

Books

The Prehistory of Metallurgy in the British Isles, by R. F. Tylecote. *Institute of Metals*, London, 1986. xiii + 255pp, 160 figs, bibliog., index. £19.95 (£16 to members of the Metals Society or Historical Metallurgy Society).

FOR OVER 20 YEARS almost every report on early metallurgy published anywhere in the world carried a reference to *Metallurgy in Archaeology*. Even though it dealt only with metallurgy in the British Isles from the Bronze Age to the Industrial Revolution, it was quite simply the foremost text on the subject – more detailed, scientific and above all more factual than anything that had gone before. Sadly for most of the time since its appearance in 1962 it has been out of print. Now at last the revised edition is out, and it is a worthy successor to the 1962 volume. The layout is similar and some of the figures and illustrations are repeated, but basically this is a new book reflecting the enormous amount of research that has taken place in the last quarter century, not least by Tylecote and his students.

One of the most encouraging developments has been the revival of interest in excavation of early copper mines in Britain at sites such as Alderley Edge in Cheshire, very recently at Gt. Orme's Head in N. Wales, and of course at Mt. Gabriel where 5 carbon dates, all in the Bronze Age, should dispel any lingering doubts over its antiquity.

We still have little evidence for primary non-ferrous metal smelting, but excavation and artefact study has greatly deepened our knowledge of metal alloying and metal working. Discoveries such as the thousands of mould fragments, crucibles, moulding tools etc. from Gussage All Saints not only transformed our knowledge of such bronze working area, but drew attention to this class of material, and suddenly from the mid '70s onwards everyone was finding mould fragments. I remember being told in the late '60s that we would never have any evidence of Bronze Age casting because the clay moulds could not be expected to survive. Survive they did in plenty, all they needed was recognition.

Tylecote is especially good with iron metallurgy. He expresses very welcome caution about furnace types. As he writes, all that is normally left to the excavator is a badly vitrified base from which to reconstruct the whole furnace, and usually there is little dating evidence. Previously the received wisdom has been that bowl furnaces were used in the Iron Age, but the Romans used shaft furnaces. Thus any scanty furnace remains on a definite Iron Age site was a bowl furnace, but if an isolated shaft furnace was located then it was Roman. Recent

work by Tylecote and his colleague R. Clough has shown that the true situation is much more complex, with at least one 5th century BC shaft furnace.

The London area figures quite strongly in the sections on iron technology, with the Iron Age blacksmith's tools from Waltham Abbey (now on display in the British Museum), and the Saxon and medieval forges and furnaces at sites such as Waltham Abbey, and Alsted in Surrey, both of which have greatly widened our knowledge of post-Roman iron making.

This book relies relatively little upon written sources, but is fixed very firmly on the evidence of surviving artefacts, excavation and the experimental reconstruction of smelting and metalworking processes. This does give the work a great degree of reality, and provides the whole work with a firm basis for the authority with which it is written. There is a great mass of carefully digested and critically assessed information here. Clearly this will become a standard reference like its predecessor. Let us hope it stays in print rather longer, but just in case it does not, if you are at all interested in the subject, you should get your copy now – the price is not outrageous.

PAUL CRADDOCK

The worst street in north London – Campbell Bunk, Islington, between the wars, by Jerry White. *Routledge and Kegan Paul History Workshop Series*, 1986. 312pp, 15pl., 2 maps, 3figs., 21 tables, notes and bibliog., index. £8.95.

ALTHOUGH ON FIRST acquaintance this book can create a desire to find a little used corner of the bookcase in which to hide it, after reading the first few pages one realises that here is an interesting and well researched book. The central theme is Campbell Street, Islington (known as Campbell Bunk or simply 'the Bunk'), from its birth in the 1850s until its demise in 1957, but mostly concentrating between the First and Second World wars. Direction is maintained with eye-witness accounts by surviving ex-residents, whom the author was able to contact.

Chapter 1 deals with the origins of the street, which unlike others nearby never achieved a passing respectable status. The street contained two basic types of resident (a) permanent families and (b) mobile households using furnished rooms and lodging houses. Only the poorest and roughest people were attracted to Campbell Street, and these residents by their actions – which appear to have been enthusiastically reported in various newspapers – gained it the epithet 'the worst street in north London', a title it 'enjoyed' for most of its life.

Class structure, discussed in Chapter 2, gives further indications of the lowly status of the Bunk. The rough nature of residents coupled with the street's bad name was, in many instances, enough to deny offers of work. Low education levels and non-existent labour skills were further factors in reducing Bunk residents to the labour market's lower end. This created high unemployment, leading many people to reject traditional working practices and attempt to obtain money by less conventional means. Inevitably, imposed financial hardships and families forced to live in overcrowded slums, created tensions which often found expression in arguments and brawling.

How the residents attempted to cope with these problems is dealt with in Chapter 3. This indicates that many people believed they had been rejected by society, and so became introverted in their attitude towards society outside the Bunk, and in their turn rejected outsiders, sometimes to the point of violence. This insular thinking was also expressed in a physical discrimination between upper and lower ends of the street, with all the tensions that this could bring.

Streets with these underlying stresses usually had a large percentage of residents who turned to crime, and Campbell Street was no exception. Chapter 4 shows that the Bunk had more than its fair share of contact with police. In spite of hardships that living in Campbell Bunk could bring, most residents regarded themselves as loyal to the Crown. Nevertheless, rebellious and unloyal thoughts were voiced, with 'toffs' and 'foreigners' blamed for the low social state people found themselves in.

Chapter 5 details family events, and the various solutions to problems encountered. Family life was extremely difficult and fighting between husband and wife, with violence to children, was rife. However, interference by outside concerns led to a closing of ranks by Bunkites (no matter how misplaced on many occasions), and a staunch defence of their independence.

Chapters 6 and 7 are concerned with young men and women respectively, and how they variously dealt with the social position that living in Campbell Street imposed on them. Several people discussed in the chapters proved that coming from this street did not necessarily stop a better standard of living, although moving away provided greater chances.

By the end of the 1930s people had started to drift away from Campbell Street, and Chapter 8 shows that this trend had accelerated by 1945. In many cases, men returning from the Second World War used their enforced break to cut many ties, and move away to nicer areas. With this gradual

abandonment property became derelict, and the street became part of a slum clearance project which demolished it all by 1957.

The coverage that this book gives Campbell Street, its residents and the environment in which they lived is extensive, but reading it is slightly hindered by the figures and tables not being within the text. This is a small criticism, however, and Mr. White is to be congratulated on producing a detailed account which is also very readable.

ALAN THOMPSON

The Creative Explosion: an inquiry into the Origins of Art and Religion, by John E. Pfeiffer. *Cornell University Press*, 1985. 270pp, 71 b&w illus., 23 colour pl., notes, bibliog., index. \$12.95.

ONE OF THE MOST enigmatic problems of Upper Palaeolithic times concerns the introduction of and meaning behind numerous paintings and engravings found on cave walls in France and Spain. The subjects are mainly animals, with occasional birds, fish, human figures, hand prints and stylistic designs, all of which have been variously regarded, at one time or another, as art for Art's sake, magical, religious, to assist the hunt, or any combination of these interpretations. These, and other associated problems, are discussed in the first half of this book, with the author summarising information from other workers and combining it with his own extensive researches.

In Chapter 8 various cultural practices of the Australian aborigines are outlined in detail. However, although the use of modern hunter/gatherer groups such as Australian aborigines or the Bushmen of Africa as comparisons for groups during the Upper Palaeolithic has great appeal, especially with regard to the Australian aborigines' tradition of painting both rock walls and themselves, analogy of this kind must be undertaken with exceptional caution. Although caution is stressed by the author, in the final chapters he nevertheless uses modern hunter/gatherer groups as a focal point around which to swing ideas about religious motivation and other cultural reasons connected with paintings and engravings executed by our Upper Palaeolithic forebears.

In general the book is easy to read, if a little wordy, and contains much of what is currently known about 'Cave Art'. Overall it is clear that our knowledge of the Upper Palaeolithic has greatly increased in recent years, but it is still not (and perhaps never will be) sufficient to allow a complete picture of its people and their cultures. Caution must remain a byword in any interpretation of this material, especially when modern analogies are used.

ALAN THOMPSON

London – Illustrated Geological Walks – Book Two –The West End, by Eric Robinson. *Scottish Academic Press*, 1985. 142pp, many pl., glossary, index. £4.95, paperback.

THIS IS A GUIDE to several walks through the West End of London, covering Moorgate, the Barbican, Ludgate Circus, Holborn Viaduct, Fleet Street, the Strand, Trafalgar Square, Piccadilly, St. James's, Bloomsbury and St. Pancras, five walks in all. As the book was compiled nearly two years ago, some of the information may be out of date.

No previous knowledge, says the book, is assumed, but this does not mean that only complete beginners can benefit from it; I am sure that a more experienced geologist could do so too. To help the amateur, an extensive glossary is provided, which gives information on the rock types included in the main part of the book.

The book contains a large amount of information in a relatively small space, incorporating detailed descriptions of many individual buildings. There is an extensive index to aid the reader who is looking for a particular building: however I found some errors in it, which are rather irritating and could cause confusion. Another bonus is its handy size, which means that it is small enough to fit into pocket or handbag.

All in all it is an extremely interesting and educational book, which can be of use to a wide variety of people who are interested in geology and architecture, from the inexperienced but enthusiastic amateur to the experienced professional. It seems to succeed in its purpose of showing people how interesting the subject is, and going into greater depth than at first glance the observer is able to.

ELIZABETH BROOMFIELD (age 14)

Croydon Airport remembered, by Charles C. Dickson. *Sutton Libraries and Arts Services*, 1985. 64pp, 55 pl. £2.95.

WHEREAS MOST publications on the history of Croydon Aerodrome are compiled from official sources, the charm of this book lies in the fact that it records the personal reminiscences of the author's close association with the airport during its first twenty years. Not only this, but his acquaintance with the flying and administrative staff of the period, and even more telling, his caricatures, bring his stories vividly to life. While not a member of the airport staff, his position as an aviation artist enabled him to take part in many of the activities and flights in the twenties and thirties, giving him a broader insight into the overall picture than some one more closely involved in the actual work.

Recommended as enjoyable reading, not only to aviation enthusiasts but to anyone interested in the

days when flying was an adventure experienced only by the few.

FRANK WILCOX

The first, the fastest and the famous, compiled by Douglas Cluett. *Sutton Libraries and Arts Services*, 1985. 78pp, 106 pl. £2.50.

THE TITLE OF THIS BOOK, together with its sub-title *A Cavalcade of Croydon Airport events and Celebrities* accurately reflects the coverage of the highlights of aviation history at the aerodrome during the period 1920 to 1938. The format consists of a series of photographs in chronological order, each accompanied by a descriptive paragraph. The comprehensive range of subjects portrayed include the first King's Cup air race of 1922, early flights by Alan Cobham, Lindbergh's arrival, Amy Johnson's return from Australia, pioneering flights by Imperial Airways, together with many other equally historic occasions. While making no pretence to show the day to day working of the aerodrome, it does evoke the personalities and somewhat primitive aircraft of the era. It should be of considerable value to enthusiasts of aviation history in the pre-jet age.

FRANK WILCOX

The Archaeologist's Handbook, How we know what we know about the past, by Jane McIntosh. *Bell & Hyman Ltd.*, 1986. 192pp., approx 228 illus. £12.95.

IN THE LAST FEW years there has been a rash of handbooks, such as the *Handbook of British Archaeology*, *Archaeological Resources Handbook for Teachers*, *Handbook of Gloucestershire Archaeology*, *Radiocarbon User's Handbook* and so on, and almost the only common factor among these books is the word "handbook" in the title. However, this handbook has a subtitle – *How we know what we know about the past* – which clearly announces the purpose of this particular book. It uses examples from this country and abroad to cover most aspects of archaeology that usually appear in introductory books, as well as less commonplace and even unusual aspects of archaeology.

The book is divided into six parts, all designed to give the reader an insight into archaeology. Part 1 describes the history and development of archaeology. Part 2 is devoted to how sites form part of the landscape and how they are found, and part 3 deals with many aspects of excavation; part 4 describes techniques of analysing finds; and part 5 attempts to show what all the evidence means and how, for example, experimental archaeology and ethnoarchaeology can assist the understanding of the past. Each of these sections is enhanced by case-studies of varying length which enable the reader to dip into many facets of archaeology – for example, there are case-studies on Glozel, Sutton Hoo and the archaeological evidence for King Arthur.

The book is printed in double column with a sub-theme dealt with in every two-page spread; no topic is too long, and the book is easy to read. Because of this structure, each subject holds the reader's interest and is then followed by a different but linked subject, so that the book can be "dipped into" or read at length with equal ease. The illustrations and overall design are excellent, with many colour plates and colour drawings, most with extended explanatory captions.

Part 6 is 'The Diary of Billingsgate' by John Schofield, which gives a fascinating glimpse of that site, and adds another dimension to the book.

There are a few errors – mostly typographical – which could have been eradicated by more vigorous proof-reading, but the major disappointment is the short bibliography. There are only 31 entries, and they are not directly linked to the text. The topics are handles in such a way that they generally leave one wanting to read more about them, and so in would have been invaluable to have had further reading references linked to each section.

Overall, though, the book is an excellent introduction to archaeology, and more than an introduction: it covers such a wide range in such a readable way that even those who think they know a lot about archaeology will find it worth reading. It is a must for any bookshelf or reading list.

LESLEY ADKINS & ROY A. ADKINS

Landscape with Lake Dwellings, the Crannogs of Scotland by Ian Morrison. *Edinburgh University Press*, 1985. 128pp + 16pp plates (8 in colour), 44 figs., bibliog., index. £10 (h'back), £6 (p'back).

ALTHOUGH SMALL, this is a delightful and fascinating book and gives crannogs the importance in Scottish archaeology that they deserve. Scotland has one of the largest concentrations of built-up island sites known, and it is to be hoped that the present world-wide interest in every aspect of wetland archaeology and ecology, and the use of diving as an archaeological tool, will enable an increasing amount of information to be gleaned from these very exciting sites.

Dr. Morrison reviews the history of crannog investigation, gives a fascinating account of their structure and form and of their necessity (was it defence or a reflection of the amount of standing water?). Their use extended over two and a half millennia up to the 17th century, and they have always been a source of folklore and legend. He gives a short account of the techniques of investigation and finishes with a plea for the crannog to be studied, not in isolation, but as an integral part of the archaeology of the landscape as a whole.

The plates are excellent, the drawings and diagrams clear and informative, and there is a useful bibliography for those whose appetite has been whetted. It is, in all, a book to be enjoyed.

DAPHNE LORIMER

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markets. In 1867 they toured the Windsor area selling their creations until a clergyman recognised the objects and alerted the police. Billy and Charley were taken to court, but there were insufficient grounds for prosecution and they fled back to London²⁸ (strangely Billy gave his name as George Henry Smith in court).

By 1869 Billy and Charley were finding it so difficult to sell their forgeries that Henry Syer Cuming could buy them for a penny²⁹. Charley Eaton died on January 4th 1870, aged 35. His death certificate gave the cause of his death as consumption and the place of his death as a tenement in Tower Hamlets. There is no evidence that he died a wealthy man.

Later that year Billy Smith (who had taken the name William Monk) tried to sell a badge bearing a picture of the Lamb of God (Fig. 6). He was unable to find a buyer and eventually confessed to having

copied the design from a butter mould³⁰. In 1871 he met with a similar lack of success when he tried to sell a lead copy of a 13th century jug³¹. After this he disappears from history and his fate is unknown.

There is no record of Billy and Charley's output, but evidence presented in court at Guildford in 1858 suggested that they manufactured between 1000 and 2000 objects in a year. This indicates that they produced four or five a day (which sounds reasonable considering their working conditions). Between then and 1861 they could have produced three or four times as many forgeries. Even if they reduced production after 1861 they could have manufactured between 5000 and 10,000 items during their careers.

Billy and Charley forgeries continue to circulate. One was mistaken for a Vampire Talisman and featured prominently in a work on the paranormal!³² Examples can be seen in several London museums, and there is a particularly interesting display in the Cuming Museum.

27. *J Brit Archaeol Ass* 18 (1862) 371-2; 20 (1864) 83; 355.

28. *The Bucks. Herald* 20th & 27th July 1867.

29. *J Brit Archaeol Ass* 25 (1869) 389-90.

30. *J Brit Archaeol Ass* 26 (1870) 70; 377-8.

31. *J Brit Archaeol Ass* 27 (1871) 255-6.

32. P. Underwood *The Vampire's Bedside Companion* (1975). The author admitted his error in his autobiography *No Common Task* (1983).