

## REVIEWS

### THE ANGLO-SAXON CEMETERY AT DINTON, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

A. Hunn, J. Lawson, M. Fenley *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology & History*, 7, 1994.

An important contribution to the archaeology of Buckinghamshire has recently been published in *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History*, volume 7 (1994), pp. 85–148. Dinton, south-west of Aylesbury, is not a newly discovered site, but further excavation took place in 1991, and helped to provide a better context for the work done there in both the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Twenty graves were excavated in 1991, dating to the late fifth and sixth centuries. Unfortunately, bones did not survive well, and the small numbers involved mean that conclusions must be treated with due caution, but it is interesting that whereas the age distribution seems about average (although the young are under-represented), with few people reaching the age of 45, the heights seem to have been below average: other recent work has revived the possibility of recognizing a native British element in cemeteries with Anglo-Saxon styles of object and burial, and skeletal data may show that the Britons were less tall. It would obviously be a very long shot to suggest that Dinton is a case in point, but the range of grave goods is noted as an eclectic mix of 'Anglian' and 'Saxon', and sites like the significantly named Walton (*Wealh* for 'Welsh' if this etymology is acceptable) raise the possibility that there is more continuity than may be easily recognized. Readers of the *Records of Buckinghamshire* will want to study this report for themselves, as its final pages update the available information on fifth- and sixth-century material from the county, and suggest that the Thames valley and the area north of the Chilterns had a settlement pattern very different from the rest of modern Buckinghamshire.

The Dinton excavation report is therefore much more than a catalogue of graves and objects. The

latter should not go unmentioned, however, even though there was nothing quite as glamorous among the recent finds as the eighteenth-century discovery of a glass cone-beaker, discussed by Professor Vera Evison. A 'great square-headed brooch' has its ornament deconstructed by Colin Shepherd, and seems to carry a lot of coded information about local integration with pan-European culture. There are various disc-brooches, including saucer-brooches. A wooden bucket of the sort that sometimes contain surviving traces of their contents, such as nuts, suggesting allusions to feasting (not necessarily, of course, in the Other World), frustratingly defied modern analytical techniques for residue identification. There are beads, buckles, and spears . . . not particularly exceptional, unlike the mineralized remains of textiles, from which Elisabeth Crowfoot and Glynis Edwards are able to recognize both vegetable and woollen fibres; one example of the latter was 'matted' by teasing to disguise its weave, an unusual Anglo-Saxon practice, but one which shows that as much care went into dress as into dress ornament – and also shows how much more information can be extracted from what survives in the ground when rigorous standards of excavation and conservation are applied.

David A. Hinton

*Mr Hinton is Senior Lecturer in Archaeology at the University of Southampton.*

### EXPLORING ENGLAND'S HERITAGE: OXFORDSHIRE TO BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

Catherine Murray. pp 126, 97 Plates. (*English Heritage/HMSO, 1994*) ISBN 0 11 3000030

The shortcomings of this book are to be laid at the door of the publishers, who imposed such severe limitations on the author that it is a marvel that she has got in as much as she has. A little more generosity with illustrations would have allowed ex-

planatory thumbnail sketches of, for example, lobby entries and broach spires. It would have required very little space to allow the use of the Bucks term 'witchert', with a gloss, instead of the alien 'cob'. And it is a shame that Mrs Murray was not able to pursue her 'special interest' (to quote the preamble) in domestic architecture.

It is not possible to fault the inclusion of any building. Though why, if space was so short, include two of Sir Thomas Tresham's extraordinary symbolic buildings, and nothing by any of the Scotts? (Unless George Gilbert had a hand in the restoration of the Star Chamber at Broughton Castle). Every reader will have his own list of perverse omissions.

What has been allowed in has many attractions. One of them is a pleasantly relaxed style – 'huge great braces'; a row of porches is 'delightfully wonky'. The argument for the early date of Brixworth church is elegantly compressed: and throughout there is a freshness that is most appealing.

The book is arranged in nine sections dealing with Prehistoric and Roman sites, Towns and Villages Small Houses a Country Houses and Castles, Churches and Chapels, Educational and Charitable Institutions, Living off A Land (the buildings associated with agriculture), Travel and Transport, and Monuments. This is a good classification, and helps the text to flow. A better map might have helped readers to find the sites mentioned more easily. The Introduction, and those to each section, are enlightening.

J. C. T.

#### THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF MILTON KEYNES.

R.A.Croft and D.C.Mynard: *Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society, Monograph Series No.5 1993. pp 211, 84 figs, 37 plates, 11 large format maps in pocket ISBN 0 949003 12 3. Available from Oxbow Books.*

Before its designation in 1967 as the name for a new city in northern Buckinghamshire, Milton Keynes was but one village in a region of nucleated settlements, its chief claim to fame beyond the

county boundaries being that Lewis Atterbury, the father of Francis Atterbury, the bishop of Rochester banished in 1720 for supporting the Old Pretender, was rector from 1657. Why Milton Keynes should have been chosen to give its name to the new city remains something of a mystery, since the designated area contains four towns, Stony Stratford, Wolverton, Bletchley and Fenny Stratford as well as a dozen other villages.

The Milton Keynes Archaeology Unit was established by the Milton Keynes Development Corporation in 1971. Its first responsibility was the excavation and recording of archaeological sites within the designated area. Secondly it was required to advise the Corporation upon the management and preservation of those sites which could be retained within the overall scheme of the new city as it evolved. As a result the 22,000 acres of the designated site of the new city have been intensively studied for some twenty years, and the Unit has established a national reputation for the quality and thoroughness of its work and for the consistently high standard of its publications.

The volume discussed here must be seen as the climax of its work. The volume divides into two parts. There is first of all an overall survey of the entire area, with chapters on the geology and topography, prehistory, Roman, Saxon and medieval landscapes, the post-medieval landscape and the place-names of the area. The general focus is upon surviving earthworks and upon what has been discovered by excavation. Thus there are sections on roads and trackways, castles, markets, mills (both water and wind), moats, fish ponds, field systems, woods and parks and religious houses. Only in the sections on parish boundaries and on place-names is there a shift away from surviving physical remains in the landscape to intangible landscape features, and any account of the ideas which may have shaped the landscape is left on one side. Religious houses, for example, are given only five paragraphs. Thus there is no account of the motives behind their foundation, no reference to the various orders, no account of parish churches. The section on the post-medieval landscape has paragraphs on agriculture, settlement, roads and bridges, canals, railways, industries - including brick-making and lime-burning but these are treated in a very sum-

mary fashion. There is no account of vernacular building.

The second part is given over to essays on the individual parishes within the designated area. There are some anomalies, since the boundaries of the city included Stony Stratford, and hence part of the ancient parish of Calverton, and part of Newport Pagnell. Neither of these is included. Each parish is treated in a standardised way, so that the reader knows what to expect, and also where to look when he wishes to study one particular aspect of the landscape. This is particularly useful since there is no index to the volume as a whole. Each parish section has an introduction, some account of archaeological finds, paragraphs on the medieval and later village, the medieval earthworks, including deserted sites, the field system, and other landscape features, including wind and water mills. The material is presented clearly and consistently and is admirably illustrated with maps, plans, aerial photographs and several artist's reconstructions, including one of Great Linford postmill (p.29) and the house and garden of the Roman villa at Bancroft (p.13).

In this way a mass of quite invaluable archaeological and documentary evidence relating to the landscape of Milton Keynes is presented clearly and intelligibly to the reader. All historical writing is but an interim statement and the authors of the various sections of this volume are refreshingly aware of the gaps in our knowledge, as when on p. 15 it is emphasised 'that the apparent concentration of Saxon artefacts in this part of the city [the Shenleys] is due more to the level of archaeological activity than to any actual preference on the part of the Saxon inhabitants'. There is much that is new and provocative, particularly in the reappraisal of that most formative period in English landscape history, the five hundred years from the end of Roman Britain. Most of the present village sites, for example, seem to have been established in the tenth and eleventh centuries (p.15) and the suggestion (pp.121-123) that the present church of Milton Keynes itself may have been built upon a new site raises the intriguing possibility that other churches may also have moved since their original foundation.

The volume is very well produced. A handful of errors have slipped through the proof-reading: p.26 then for than, p. 41 Rotheram for Rotherham, p. 57 ached for achieved, p.86 license for licence, p.150 practise for practice and p.,161 canditates for candidates. There is a more serious error to be found in the confusing references to the map of Loughton of 1769. On p. 113 it is called the tith map, and this is repeated on p.119, but the reproduction to be found loose in the end pocket calls it the enclosure map. On pp. 83 and 87 there are references to manuscripts in the Cotton collection in the British Library, but these are not Additional Manuscripts. A Great deal of research into documentary sources has clearly taken place, but there is no list of those examined in the Bibliography. This would have been particularly helpful. Thus I cannot tell whether the information about the enclosure of Milton Keynes to be found in Public Record Office E. 134 35 Charles II has been deliberately left on one side, or whether the glebe terriers in the Buckinghamshire County Record Office have been studied but not referred to. Thus a late glebe terrier in the County Record Office gives the names of the fields in Shenley Brook End. PRO C1 452/37 has something to say about the early enclosure of Stantonbury, and British Library Additional Ms 37069 has much on the early enclosure of Tattenhoe. The Bibliography misses Professor Cantor's article on parks in Buckinghamshire (*Recs. Bucks*, 20, 1977), the list of water mills, (*Recs. Bucks*, 24, 1982), and wind mills (*Recs. Bucks*, 20, 1978), and my own article on markets and fairs (*Recs. Bucks*, 20, 1978). An item by Taylor, C.C., 1975, is said to be in Fowler, but Fowler itself is not listed. All of this, however, is but quibbling over an enormously rich and very well presented mass of material relating to certain, but not all, aspects of the landscape of Milton Keynes, much of it of permanent value because many of the sites here described have since their excavation been submerged beneath the modern buildings of Milton Keynes. No historian of Buckinghamshire and no historian of the English landscape can afford to be without this book.

Michael Reed  
Loughborough University

Professor Reed is the author of *The Buckinghamshire Landscape*, (London) 1979.

## GAZETTEER OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE BRICKYARDS,

Andrew Pike, 47 pp. 5 line drawings, 8 photos;  
A4, card covers. Bucks County Museum 1980  
and 1995, ISBN 0 86059 504 8, price £3.95 + P  
& P.

The introduction, starting at p.3, runs to p.6. After a list of abbreviations there follows a bibliography occupying three pages. This has apparently been up-dated after the first impression of 1980, since it includes T.P.Smith's study, *BAR* 138, 1985. Regrettably, however, it omits N. J. Moore, 'Brick' in Blair & Ramsay (ed's), *English Medieval Industries*, 1991.

The meat of this publication is, naturally, the gazetteer. Not surprisingly it contains little evidence of brickmaking before 1800. From the middle ages onwards brickmaking had been a largely peripatetic and *ad hoc* occupation and, as a trade, it was often combined, well into modern times, with other activities. Two versatile Bucks men, Harry Woollams in Great Missenden in 1883 and Thomas Cannon in Whitchurch in 1911, combined the jobs of builder, brickmaker and undertaker. Such evidence is gleaned from directories, which become available in the nineteenth century and form a major source of information. There is little archaeological evidence to back up the printed records, but what remains is duly sought out and recorded.

Bucks is for the most part rich in clay and brick earth, whose easy availability must be one of the determining factors for areas of brick production. There are thought to have been in England numerous small independent contractors from at least 1400 onwards, but in many cases their kilns or clamps were probably dismantled when the suitable deposits of brick earth, or the fuel for firing the furnaces, were exhausted. The high cost of transport, which only became more practical from the end of the eighteenth century, with improving communication by water and road (followed of course by railways), meant that bricks were burned as near as possible to the sites at which they were to be used. In Bucks from about 1700 brick was the commonest building material for all types of houses.

Evidence for earlier periods is sparse, but Brill supplied bricks for Oxford in 1465, and Brill Com-

mon furnished brick earth throughout the nineteenth century, suggesting, perhaps, an unbroken tradition. Tingewick, according to the much-quoted brickmakers' contract of 1534 between New College, Oxford, and two London brickmakers, was the site, with Stanton St John (Oxon), where a total of 800,000 bricks were to be made. Tingewick was one of the college's manors, but it is impossible to know where the bricks were destined to be used.

A long gap in the record brings us up to the seventeenth century, when estate papers begin to become available. The larger estates appear to have maintained their own brickworks - Claydon in the seventeenth century, Stowe into the eighteenth century, and Shardeloes too. There, bricks were presumably manufactured for all estate building, not just for the great houses. Chicheley Hall's beautiful bright red bricks were made on site, and the deposits of brick earth in the area continued to be used until the end of the nineteenth century.

It is hardly necessary to add that the Bletchley area gave birth to the London Brick Company, after having been exploited during the nineteenth century and probably earlier. The existence of the Ouzel river and eventually the Grand Union Canal must have facilitated expansion.

Most of the above information is extracted from the gazetteer, which will be a most useful reference tool; it gathers together all the evidence available at the end of the twentieth century for past brickmaking in the county. The absence of a distribution map is much to be regretted: it would considerably increase the usefulness of the book, which should perhaps have different symbols to distinguish the pre-1700 brickmaking activity for which the evidence is so sparse. One would then be able to see at a glance the areas most exploited and make a helpful comparison with the geological map of the county. The badly reproduced (and mostly undated) photographs add little or nothing, and should have been omitted. Nevertheless, a welcome booklet has been produced under the aegis of the County Museums. It will, no doubt, eventually find its due place, with the Sites and Monuments Record, in the Internet.

*Pauline Fenley*

THE BUILDINGS OF ENGLAND,  
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

*Nicholas Pevsner and Elizabeth Williamson, with  
Geoffrey Brandwood. Second Edition (1994),  
Penguin Books £30. Published September 29th  
1994. ISBN 0 14 071062 0*

This is the long awaited second edition of the classic handbook on the buildings, both old and new, in the county, within the traditional boundaries as established before the loss of its southern promontory, including Eton and Slough, to Berkshire in 1974, and the loss now proposed of Milton Keynes. It is thus directly comparable to Pevsner's original edition of 1960. The increase of nearly 250% in size, ignoring the larger format, is some measure of the wealth of additional information now included. There are 132 plates, new photographs all, and a welcome addition of 20 maps including many town centres which makes the locating of buildings so much easier. Also there are a number of helpful house plans, such as for Chequers, Dorney Court, and Lower Winchendon House, which convey much that in a prolix description would become tedious. The format for the volume is the new, taller type that has been adopted since the early 1980's. The gazetteer, the reason for which most people buy a 'Pevsner' is preceded by a series of no fewer than nineteen introductory essays on architectural subjects, great and small, taking us to page 120 before the old familiar 'further reading'.

Worthy as they are, and most are commissioned from people with a great deal of local knowledge, the sheer extent of these makes one wonder whether this is what the purchaser really requires. One has always enjoyed Sir Nicholas's terse, occasionally acerbic, introductions, based as they were on his personal experience of other counties, but this collection of essays amounts to something different, and it raises the point as to whether there should be another vehicle for these observations, and so reduce the rather high cost of the new volume to something more in reach of a wider public.

Buckinghamshire, which has always suffered from being not distinctive in geographical terms, is indeed particularly rich in certain fields. Perhaps those essays most useful are those which in one

way or another cover those fields which are particularly well represented in the county. 'Parks and Garden Design, 1660–1830' is such a subject, and there is a more-than-usually-interesting collection of early modern buildings, such as at Dagnall, Marlow Common, Chalfont St Peter, and Amersham. The essay 'Planning and Secular Architecture 1945–1993' is not only a perspicacious summary, but places the particular development of Milton Keynes neatly into the perspective of the architectural historian, perhaps for the first time. On the other hand, the geology and building stones essays could probably have been adequately illustrated simply by a map, which would have been more helpful for those not familiar with the place names.

Any new edition, after 33 years, usually has a sad catalogue of buildings lost, particularly in the notorious decade of the f 1960's and early 70's, the equivalent in our generation of the reformation of 1530–40 and depredations of the Commonwealth, 1643–50. Most fortunately, unlike many parts of the country, Buckinghamshire lost very few of its great buildings then, although the comparative dearth of seventeenth-century great houses is some measure of what has gone.

The 'meat' therefore starts on page 127 with the gazetteer.

The text gazetteer has not just been expanded, but has been largely rewritten. There are welcome new attributions, old attributions, like Archer's involvement at Chicheley, and Vanburgh's Bourbon tower at Stowe are finally laid to rest, and we are granted more information on such important detail as separating the date of design from that of completion, or at the least given bracketed years. In some cases dates have been significantly revised, such as Archer's work at Clivedon, from c.1720 to c.1705–6. It all makes it invaluable for the researcher, and one must with some sadness throw away one's now misleading 1960 edition. The greater size is also to a significant measure due to Elizabeth Williamson's drawing on the understanding and appreciation of what has come to be known as vernacular architecture, which has made massive headway since the first edition, an area in which Pevsner, the pan-European scholar, often admitted he was not strong. The 1993 postscript

outlines the need for more research on some aspects, such as secular buildings post 1830, while at the same time usefully flagging up those larger buildings which deserve a more detailed study, such as Bradenham Manor, Radcliffe Manor and Ditton Park. The gazetteer has also been expanded by Geoffrey Brandwood's detailed knowledge of churches, and, through his specialism, we discover much more about the activities of the Victorian restorers.

The totally new section is, of course, that on the new city of Milton Keynes. This is excellent and perhaps the first truly balanced account not only of its inception and development, but includes an intelligent critique worthy of the true profession of the architectural historian, of its achievements and failures. The book has instantly become the one place of reference for the work of a wide range of architectural practices of the 1970's and 1980's, and, for once, the credit for schemes built under the aegis of the Development Corporation and the County Architect's Department has largely been given to the individuals actually responsible. The authors do not shy away from commenting on the decline in standards which have flowed from the government's policy of forcing the design and planning more and more into the private sector on purely doctrinaire grounds, and most pertinently express their fears for any future departure from the original concepts which has made the city an international success, a prophecy likely, at this point twelve months later, most unfortunately to be realised. The comment stops just short of saying it is an object lesson in the debasement of standards which, we all in our hearts know, results from commercialism and unfettered private enterprise. — Perhaps not enough has been said of the pioneering work carried out in integrating public art in the developing communities. Many works have been mentioned, but some important pieces, such as Peter Randall Page's sculpture at MK hospital, and the Tindle murals at the Open University are worthy of a mention. These are consistently being added to, and can elevate MK to an art-sculpture trail in itself.

To return to the detail, no work on this subject, and of this magnitude is without its controversies and errors, and it would be churlish to dwell here on such minor points and infelicities of wording

(one cringes slightly at terms like 'Art Nouveaish'). Such errors as there are, and there are indeed remarkably few, will be apparent to those with specialist knowledge of individual places, and Penguin Books invite readers to write in with corrections. For instance, Buckingham's anglo-saxon mint started in c.1016–20, not 975 as stated; St Michael's church at Thornton, now placed in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust, was actually refurbished in 1802, thus vindicating the author's reticence over the 1850's date, and providing a date for the grotto built with church fragments.

Pevsner's original comment on the significance of Hakewill's remarkably early new-built Norman revival church at Old Wolverton, has been unnecessarily modified, for Cockerell had evidence for his work 17 years earlier at Tickencote, Rutland; thus the sudden appearance of this style in 1809 remains baffling.

The archaeological section does not mention the seeming quasi-official status of Stanton Low settlement, deduced from the excavated material, nor the architectural quality of Bancroft mausoleum. It also fails to recognise the importance of the probable forts at Magiovinium. It is also a pity to see old errors creeping through, such as a 'Roman Camp' at Calverton.

More importantly, Mrs Williamson has drawn on, as she says, as much 'as recent research makes possible and space permits', such as the documentary work on the gardens at Stowe, and Peter Welford's work on the triumphant wall paintings at Eton.

No doubt each reader will look for some particular favourite building, only to find it has not been mentioned. The choice Mrs Williamson had to make was often a hard and unenviable one, and one must admire the erudite balance she has achieved. However, one is just a little surprised at no mention being made of, for instance, the sangha in Milton Keynes, or one of the largest building projects in the county, the building of the huge underground control bunker for cold-war defence combined, ironically, with the post-bomb income tax office, at Bradenham, which rightly raised a nationwide controversy over its siting in the early

1980's. And some works are pilloried, usually deservedly so, such as Milton Keynes City Church and the awful church glass at Olney.

Bearing in mind how these volumes are used, and let us accept that they are no longer field guides to be stuffed into a pocket for an afternoon ramble, one would like to see, for the future, an index of features, such as wall paintings, and medi-

eval floor tiles in addition to the innovative and good, though curiously named, Index of Patrons and Residents. In a work of reference, such indices would make the volumes more useful than ever.

You cannot afford to be without it.

*Paul Woodfield*