individual houses at various times. It is a most useful source of reference for local studies in Putney and also in general for the period it discusses.

*Sinead Marshall*

*Mapping an English Parish Before 1870: A History of Harefield in Middlesex Through Maps.* By Keith Piercy. Harefield History Society, 2015. Pp 116, A4 landscape, colour figs. ISBN 978 0 993196 20 1. Price: £12.00 pb. Winner of the LAMAS Local History Publications Award 2015.

Harefield is a remote Middlesex parish singularly blessed with many historic maps and plans. How lucky for Harefield, then, that a geography teacher with an interest in the history of his locality should come across the maps and be impassioned to use them to learn about the history and development of the area. Not until his retirement, however, did he have the time to complete the study, which is documented in this enjoyable and instructive book. How lucky for the reader.

The maps presented here cover the period from the earliest, dated 1478, to the 25 inch Ordnance Survey map of 1865. Most are beautifully drawn and many are tinted; a plan of Harefield Grove in 1861 verges on the gorgeous. The author has examined an extensive literature about old maps, finding that modern map-making in England began in the early 16th century following improvements in surveying techniques, and that developments in printing had made dissemination possible. For Saxton's early maps of England and Wales, based on counties, state administration provided a source of finance and a market. Subsequently county maps had usually to rely on subscription from private donors,

which accounts for the border displays of their coats of arms and the emphasis on their country seats.

Maps for private legal or management purposes found their own funding and benefitted hugely from the improvements in measuring. Their chief drawback is that they mostly cover a relatively small area, but the compensation is that they frequently include an enormous range of topographical and economic information. 'The Plott of the capitall messuage of Brackenburye' of c.1620, for example, shows land use, while there is a clear layout of Harefield centre in the early 18th-century Newdigate Estate map. Later on, road, canal and rail plans were produced and the 19th century contributed useful maps in sale brochures. They are all packed with information which the author makes it his business to bring out. He points out that prior to the Ordnance Survey, maps were made with a particular purpose in mind and show only what the commissioner and his cartographer wanted to be seen. On the other hand, I think it is true that most users of maps see what they want to see, whatever the purpose of the map.

The earliest map, dated 1478 and pre-dating improvements, is a prime example of the dominating purpose of a map, it being largely a written account of fishing rights in Harefield with diagrammatic explanation. It is curious and looks odd to modern eyes. At the other extreme is the Harefield Enclosure Map of 1813. It is wonderfully detailed and lucid, easy to interpret and having certain parts shown at a larger scale. Would that all enclosure maps were so rich. Most of the maps illustrated are accompanied by lists of named properties and owners compiled by the author. Appendices include a list of estate maps before 1870, and deal further with some interpretations and funding. It has stout scroll binding which allows the maps to be seen flat. The reproductions are of high quality, which is rather unusual these days.

This book is an enterprising venture, a good example of what can be found out by using maps alone. As the author rightly says in his final paragraph, 'they have turned out to be a useful, even major, source of data, albeit partial'. His purpose was to consider the contribution of maps to understanding

a locality's history. He has indeed done that. Newcomers to the field will find it a very useful introduction and companion. Those more seasoned should also find a good deal of helpfulness in it, as well as sheer pleasure.

*Pat Clarke*

Also received:

*London Topographical Record Vol 31*. Edited by Ann Saunders. London Topographical Society Publication 176, 2015. Pp 218, many figs. ISBN 978 0 902087 63 7. Price: £25.00 hb. Available from [www.topsoc.org](http://www.topsoc.org) or R Cline, Flat 13, 13 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9SH (cheques made out to the Society; add UK postage of £3 for one or two books).

The *London Topographical Record* appears at five-year intervals as a collection of essays and illustrations which contribute to the topographical history of London. Each volume is individual; and as the editor notes, in a valedictory editorial after 41 years of service, 'several highly successful careers have been built on a first essay in the *Record*'.

There are 13 papers here; I will mention only a few. Kerry Downes unpicks architectural evidence and denies that Wren was influenced by Borromini. There are studies of individual lost buildings of Henry VII's almshouse at Westminster by Christine Merie Fox and Nevill's Court, Fetter Lane by Dorian Gerhold. New work on plans and maps is provided by Derek Keene (an early proposal for London's Royal Exchange of 1566, but on another site), by Dorian Gerhold again

(further maps and biographical information on the Treswells) and by Tracey Logan (a portion of the lost Chiswick Enclosure Map of 1840). Fittingly, the retiring editor contributes two papers, one on a farm swallowed up by Regent's Park and the other on the triumphal arches erected for James I in 1604. The volume also includes obituaries of Hermione Hobhouse and Anthony Moss.

*Two Early Panoramas of The Regent's Park: The Panoramas of Richard Morris and John Mortimer*. By Geoffrey Tyack. London Topographical Society Publication 177, 2015. Pp 46, colour figs. ISBN 978 0 902087 64 4. Price: £15.00 hb. Available as for the previous.

One of the most extraordinary developments in 19th-century London, a century of great topographical change, was The Regent's Park of 1813–20. Here John Nash created a landscape and surrounded it by blocks of houses the like of which had not been seen in London before (and have rarely been imitated since). The white classical facades were crying out for a panoramic view along them such as would later be provided by a movie camera. The panorama, a large painting on a circular wall, had just been invented; and two early printed examples of the buildings around Regent's Park are reproduced here, of John Mortimer of c.1828–9 and of Richard Morris of 1830. They are mounted together so they can be compared on each page. Geoffrey Tyack provides an introduction and assessment.