

Reviews

Medieval Archaeology: An Encyclopaedia. Edited by Pam J. Crabtree. 23 × 29 cm. xxi + 426 pp., many figs., maps and plans. New York and London: Garland Publishing, 2001. ISBN 0-8153-1286-5. Price: £80.00 hb.

As the editor notes in her Acknowledgements the compilation of an encyclopaedia of medieval archaeology is a daunting task; one can only agree. The geographical coverage of the volume is broad and extends from Ireland to Russia and from Scandinavia to Italy. The book aims also to cover archaeological methodology as well as sites, materials and themes relating specifically to the study of the medieval period from A.D. 500–1500. Many would argue that the chronological coverage should be extended at either end of that range. What of the content and organisation of the book? The first thing to strike the reader is the inclusion of so much in a volume of just over 400 pages. English-speaking readers will find the eastern European summaries particularly useful. The number of illustrations is to be welcomed and the selection of salient phase plans and succinct narrative from lengthy excavation reports, many in languages other than English, will be of benefit to both students and scholars alike. The overall quality of the illustrations, however, is rather poor. The list of contributors numbers well over a hundred and includes many familiar names; Rybina on Novgorod, Roesdahl on Trelleborg, Heidinga on Continental rural settlements etc. as well as less familiar writers — at least to western Europeans.

Given the editor's emphasis on the volume's provision of eastern European material, the site entries by country come as a bit of a surprise. England merits the largest number of entries by far (thirty), followed by Scotland (ten) and Denmark (eight), with only one-apiece for Hungary, Ireland, Iceland, Poland, Russia and Switzerland and a few more for countries like the Netherlands and Sweden (three). Distinct entries for many of the Baltic States are absent (Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia). Many major medieval sites and regions for which one would have expected extended treatment receive the barest mention if at all. Furthermore, a number of relatively obscure sites receive lengthy comment. To give some examples, Grove Priory and Warden Abbey, Bedfordshire, are presented, but there is nothing on Tara. Boss Hall, Ipswich, finds an entry, but there is very little on medieval Spain; Shrewsbury is considered while Brugge is mentioned under 'Rescue Archaeology' and so on. While what is included is generally of a high standard, the volume has more on East Anglian sites in terms of individual entries (nineteen), while Paris is mentioned only cursorily. The much renovated Uppsala Cathedral has a section of its own, while that at Lund is ignored; the impressive urban archaeology of the latter city is consigned to a brief paragraph. Pilgrim souvenirs can be found among the various crafts and industries with their own sections, while pottery is discussed by reference to a limited number of wares rather than as a subject in its own right, although the Netherlands finds its own section.

While it would be impossible to achieve exhaustive coverage in a single volume, and bearing in mind that encyclopaedias are probably among the most difficult of texts to assemble, one turns the pages of this volume with a mounting impression of what is absent rather than with a growing sense of rounded coverage. Many of the British, Irish and Scandinavian sites can be found in either full or summary form in many sources and the sections on methodology are likely to be superfluous to anyone with the will to invest

£80.00 in such a specialist volume. This reviewer writes as one who does not revel in criticism, but it is unfortunate that the contents do not match up to the title or intention of the book. The entries as they stand are wide-ranging and of the high standard one expects of the impressive list of contributors; the absence of individual entries for key items of material culture is another matter altogether. Overall, undoubtedly useful, but patchy.

ANDREW REYNOLDS

Farming in the First Millennium A.D.: British Agriculture between Julius Caesar and William the Conqueror. By Peter Fowler. 17 × 25 cm. xviii + 393 pp., 21 figs. and 42 pls. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. ISBN 0-521-89056-X. Price: £27.95 pb.

This book takes on a subject which many of us take for granted as the backdrop to our study of societies in various sub-sections of the first millennium A.D.: the agrarian subsistence basis, which must have been the main preoccupation of the majority of the people we study, sometimes without much reference to it. The written record is biased firmly towards a small élite, although even that élite in a pre-industrial age cannot have been divorced from the reality of rural life — as a few written accounts, used by Fowler, remind us. Archaeological evidence does of course include bones and seeds, houses and field systems — the substance of this book — and the evidence for individual sites is analysed in terms of its subsistence base. But it is a fragmented picture, not previously put together as it is in this book.

Peter Fowler has tried, moreover, to overcome that ancient academic frontier between Roman and Saxon which divides our perceptions of the millennium far more effectively than Hadrian's Wall ever separated Roman from native, a division which might not have had much meaning to the people engaged in growing food on the same land, with much the same technology, whether tribute was paid to Roman emperor, Saxon king or William of Normandy. Professor Fowler is well qualified to take on this task, as he has for many years carried out fieldwork and academic research into the landscape made and used by prehistoric and later farmers in Britain. In this book he draws on his own research, but also synthesises much recent literature on relevant topics: landscape, farms and buildings, tools, technology and ploughing, food and diet. He uses archaeological, experimental, documentary and ethnographic evidence — the latter drawn mainly from remote parts of France and Spain where it seems as if time stood still in farming practice: the flails, spade, yoke and harrow illustrated do look as if they would not cause an Iron-age farmer much comment. The book is aimed partly at students and those who teach them, and it will certainly serve them well, though I doubt many will pursue a fraction of the references — most of what they need is within these pages. It is also readable for the interested general reader.

Until recently the landscape did not often change rapidly and irrevocably as the result of human activity, and each generation lived within the framework left by their predecessors, adapting and changing it according to their own needs and abilities. Understanding any period within the use of a landscape necessitates unravelling its whole history backwards from the present. Such research therefore inevitably takes a long-term perspective, not fitted neatly within political time frames: even the first millennium A.D. is an artificial division, as Fowler recognises. He is good at presenting the *longue durée*, the underlying environmental and technological constraints which allow meaningful comparison between farming of all periods in Britain up to the 19th century and occasionally more recently. He has tackled topics which have often been confusing because not properly understood by those writing about them, impractical urban academics who have simply repeated what they have read elsewhere. I particularly like the explanation of the difference between ard and plough, set out clearly both in the chapter of that title and in the glossary.

Fowler explains the limited and incomplete nature of our evidence, and the probability of regional variation in the history of the introduction of different methods of ploughing — more comprehensible than accounts punctuated by the (repeated) sudden introduction of heavy ploughs by the Belgae, the Romans or the Saxons to clear trackless forest we now know did not exist.

This is a qualitative, not a quantitative book. General discussion is punctuated with selective detailed case studies, but there are no statistics as to how representative any one example might be. This is partly because it is intended as a general survey, introduction and text book. But there are some topics where I would need to read further — as Fowler intends — to find out how many settlements were of such a kind and what the relative proportions were of animals or crops in which place at what time. The separation of urban and rural was not, apart perhaps from some of the larger Roman cities, so great that evidence from towns should be left out of consideration. There is some discussion of Hamwih, but probably more use could be made of evidence from urban sites, especially from Middle Saxon York, London and Southampton, for consumption, production and technology, all with relevance to aspects of agrarian life.

The publication of the Tattershall Thorpe smith's grave appeared too late for inclusion, as did the York wood-working volume.¹ However, overall this is a welcome and important book, to be read through or quarried for individual topics.

CATHERINE HILLS

Early Medieval Settlements: The Archaeology of Rural Communities in North-West Europe 400–900.

By Helena Hamerow. 18 × 25 cm. xiii + 25 pp., 75 figs. and 1 tab. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. ISBN 0–19–924697–1. Price: £45.00 hb.

This survey synthesises in detail the evidence from archaeology and some documentary sources for Early-medieval rural settlement in the North Sea region. The introductory chapter summarises the history and historiography of settlement archaeology. Subsequent chapters (2–6) explore the archaeology of buildings, settlement structure and social space, settlements in their territorial context, agriculture and animal husbandry, and trade and non-agrarian production. Within each chapter the main emphasis is on evidence from the Continent and southern Scandinavia, which is then compared explicitly with the evidence from England. A brief concluding chapter summarises conclusions and the contribution of settlement archaeology to current understandings of Early-medieval Europe. The results of much important fieldwork and research undertaken on the Continent and in South Scandinavia over the past two decades are presented here in English for the first time, although some of the case studies selected for presentation in greater depth, such as Heidinga's work on the Veluwe district in the central Netherlands, have been readily available in English for some time and are more widely known in the U.K. For the most part a good balance is struck between the presentation of information, synthetic interpretation, and mapping current research debates, although I sometimes found myself wishing for less recapitulation of data and more firm opinion on current research questions.

The thematic treatment of the evidence, integrating the different social and economic dimensions of the material record and incorporating anthropological perspectives, is very welcome, as is the broad-scale comparative approach. This demonstrates how far the archaeological study in England of Early-medieval settlement has come in the 20 years

¹ David A. Hinton, *A Smith in Lindsey: The Anglo-Saxon Grave at Tattershall Thorpe* (Soc. Medieval Archaeol. Mon. 16, 2000); Carole A. Morris, *Wood and Woodworking in Anglo-Scandinavian and Medieval York* (Archaeology of York: The Small Finds 17/13, York, 2000).

since contributions to a landmark conference were memorably characterised as ‘wittering about post holes’. However, in distilling such an enormous amount of data and opinion it is inevitable that some approaches and narratives will be privileged at the expense of others. Thus, there is little engagement with perspectives from historical geography which might provide a more sophisticated vocabulary and characterisation of the structures, morphology and dynamics of settlement and landscape. Different approaches to excavation in the U.K. and Germany and the Netherlands are noted but the detailed implications of the ways in which these structure archaeological data, and so constrain or enable social and economic interpretation, are not really considered, despite the fact that this has a critical bearing on the integrity of some of the major interpretative models offered. A Germanic cultural template seems to condition comparisons between the Continent and England: for a comparable time-depth and sample size, Continental and Scandinavian sequences spanning the later 1st millennium B.C. and the 1st millennium A.D. should be set against the full range of settlement for the same period in Britain, not just southern and eastern England in the 5th to 9th centuries A.D. This has particular importance in the treatment of developing non-agrarian economic structures and political and economic centrality where satisfactory explanation at this inter-regional scale must recognise the different impacts of Rome inside and outside the Empire and the very different experiences of societies in Gaul and Britain from those beyond the *limes*.

Placing the evidence from England so firmly in its European context is an important achievement which usefully exposes some insular research debates to more searching perspectives. However, because the treatment of the English material is necessarily synoptic the picture which emerges is sometimes sketchy. There is, for example, little sense of the diversity, complexity and dynamism of settlement structures in Middle Anglo-Saxon England which is becoming apparent through archaeology, nor of the potential of large-scale landscape studies like that in the Vale of Pickering, and the reliance on major published sites understates the sheer scale of the evidence generated by excavation and surface collection over the past decade which is documented in ‘grey literature’ or is in preparation for publication.

It would be unfair, however, to place too much emphasis on such criticisms. Any synthetic treatment is a point-in-time statement and demands that choices be taken and generalisations made. Helena Hamerow has given us an impressively wide-ranging expert synthesis which will broaden the horizons of Early-medieval settlement studies in England, stimulate and facilitate future research, and remain an invaluable resource for anyone teaching, researching or simply interested in the societies of Early-medieval Europe.

CHRISTOPHER SCULL

Uppåkra: Centrum och Sammanhang. Edited by Birgitta Hårdh. iv + 274 pp., many figs. Price: SKK 270; *Uppåkra: Centrum i Analys och Rapport*. Edited by Lars Larsson. iv + 184 pp., many figs. Price: SKK 236; *Järnålderns Skåne: Samhälle, Centra och Regioner*. By Bertil Helgesson. vi + 264 pp., 41 figs., 16 tabs. Price: SKK 253 pb; *Central Places in the Migration and Merovingian Periods: Papers from the 52nd Sachsensymposium*. Edited by Birgitta Hårdh and Lars Larsson. 25 × 17.5 cm. iv + 362 pp., many figs. Price: SKK 312 pb. (Acta Archaeologica Lundensia, Series in 8^o, Nos. 34, 36, 38 and 39; Uppåkrastudier 3–6). Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell International. ISSN 0065–0994.

The Institute of Archaeology at Lund University in southern Sweden is making a bold and determined effort to share the continuing discoveries at the remarkable site of Uppåkra, which lies close to Lund and is in some sense a precursor as a ‘central place’ of that medieval see. The series of published Uppåkra Studies began in 1998 with a collection of papers on central places and was followed in 1999 by a collection of studies discussing

the wide and important range of pottery, glass and metal finds from the site. Volumes 3–6 have followed in rapid succession in the years 2001–2, the latest volume being the proceedings of the 2001 Sachsensymposium in Lund.

This most recent volume includes the most up-to-date summary of the modern investigations at Uppåkra, where some excavation was carried out in the 1930s. This new project began in 1996, using several different methods of survey and more lately substantial excavations. A number of buildings have been identified in an area around and to the south of a surviving church and farmstead on a high point in the landscape. Post-built structures and at least one sunken hut can be dated to the Vendel and Viking Periods. The most remarkable building, however, is one that even the most sceptical have to concede looks a remarkably good candidate for a cult building, perhaps originally of the Migration Period. It has exceptional artefacts deposited by the hearth or in postholes, and, we now know, extraordinarily deep foundations. Not only have examples of the mysterious gold-foil figures or *guldgubber* been found here but patrician dies for their manufacture are present too.

Well-crafted, precious artefacts from the cultural layers around the site extend back chronologically to the earlier Migration Period in the 5th century A.D., and there are indeed late-Roman coins as well. The Vendel Period of the later 6th to 8th centuries is represented *inter alia* by a remarkable collection of several hundred brooches, a corpus carefully studied by Hårdh. As is being suggested elsewhere in Scandinavia, a shift in patterns of contact and behaviour is noted between these two phases, with extensive connexions and influences in the earlier period giving way to a greater level of regional coherency and (implicitly) cultural autonomy in the latter. Such broad patterns of change are developed *in extenso* in Helgesson's doctoral thesis, 'Iron-Age Skåne: Society, Centres and Regions', which is volume 5 in the series. Helgesson here proposes five main stages of social organisation between the beginning of the Iron Age, c. 500 B.C. and the earlier Christian Middle Ages of the 11th–12th centuries. In a systematic way, he correlates this scheme with a thorough survey of the archaeological material from Skåne, leading to conclusions that compare specific regional variation here with a more general Scandinavian model. This is a valuable archaeological overview, but unlike the other volumes in this series it is by no means an introductory study or a book for an interested newcomer to Scandinavian finds. Except on the rather attractive cover, no artefacts, sites or structures are depicted: this is the sort of book where the data are discussed, and figured only in maps or tables.

The other three volumes under review here are collections of papers, volumes 3 and 4 including several contributions by Lund research students. There are themes, or foci, to the individual volumes, but they are not followed slavishly. Volume 3 ('Centre and Context') includes a number of studies of Skåne, together with papers on cult activity, and social structure and settlement. Volume 4, despite its practically meaningless title ('Centre in Analysis and Report'), offers substantial accounts of the excavations of 1996–8 and various forms of survey of the site, alongside a set of discussions of animal and plant remains retrieved here. Both volumes include a variety of papers on groups of artefacts from Uppåkra. Most of these papers are in Swedish; English summaries are always provided.

The Sachsensymposium volume is almost entirely in English. In addition to Larsson's up-date on the results of work on the site — still, of course, an interim report — the majority of papers in the collection do deal directly with the types of site that can (liberally) be regarded as central places of one sort or another. Indeed a virtue of this volume is the valuable insight it unconsciously but inevitably conveys into how the phenomenon of the central place differs over the geographical and cultural range from Scandinavia to the Continent and Britain, and consequently how perspectives upon that phenomenon shift from area to area. The contrast is exemplified by Lotte Hedeager discussing Scandinavian

central places in a 'cosmological setting' and the prominence of the cult evidence at Uppåkra, while the Continental and British contributions are far more concerned with craft, trade and early towns. Williams offers a distinctive and valid bridge between the two by discussing the central-place functions of large 5th- and 6th-century cremation cemeteries in Early Anglo-Saxon England, but not in a way that does anything but confirm the breadth of the spectrum we are faced with.

The directors of the Uppåkra project are to be congratulated on their enterprise and success in getting the results of their work, and the questions and arguments those necessarily generate, into the public domain so speedily and effectively. Some of the material published in this way does inevitably become superseded quite quickly, but that is a small price, and one well worth paying, for the effectiveness of this policy. One can only look forward to more information about and understanding of this important and valuable site in the coming years.

JOHN HINES

Haithabu und die frühe Stadtentwicklung im nördlichen Europa. Edited by Klaus Brandt, Michael Müller-Wille and Christian Radtke. 30 × 22 cm. 451 pp., 143 figs., 18 tabs. Neumünster: Wachholtz Verlag, 2002. ISBN 3-529-01812-0. Price: €84.00 hb.

Les centres proto-urbains russes entre Scandinavie, Byzance et Orient. Edited by M. Kazanski, A. Nercessian and C. Zuckerman. 25 × 17.5 cm. 442 pp., many figs. Paris: P. Lethielloux, 2000. ISBN 2-283-60457-5. Price: €27.44 pb.

The proceedings of the conference held on Hedeby and early urbanisation in northern Europe in 1998 form a weighty tome, but one that is somewhat varied in its contents. A conference affording its participants an overview of a major general topic is always likely to have value, although equally its published proceedings are always likely to be a mixture of long and short papers, new information and old. A reviewer impatient to get on with a large and heavy book of 450 pages is probably the least likely to really appreciate a leisurely *Forschungsgeschichte* in the opening three papers on the work at Hedeby and its impact in studies of the Viking Period. Nonetheless these do show how significant Hedeby has been as a testing ground and inspiration in this field, not least in relation to large-scale and long-term, excavation- and survey-based research projects.

The newest material here is found in a variety of papers presenting and discussing a number of different forms of trading site as well as contemporary early towns, complemented by informative specialist perspectives on the role of shipping and coinage between these sites. A small selection of examples of detailed analysis of aspects of economic life in Hedeby is provided in papers on diet in Hedeby and Schleswig, textiles at Hedeby and Birka, and a particular form of metalworking in Hedeby. Comparative studies show a particular interest in the Baltic area, with considerable attention inevitably paid to the major discoveries at Groß Strömkendorf (believed to be Reric), but also include Dorestad and, again from later in the Middle Ages, Bergen. It is understandable that Michael Müller-Wille finally summarises with a totally factual review rather than any Big Ideas. This is a diffuse volume, but with much good stuff in it, and certainly an item for any serious library of European medieval urban archaeology.

Considerably more fresh revelations, at least for a western readership, are offered by Michel Kazanski and colleagues' exciting collection on early Russian urban centres and their context. It includes 21 papers, mostly in French although four are in English; all have summaries in the other language. The contents are divided into four sections, the largest, covering nearly half the book, being straightforwardly 'Les sites'. The opening section sets the scene, with Dolukhanov and Kazanski separately discussing the colonisation and

expansion of agriculture in the forest zone of NW. Europe in Russia, and Callmer providing a mass of precise information on Scandinavian relations with the eastern Baltic area from the 6th–9th centuries A.D. in a long and detailed paper. Zuckerman compares historical and archaeological sources to revise and refine our picture of the mid-9th-century Scandinavian ‘kaganate’ of the Rus’. This theme is picked up in a later section through discussions by Howard-Johnston and Sorlin of the mid-10th-century Byzantine diplomatic manual *De administrando imperio*.

The survey of sites rightly forms the heart of the collection: a valuable overview of a series of sites, some familiar, an equal number not so (to this reviewer at least) — Staraja Ladoga, Gorodishche, Novgorod, Timerevo, Sarskoe, Rostov, Gnezdovo, Kiev, Chernikov, Shestikova, Truso (near Elbląg, Poland) and Kaup (by Kaliningrad, formerly Königsberg). The relationships between the trading and military roles of the Scandinavians in the social processes that lead to the emergence of Russia are the subject of increasing debate, and considered here in different ways by Mocja and Petrukhin. The collection is rounded off by a strong set of papers focusing on the character of the trade itself, investigating the relevant conditions in the Khazar steppe and its impact in the moslem caliphate of central Asia at the southern end of the trade routes. Thomas Noonan continues his detailed analysis and interpretation of the coin hoards to correlate changing patterns and levels of trade with the rate of urbanisation in Russia.

This book makes a genuinely rich contribution to the archaeological literature, both on Early-medieval Russia for a Francophone/Anglophone readership and on the Viking Period generally. No one can ignore any longer the fact that the world of long-distance connexions and relationships became a large and complex place in the Viking Period, and that our horizons need to be equally broad to comprehend that.

JOHN HINES

Excavations on St Patrick's Isle, Peel, Isle of Man, 1982–88: Prehistoric, Viking, Medieval and Later.

Edited by David Freke, 29 × 21 cm. 480 pp., 117 figs., 51 pls. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2002. ISBN 0–85323–336–5. Price: £99.95 hb.

Mannin Revisited: Twelve Essays on Manx Culture and Environment. Edited by Peter Davey and David Finlayson. 15 × 21 cm. 183 pp., 56 figs., 2 colour pls. Edinburgh: Scottish Society for Northern Studies, 2002. ISBN 0–9 535–226–28. Price: £13.00 pb.

St Patrick's Isle lies on the west coast of the Isle of Man and excavations there have produced rich evidence for its human occupation, particularly in the medieval period. Interim reports and press coverage generated great interest during the excavations and finally, fourteen years after the excavations were completed, this long-awaited ‘final’ report has appeared. That its publication was a difficult process is made clear in the editorial statement (xv), written in 1999 and explaining the delays as due to ‘. . . conflicting pressures on the principal author, as well as a succession of typesetting problems and more recently administrative pressures on the Liverpool University Press’. Some honest scars from this process remain evident.

The report is structured in six parts. The first is an introduction encompassing a summary of previous excavations on the site, documentary evidence and two well-presented and contrasting views on the place-names. It also defines the seven periods (and their phasing) of the excavation: the first prehistoric, the last two Post-medieval and modern and the remainder medieval (encompassing cemeteries, a Viking fort, churches and the later castle). The second part deals with the main excavation report, comprising the prehistoric archaeology, the Early Christian to Post-medieval cemeteries and the other excavated features (periods 3–7). The standing masonry survey and the architectural

interpretation form the focus of the third part and the various specialist reports are gathered together to form the fourth part. These encompass the environmental and faunal evidence; the scientific dating reports; the numismatics and the artefacts of stone, metal, skeletal materials, glass and ceramics. General conclusions and the references form parts five and six.

The scars alluded to above show themselves in several ways. Typographically, errors include ‘. . .the the Cathedral’ (25); ‘admini-strative’ (439); inconsistent use of commas in the bibliography and inconsistent use of italics for *Chronicle of the Kings of Man and the Isles* as against *Orkneyinga Saga* (441–2). In addition a number of the illustrations could have been better served with more crispness and sharpness. There is a remarkable lack of colour illustrations — plates 4 and 7, both watercolour views, are reproduced in black and white, nor is there a colour plate of the significant group of glass beads. The project’s difficulties have been such that the 50,000 pieces of large mammal bone excavated are not published in this final report — we get a short chapter styled on an interim report, with the rest to be published as a forthcoming, stand-alone monograph.

The strongest section is that dealing with the cemetery excavation. This is the most integrated section of the volume, tackling the material grave by grave and backed up by a chapter on the Viking-age artefacts from the graves. This gives the material the undoubted focus which enables it to make an impact; even then the analysis of the glass beads from the so-called ‘Pagan Lady’ grave was deferred to a later chapter in the finds section. The rest of the report, in contrast, treats the archaeological contexts and the artefacts derived from them as largely distinct phenomenon. The otherwise excellent, narrative-driven conclusion summarises the human use of St Patrick’s Isle, but without reference to the contribution of the finds.

The finds reports themselves bring together details and analyses of a diverse range of fascinating objects. They begin with the prehistoric lithic assemblage. This was largely residual and includes an axehead found in a Christian grave context and yet the analysis of this material shows a marked reluctance to raise the question of its possible medieval re-use. This links in with the general, traditional approach of cataloguing the finds by material types rather than social context and possible functions. The gaming material is a case in point. This is split between the skeletal artefacts and the stone artefacts sections. The graffiti gaming boards are treated separately as a significant group but one of the boards (fig. 84 no. 2, and by extension possibly no. 3) is described as a merels board when it could have been more precisely described as an alquerque style of board. It also does not pick-up on the possible board designs on two of the stones discussed separately in the chapter on Early Christian and Viking Age Sculptured Monuments. Figure 88 no. 2 bears an apparently unfinished merels board and figure 88 no. 5 a possible *hnefatafl* (king’s table) board.

There are some significant reports within this volume which will remain points of reference for some time to come. The overall approach may not be ideal and dogged by circumstance but the strength of the material and the evident hard work of the contributors should mean the volume is deservedly and widely consulted. Recommending its use is easy but at £100 recommending purchase is much harder!

The second Manx item is a collection of twelve papers stemming from a conference held by the Scottish Society for Northern Studies in Port Erin, Isle of Man, in 2000. It has much to interest the archaeologist concerned with regional medieval culture. Commencing with the geological background, the volume then moves on to Early-medieval Manx sculpture; place-names; the relationship with Ireland in the 11th century; medieval appropriation of Iron-age forts; Manx archaeology in the High Middle Ages; the 2nd Duke of Atholl’s inheritance of Mann; Manx farming post 1750; Manx folklore; Manx fiddle music; the Tynwald-Westminster relationship and the future for Manx Gaelic.

The volume has a broad and laudable interdisciplinary character: geology, art history, archaeology, place-names, folklore and historical analysis are all used to give a broad account of evolving Manx culture and history. It serves as a fine advocate for both understanding medieval regionality for itself and for the understanding of the continued impact of (evolved) medieval institutions today.

The pivotal issue of Man's physical and cultural setting in the Irish Sea, its long history of contacts with its neighbours is an issue addressed by almost all the papers and notably those that deal with the medieval episodes. Pressure of space does not allow the consideration of each in detail but where it is dealt with its complexity is recognised and it is never reduced to a *fait accompli* of meekly accepted waves of cultural influence. The Early-medieval sculpture paper, exploring the contacts between Man and Pictland, is a good example, and a taste of the delights to come with the publication of the full Isle of Man corpus. The point is made most succinctly and powerfully by the figure 1 map in the paper on the High Middle Ages, captioned: 'Position of the Isle of Man from a "northern" perspective', which basically shows the Irish Sea province but 'upside down' as it were. The same paper has perhaps the most puzzling omission. Although it characterises the medieval occupation of the Isle of Man as generally rural, there is no discussion of shielings. Certainly in Scotland the nature and evolution of shielings is a key item on the agenda for understanding medieval and later rural settlement.

The whole volume is attractively laid out, the main drawback being the lack of any unifying index. Printing errors include a want of sharpness in some of the illustrations. Figure 2 (14) has had to be overlain with a replacement illustration after final printing. *Chirho* is misspelt in places and there is no standardisation on Man or Mann. These errors should not detract from what is a significant, well-integrated and interdisciplinary regional study.

MARK A. HALL

Naples, from Roman City to City-State: An Archaeological Perspective. (Archaeological Monographs of the British School at Rome 12). By Paul Arthur. 21 × 30 cm. xv + 197 pp., 86 figs., maps and plans. London: The British School at Rome, 2002. ISBN 0-904152-38-3. Price: £27.95 pb.

There are extremely few detailed Italian city-based archaeological studies in English and almost none exist which focus on the whole span of the first millennium A.D. In Italian of course there are many detailed (and usually multi-volumed) *Storia di* . . . offerings, such as for Ravenna, Milan, Naples and Rome, although the pace of urban archaeology in Italy is such that for the largest cities these works fairly quickly go out of date; many single volume syntheses also exist but these are generally text- and history-oriented. Paul Arthur's monograph is thus an extremely welcome arrival, offering a detailed and critical assessment of the archaeology and history of a key centre and its territory, utilising many data drawn from the author's own fieldwork in and around Naples (see Appendix 1, 153-4).

The monograph comprises seven chapters, with the final one providing an overview linking back to the opening historical survey. This latter provides a useful introduction to Roman Naples, charting a steady rise in economic and, by the mid-5th century, strategic importance (notable refugees from Africa also came here after the Vandal takeover of North Africa). In the 6th and 7th centuries A.D. Naples was overseen by a count and then duke, who held both militia and navy; the same period marks the rising power of the Neapolitan bishop (around A.D. 600 Gregory the Great in fact reprimanded Bishop Paschasius for spending too much time and money on ship-building!). The duchy from the mid-8th century was largely autonomous, coincident with Byzantine demise, papal weakness and Carolingian strength; despite a restricted territory, trade enabled sufficient

wealth (and attracted people) and its navy offered sufficient strength to retain independence until the Norman occupation in 1140.

Chapter 2 considers the population of the town and territory (including its health and diet) as a lead in to a key analysis of *Urban Transformation* (chapter 3: 31–58). While texts and the names of bishops and dukes register religious and administrative continuity (see 163–8), a central debate in Italian archaeology is the level of physical continuity in the related urban space: much debased and weakened from Rome (i.e. with dereliction in the cityscape) or active and refocused (e.g. based around churches and monasteries)? Arguably a much reduced population after c. A.D. 450 should not deny a full urban status; and, as Arthur shows, material debris (ceramics) is well attested for the 5th to 8th centuries — if now gathered inside the city walls rather than disposed of elsewhere. Religious foundations and events are an important guide to local vitality, although there is little (published) archaeology to support the written data (chapter 4: 59–81; Appendix II — 159–62). After a set of important Late-antique works, no new churches or monasteries are attested in the 7th century, and almost none in the 8th. Arthur correctly states that existing church provision may have been sufficient between times for a stable population to not warrant new works (and with some bishops keener anyway to build boats!); when these do appear again from the 9th and especially the 10th century they relate to a diverse social context and comprise small private church foundations, alongside new monastic houses for monks displaced by Arab raids (60–1, 69, 71 — in all, 29 monasteries are attested in Naples by A.D. 1100). Oddly, there is little evidence for the early dukes displaying their independence through religious foundations; perhaps gifts, endowments and renewal were the preferred route.

‘Building activity in Naples seems to have been fairly lively throughout the early Middle Ages with respect to most other surviving towns . . .’ (31), but with changes in building media, notably in the re-use of materials from quarrying of Roman structures; the Church, however, shows an ability to harness new production, notably for tiles. So saying, the urban innards remain hazy. Naples does feature the best preserved classical street plan in Italy, presumably indicating persistent centralised control of the thoroughfares (although the general narrowing of streets attests progressive encroachment: 38–40, 52); however, the fate of the larger public Roman buildings is not well understood, and where in the case of the *theatrum tectum* conversion into housing occurs, the chronology is uncertain (such chronologies are, of course, only now being teased out in other towns in Italy). A useful assessment of the potential structural evolution of private dwellings indicates how Early-medieval housing may emerge alongside open space, dark earth and orchards; some dispersed intramural burials are also recognised, but relationships with houses/plots as opposed to churches remain to be determined (46–58).

Valuable reviews are presented of the landscape’s evolution and of the economy, stressing in chapter 6 how urban resilience must reflect relative rural success. Arthur summarises the evidence for animals, plants, and oil and wine in Naples, noting also the documented presence of intramural orchards and cultivated spaces; Early-medieval amphorae denote persisting production and export/import, the implication being a Church-maintained *annona* whilst other trade withered (128–30, 141). Yet after the mid-6th century the old Roman farming pattern fragmented with a likely displacement towards forts and the coastal centres, requiring adoption of diverse rural strategies (more farming inside and immediately around Naples). By the 9th century the wider landscape becomes busier and more open once more, prompted by churches and monasteries. Archaeology, however, remains to clarify both these rural sites and the earlier phases of the *castra*/forts (103–5).

Although relatively compact at 151 pages of text, this is a very informative and well presented volume, suitably illustrated and referenced, and with a wide bibliography. As a

guide to questions of urbanism, landscape and sources in late antique and Early-medieval Italy, *Naples, From Roman City to City-State* is an excellent introduction.

NEIL CHRISTIE

Excavations at 25 Cannon Street, London: From the Middle Bronze Age to the Great Fire. (Museum of London Archaeology Service Archaeology Studies Series 5). By Nicholas J. Elsdon. 21 × 30 cm. x + 74 pp., 51 figs., 17 tabs. London: Museum of London Archaeology Service, 2002. ISBN 1-901992-22-5. Price: £7.95 pb.

Roman Defences and Medieval Industry: Excavations at Baltic House, City of London. (Museum of London Archaeology Service Monograph 7). By Elizabeth Howe. 21 × 30 cm. xi + 122 pp., 80 figs., maps and pls., 48 tbs. London: Museum of London Archaeology Service, 2002. ISBN 1-901992-17-9. Price: £12.95 pb.

Roman and Medieval Townhouses on the London Waterfront: Excavations at Governor's House, City of London. (Museum of London Archaeology Service Monograph 9). By Trevor Bringham with Aidan Woodger. 21 × 30 cm. xii + 144 pp., 74 figs., maps and pls., 26 tbs. London: Museum of London Archaeology Service, 2002. ISBN 1-901992-21-7. Price: £12.95 pb.

The Archaeology of Medieval London. By Christopher Thomas. 18 × 25 cm. xii + 178 pp., 59 figs., maps and plans. Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2002. ISBN 0-7509-2718-6. Price: £25.00 hb.

The Museum of London Archaeology Service has considerably enhanced our understanding of the archaeology of medieval London over the past fifteen or so years. Some of the fruits of its work can now be accessed through a series of publications with contributions from and edited by a number of archaeologists and specialists. MoLAS Monograph Series numbers 7 and 9 cover excavations at Baltic House and Governor's House respectively, both within the Roman walled City of London. Number 5 of their Archaeology Study Series is the published results of the excavations undertaken at 25 Cannon Street, also in the City of London. Accompanying these three report-like publications is a broader synthesis, *The Archaeology of Medieval London*, written by Christopher Thomas, a project manager for MoLAS and an archaeologist with first-hand knowledge of some of the archaeological sites he discusses.

Roman and Medieval Townhouses and *Excavations at 25 Cannon Street* have a strong focus on the Roman remains recovered — as does *Roman Defences and Medieval Industry* (MoLAS monograph 7) — but all periods of archaeological deposits are subject to equally adept scrutiny. It is to the first two of these report-like publications that those who are interested in the 'reoccupation' of the Roman city walls in the pre-Conquest period will be most attracted. Both publications follow a similar format and it is a credit to authors, editors and excavators alike that the two sites, in close proximity to each other, are handled with such uniform conventions. We are provided with substantial evidence for the changing topography of the late Saxon to early Norman city and it is demonstrated that a similar and contemporary pattern of urban development took place on both sites. *Excavations at Baltic House* covers an area of the walled city that is characterised by far less activity in both the Roman and medieval periods. Evidence for settlement in this area during the Early-medieval period (in this instance 900–1200) differs considerably with that from Governor's House and Cannon Street and is restricted to a smattering of pits with no clear indication of property or land boundaries. The primary focus of this publication is on the range of metallurgical processes for which there is evidence of in the late 14th and 15th centuries. The plans of chronological periods from all three publications are excellent and an array of photographs, tables, artefactual illustrations, cartographic material, foreign language and specialist summaries make this format of publishing archaeology both extremely

informative for the seasoned academic as well as being readable for those with just a passing interest.

The Archaeology of Medieval London, in the popular format of a Sutton publication, covers the period c. 900–1500, the reoccupation in the late Saxon period of the Roman city walls to the dissolution of the monasteries. The adoption of a standard chapter breakdown (i.e. 889–1066, 1066–1200, etc.) is complemented by the subdivision of each chapter into themes (religion, markets, docks, defences, etc.). This works well, particularly, for example, for the discussion of London's many medieval monastic foundations where it helps to convey a sense of chronological trends.

The publication is clearly a product of archaeological investigations undertaken by MoLAS and the structure of the discussion is built around the various large and intermediate-sized archaeological sites that have recently been excavated. Thomas's style eschews historical narrative in favour of an often quite detailed discussion of the archaeology itself. This is refreshing and as outrageously obvious as this may sound, especially considering the title of the book, the approach that has been adopted in this publication allows for the archaeology to do the talking. We are treated to in-depth analysis of stratigraphic relationships. Thus we learn of how pit A is overlain by floor B, which itself was resurfaced on no fewer than four occasions before being cut through by a foundation trench for building C. Thomas's work gives the reader an insight into how, quite literally, bricks and mortar can translate into a coherent sequence of events; a history. The emphasis, however, is more towards phasing, sequences and periods defined through material culture. It is confirmed to us that the best way to gain an understanding of day-to-day life in medieval London or the topography of an ever growing city (both themes which are addressed in each chapter) is through the source material that is best constituted to deal with these topics — archaeology.

It is, however, a prerequisite of this approach, an archaeological narrative, that enough illustrative material is provided to enable the reader to visualise spatial dynamics and stratigraphic relationships and *The Archaeology of Medieval London* often lacks sufficient complementary illustrations. This, I am sure, is a restriction imposed by the publisher and otherwise there is a healthy balance of maps, plans, photographs and reconstructions.

All four publications could have been improved by the inclusion of section drawings or at least some kind of visual aid to show the depths at which archaeological deposits can survive in urban circumstances. Open-area excavations set down as many as four metres from the present-day street surface are not uncommon in urban Britain. It would be useful for both the amateur and expert alike to have to them visually demonstrated the nature of depositional make-up and just why so many periods of construction and activity survive.

These four publications represent a 'must purchase' for any student of medieval London. The monograph and study series books help us to understand the nature of urban growth, industry and day-to-day life in medieval London through the analysis of individual sites with summaries of artefactual and environmental remains. The general overview provided by Christopher Thomas would sit comfortably on the shelf of any student of medieval England. Not only is it easily digestible but, in particular, its attention to archaeological detail and the emphasis on the role that archaeology can play in our understanding of the period mark it out as a welcome contribution to the growing library of books concerned with medieval London.

Die Archäologie des mittelalterlichen Königsgrabes im christlichen Europa. (Mittelalter-Forschungen 8). By Thomas Meier. 17 × 25 cm. x + 478 pp., 173 figs., maps and tabs. Stuttgart: Thorbecke Verlag, 2002. ISBN 3-7995-4259-0. Price: €65.00 hb.

Thomas Meier's well-presented and well-illustrated book discusses the archaeology of medieval royal burials in Christian Europe. It is a very thorough and detailed survey of kings' graves and burial sites with particular emphasis on grave goods and grave markings. While the title suggests the exclusive treatment of royal burials, the author does also address burial practices of the nobility, albeit briefly. The book is written in German with a brief summary in English (and in French) at the end. It is followed by a very extensive bibliography (1,500 titles on 64 pages). Chronologically, Meier covers the long period from the Carolingian era until the opening years of the 16th century. His examples include a vast array of, among others, English, French, Spanish and German kings' and queens' burials.

The book is divided into four main parts. The first of these deals with the events surrounding the death of a king in medieval society and the consequences thereof for a society which regarded the king as the embodiment of worldly power. Meier argues that the death of the sovereign who, in the earlier years of the Middle Ages, was regarded as the personification of power, inevitably resulted in the breakdown of order within society, while the changing perception of royal power following the advance of constitutionalism, and consequently the changing perception of the king himself, resulted in a notable moderation of the crisis following the death of an individual monarch. He opens his study with a discussion of the consequences of a royal death and its aftermath in medieval Europe. His assessment of the material sources concentrates on the political, rather than the religious significance of the items and their context. The second part assesses in turn the various grave goods which have been found in royal graves, while the third part is concerned with different types of grave markings. The fourth part, finally, seeks to provide attempts at interpreting representation in royal burials and to 'historicise the material sources'.

The author informs us that he uses the term 'archaeology' in the title in the broader 'British and Scandinavian, rather than the German' sense, which denotes more specifically the actual physical evidence below ground. This approach is already acknowledged on the back cover of the book, where it is stated that Thomas Meier's work 'crosses the subject boundaries between archaeology, history and art history'. This broader approach is evident also in the many illustrations of graves and grave goods, which accompany the text, which are mostly without scales. The evidence cited by Thomas Meier is not based on actual archaeological excavations; it rather makes use of existing findings based on previous digs, which the author uses for his broad comparative survey of c. 75 kings' and c. 25 queens' burials, covering over four centuries and twelve countries or regions.

Meier is interested predominantly in high-status burials, for which the evidence is most readily accessible. These include not only royal burials, but also burials of members of the nobility. He focuses his attention on a number of specific items, more or less frequently found in the royal graves which constitute his study. These are crowns, *sphaira* (orbs), sceptres and *mains de justice*, swords, spurs, rings, and cross-shaped objects. An assessment of the frequency with which these objects are found in graves — or have been reported to have been found during previous excavations — revealed certain patterns, which the author analyses according to the location of the finding and the quality of the object. He thus notices that royal insignia, such as crowns and sceptres, were provided as inferior copies, while original objects like swords and spurs, rather than copies of these, were found in the graves, including those of the nobility. As well as discussing the increasing availability and the changing relevance of these different items, the author moreover looks at 'marks inside the grave' and analyses these in terms of their origins and their changing social status and significance. They include inscriptions within the grave, providing

characterisations of the deceased individual. The findings, based on earlier archaeological digs, are moreover listed in tabular form (figs. 65–70).

Meier provides an assessment of other contemporary sources, especially literature and art, and their usefulness. He recognises clear bias in these sources regarding the emphasis on ritual and representation, notably funerary processions and lying-in-state, which renders these sources of limited value for the study of the medieval royal burial.

Thomas Meier's work, then, is perhaps of greater interest and value to the historian of medieval kingship and ritual than to the archaeologist. The lack of scales accompanying the illustrations, for instance, and the lack of direct physical evidence deriving from actual archaeological excavations combine to make the work of somewhat limited profit for the archaeologist. It is nevertheless a lively, if at times somewhat narrowly focused, contribution to a discussion which will doubtlessly continue to evolve, subject to new findings and new interpretations thereof, involving, as was Thomas Meier's aim, archaeologists, historians and art historians alike.

KAREN STÖBER

The Affinities and Antecedents of Medieval Settlement: Topographical Perspectives from Three of the Somerset Hundreds. (British Archaeological Reports, British Series 337). By Nick Corcos. 21 × 30 cm. vi + 214 pp., 49 figs., 11 pls. and 5 tabs. Oxford: John and Erica Hedges and Archaeopress, 2002. ISBN 1-84171-425-0. Price: £31.00 pb.

Doctoral theses often make a difficult transition to full publication. First impressions of this one, longer in the completing than most due to the demands of the author's full-time employment in an entirely unrelated field, are however, good. The Acknowledgements and Dedication section is one of the most generous, eloquent and movingly personal I have ever read, and indeed it is Corcos's clear, finely pitched and elegantly readable writing style which successfully sustains the reader the rest of the volume through many long, detailed and complicated arguments.

The volume focuses on three hundreds in Somerset, Whitley, Chew and Carhampton, chosen ostensibly because they are widely spaced across Somerset, and include a variety of medieval settlement patterns, in particular bridging the divide between nucleated and dispersed zones as defined by Roberts and Wrathmell.¹ However, it is also clear that Whitley hundred was selected because it contains the village of Shapwick, the site of the ground-breaking (literally and metaphorically) ten-year research programme led by Mick Aston.² And in fact Corcos's publication could be defined succinctly as an attempt to provide a wider regional and theoretical context to the work at Shapwick.

However, the volume ranges much more widely than such a definition might suggest. After a short introduction outlining the historical and geographical background to the research, Corcos plunges into a dissection of the evidence for Roman settlement and landscape in the three hundreds in a precise and thorough manner which is typical of the whole of the volume. Previous research and ideas are reviewed, the evidence presented and analysed, and new theories tentatively offered. Subsequent chapters on the Dark Ages (chapter 3), hundred structures and ecclesiastical relationships (4), place names (5), boundaries and communications (6), Domesday Book (7) and settlement patterns (8) all follow the same basic structure.

In each of these chapters, their main strength lies in the detailed review Corcos provides both of the state of archaeological, historical, toponymical, geographical and

¹ B. K. Roberts and S. Wrathmell, *An Atlas of Rural Settlement in England* (London, 2001).

² M. A. Aston and C. M. Gerrard, 'Unique, traditional and charming: the Shapwick project, Somerset', *Antiq. J.*, 79 (1999), 1–58.

environmental knowledge, and of recent academic thought on the subject matter and approaches to it. These are consistently excellent — thorough, thoughtful, well informed and incisively inquisitorial. Another major strength lies in the care Corcos has taken to search out and incorporate new evidence, ranging from (then) unpublished work by the Royal Commission (as then was) and local archaeologists such as Charles and Nancy Hollinrake, to new analyses conducted by Corcos himself such as that on habitative place names or locative surnames.

This is all good, but one concern which repeatedly presented itself in these chapters was the way in which Corcos then uses this material to develop his own interpretations. Where these fall down is in the over-stretching of inferential arguments inadequately supported by, or tested against, physical evidence. This is apparent in such divergent exegeses as those propounding a high-status Roman site at Chew Magna, an underlying pattern of dispersed settlement in Whitley hundred, and the nature of the medieval settlement pattern on the Poldens. In cases such as these, Corcos's eloquently constructed arguments may well be right, but this reviewer could not shake off the feeling that too often his theories are developed one from another with insufficiently solid evidential foundations. Another problem lies in the dominance of Shapwick. This is acknowledged in chapters 6, 7 and 8 where it is explicitly stated that Whitley hundred 'again takes centre stage' (143), and this is also the case in chapters 2 and 9 where 'greater Shapwick' commands the majority of the author's attention. This leaves the volume a little unbalanced, with the other two hundreds the poor relations. All in all, Corcos would perhaps have done better to have restricted his vast geographical scope and concentrated instead on looking for more physical evidence to back up some of his claims.

Notwithstanding these criticisms, the volume is well rounded off by the final conclusion and synthesis (chapter 9) which reviews the evidence in the light of other recent debate, making particular reference to Faith (1997), Fox (1992) and Lewis et al. (1997) (persistently referred to incorrectly as 'Dyer et al. 1997' in both text and bibliography).³ Here Corcos recognises and accepts the heterogeneity of settlement and land use and convincingly makes the case for the pre-eminent influence of two main agencies, namely seigneurial authority and the natural landscape in the their development.

However, the reader is aware throughout the volume of other weaknesses, to do with production rather than content. The illustrations, and particularly the maps, are extremely poor. On most of the author's own maps the detail is quite unreadable, and the poorly reproduced OS maps used to illustrate other points are under-annotated and although included to illustrate textual arguments are therefore often difficult to correlate with them. Any reader unfamiliar with the region would, I suspect, have to work very hard to get a clear idea of the geography of the area. The bibliography is extensive but many of the entries are incomplete (lacking place or name of publication) or (as with Lewis et al.) wrong. More problematic is the lack of an index. This is a serious flaw in a volume whose wide coverage invites revisiting and 'dipping', particularly by anyone wishing for a quick review of the history and current state of thinking on any number of theoretical issues.

Overall, this is certainly a thesis which does deserve to be widely read, and particularly by anyone interested in the study of the medieval settlement landscape, especially if they are looking for a quick way into current thinking and how to apply it to a wide range of evidence. It is deserving of better production, which would have remedied the shortcomings of the maps, bibliography and lack of index. For a book which is undeniably very dense, it is surprisingly readable and undeniably thought provoking.

CARENZA LEWIS

³ R. Faith, *The English Peasantry and the Growth of Lordship* (London, 1997); H. A. S. Fox, 'The Agrarian Context', 53–67 in H. A. S. Fox (ed.), *The Origins of the Midland Village* (Leicester, 1992); C. Lewis, P. Mitchell-Fox and C. Dyer, *Village, Hamlet and Field: Changing Medieval Settlements in Central England* (Macclesfield, 2001).

Wells Cathedral: Excavations and Structural Studies, 1978–93. (2 vols. English Heritage Archaeological Report 21). By Warwick Rodwell. 22 × 32 cm. 618 pp., 543 figs., 15 pls., 21 tabs. London: English Heritage, 2001. ISBN 1-85074-741-5. Price: £150.00 hb.

Until recently Wells Cathedral has been relatively understudied, but it will soon be much better known. These two magnificent volumes relate to the south or cloister side of the cathedral, where the Anglo-Saxon church lay, but they are part of the wider investigation of the whole Liberty, including the cathedral itself and bishop's palace. To the east lie the wells; a stream (the palace moat) is to the south. The first recorded activities may have been agricultural. Prehistoric pits and scatters of 1,773 worked flints of more than one phase suggest domestic activity along the stream and a masonry building somewhere under the present cathedral. An empty pit, subsequently stone lined in a late Roman style of construction, is interpreted as a chamber sunk into the floor of a mausoleum erased by Saxon buildings. In origin presumably pagan (and associated with a water cult?), it is argued that the mausoleum was re-used and adapted to Christian spirituality and hence evolved into the Saxon cathedral, as elsewhere in England and abroad. Apart from interments apparently within the mausoleum, a mixed cemetery immediately to the north and west was in cyclical use from the 7th century. Excavation has so far been too restricted to reveal anything of the *monasterium* of St Andrew in the charter of 766, which became the seat of the new diocese of Wells in 909. Around the mid-10th century the Roman chamber was filled with bones formerly coffined, the mausoleum itself was demolished, and a tiny chapel was erected in its south-west corner over a group of important tombs. A forgotten saint's cult is postulated. There was another small structure (another chapel?) immediately to the north, and to the west a deep curved wall may be the eastern apse of an original cathedral that lies wholly unexcavated under the cloister. Thereafter the mortuary chapel (St Mary's) was much enlarged, into two cells, connected to the putative east end of the cathedral, and abutted by other structures that were perhaps the first cloister and domestic offices of Bishop Giso (1040–88). To the west, beyond the existing cloister and towards the town, there lay the atrium recorded c. 1160 and rebuilt in 1354 as the now ruined choristers' house. This whole linear arrangement, which is paralleled at Glastonbury and Canterbury St Augustine's, was aligned differently to the new Gothic cathedral that was erected to the north from c. 1180, strangely after the see had moved to Bath. Apparently progress was extremely rapid. On the not unlikely supposition that Chilcote stone had to be substituted for Doulling because of the rebuilding of Glastonbury Abbey, the eastern arm was already complete unexpectedly early, by 1184, therefore the transepts and the north-east cloister entrance date from the 1180s, not the 1240s, and hence the existing cloister was intended from the start. When the Saxon cathedral was demolished, St Mary's chapel was retained and joined to the new cloister. Askew to everything new, its survival surely indicates a deliberate decision to retain an archaic vestige of a venerated past. Now comprising a vestibule, nave and chancel, and re-titled the Lady Chapel by the Cloister to distinguish it from its counterpart in the cathedral, the chapel was aisled in the 13th century and adorned with a sumptuous sculptural arcade and decorated tiles. It was a popular burial place with its own chantries. Following the rebuilding of the cloister, it was completely replaced from 1477 by the new Lady Chapel in the Cloister erected by the mason William Smyth as Bishop Stillington's (1465–91) own mausoleum and chantry. Properly aligned, it also is remarkable for its size and cost — it was cruciform, aisled, and fan-vaulted throughout — and may have been the masterpiece of the West Country Perpendicular School. Its panelled western end is imprinted on the cloister wall and has thus enabled its elevations, as well as its plan, to be reconstructed. Stillington's chapel was dissolved as a chantry and was blown up in 1552. The rest of volume 1 deals with the cloisters, which are substantially re-interpreted, the western atrium and chorister's school, and the still operational medieval conduits. Volume 2, the specialist reports, contains data *inter alia* on 314 burials and some fine 13th- and 15th-century stonework. This report also

contributes to our understanding of the city's wells and watercourses, to the fortification of the Liberty, the development of the town plan and much else. The most meticulous excavation and analysis is combined throughout with wide-ranging comparisons and incisive speculation. Admittedly the earliest phases rest on limited evidence: not much will be required to confirm — or possibly correct — what is stated here. Only a fraction even of the south side of the cathedral has been excavated. Scope for further study remains in those unexcavated early levels under Stillington's chapel, the cloister, and the masons' yard.

MICHAEL HICKS

Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West. Edited by Alan Thacker and Richard Sharpe. 16 × 24 cm. xiii + 581 pp., 39 figs. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. ISBN 0-19-8203942-3. Price: £85.00 hb.

This is an important book from which anyone with an interest in the Early Middle Ages should benefit. It is exceptionally well edited, and the end result is a sharply focused collection of essays whose authors not only share a commonality of purpose, but show awareness of conclusions expressed in other chapters and frequently seek to reconcile them with their own. Outmoded views on the 'age of saints' are enthusiastically trampled underfoot, and the pages crackle with new ideas and interpretations. The main focus is on Britain and Ireland, but many authors endeavour to put their work into a broader European context and to compare and contrast between regions. Readers of this journal might feel most immediately attracted to the two papers that deal most ostensibly with archaeological material — John Crook on 'The Enshrinement of Local Saints in Francia and England' (a useful summary of his recent book) and Nancy Edwards's thorough survey of the archaeological evidence for Celtic saints' cults. But, in fact, most authors take a multidisciplinary approach and are concerned to reconcile evidence from archaeology and place-names with the complex written evidence, the unravelling of which provides the basis for new interpretations. What will interest many medieval archaeologists, as Alan Thacker stresses in his important opening essay which pulls the volume together and establishes the basic chronology of the development of saints' cults in Early-medieval Europe, is that the volume is above all about 'the significance of place in the study of the saints'.

Only a brief résumé can be given of some of the book's main areas of interest. The first saints in Britain as in other parts of Europe were the martyrs. Richard Sharpe discusses the evidence for Britain's indigenous martyrs, Alban, Aaron and Julius, Sixtus and Augulus, and for the spread of the cults of other European martyrs in the 6th and early 7th centuries through secondary relics dispensed by the popes and others. He uses the material to help frame an important argument for the basic continuity of the early British church from its late Roman origins without the need for any re-introduction of Christianity along its Atlantic seaways. Indeed, as emerges in the papers by Nancy Edwards, Oliver Padel and John Reuben Davies, the British clung to the ideas prevalent in Rome at the time of their initial conversion regarding the inviolability of bodies in their original places of burial in contrast to the Irish and the Anglo-Saxons who followed the Franks in translating and sometimes dividing bodies. By the 7th century we have reached the stage at which new confessorial saints were being produced in some numbers. Alan Thacker explains the processes by which it was done and the importance of Frankish precedents for insular practices; parallels and contrasts with Frankish practice also emerge from Ian Wood's study of the promotion of local saints in Burgundy and the Auvergne. The creation of saints in Anglo-Saxon England is relatively well recorded and dated, and Catherine Cubitt and John Blair explore aspects of the background. Thomas Clancy for Scotland

and those already mentioned studying other Celtic areas have a much more difficult task that is hindered by the obfuscation of later sources that aimed to project current situations on to a more distant period. Padel and Davies, looking respectively at Cornwall and Wales, agree that *lann* names could be formed over a long period from the 7th century onwards and that they are generally habitative names referring to a settlement based around a church or other ecclesiastical focus rather than to a particular type of ecclesiastical site. The names that often form the second element of the name could be those of priests or other local holy people, but may also have been those of secular patrons or owners with the distinct possibility that the prominent graves of these latter (as well as the former) may sometimes have become the focus over time of saintly cults. This layer of local saintly names is lacking in Anglo-Saxon England, but there were numerous monasteries or minsters each of which was likely to have had its own house saints as John Blair demonstrates. Saints and ecclesiastical families and the concept of the saint as patron are explored for Ireland by Pádraig Ó Riain and Thomas Charles-Edwards, both studies suggesting intriguing parallels but also carefully nuanced differences with the Anglo-Saxon dynastic interests explored by Blair and Cubitt. The book ends with a detailed handlist of Anglo-Saxon saints prepared by John Blair, for which he must be heartily thanked, as it will be a major source of reference for many years to come.

BARBARA YORKE

Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture: Volume VI, Northern Yorkshire. By James Lang. 22 × 29 cm. xv + 540 pp., 20 figs., 1204 illus., 4 tabs. Oxford: Oxford University Press with the British Academy, 2002. ISBN 0-19-726256-2. Price: £130.00 hb.

The latest volume in the *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture* exemplifies the high standards of scholarship and documentation that has become a hallmark of the Corpus project. It is also a tribute to the primary author, Jim Lang, who died shortly before the volume was completed. Jim had an impeccable eye for Anglo-Saxon sculpture and the nuances of style in general, but also an unrivalled eye for, and knowledge of, the sculpture of Yorkshire. For this reason, as well as for the relationship between specific sites, the book is particularly rewarding if read in conjunction with his earlier volume, *York and Eastern Yorkshire* (Corpus vol. III).

The main catalogue of *Northern Yorkshire* provides full descriptions and analyses of 375 sculptures from 66 separate sites, with information on another 73 stones contained in the various appendices. It is extremely generously illustrated; in some cases with several photographs of the same face of a given sculpture, each one offering a slightly better view of individual details. Introductory chapters are devoted to the history, geography and monument types of the area, types of ornament, schools of sculpture, and inscriptions. Appendices cover 'Stones Dating from the Saxo-Norman Overlap', 'Stones Wrongly Associated with the Pre-Conquest Period', 'Lost Stones for which no Illustration has Survived', and 'Sundials of Alleged Pre-Conquest Type'.

This volume of the *Corpus* will be of particular interest to many readers as it includes the important sites of Lythe, Masham and Whitby, which preserve either numerous sculptures or particularly unusual examples of Anglo-Saxon sculpture. The section on Whitby includes a useful grid plan of excavations at the abbey, as well as tables listing the sculpture found during the clearance excavations, and the various locations at which specific types of sculpture were discovered. Of equal importance to the major sites, however, is the impressive number of newly discovered and unpublished pieces documented — the former largely a tribute to Jim Lang's eye. It is also refreshing to see that the term 'shaft' has replaced the 'cross-shaft' used in earlier volumes in the case of monuments for which there is not clear evidence of an actual cross-head.

As with any publication of this magnitude, there are some minor problems. Why is the figure on Brompton 3A described as holding a book or a maniple, while the figure on Brompton 3D, who clearly holds a maniple, is described as holding only a book? The identification of the three orans figures on the Coverham (Holy Trinity) shaft as a possible representation of God, Adam and Eve, seems doubtful given the lack of iconographic parallels. One could also quibble with the identification of the 'chevron group' as a 'School' (40–1) as it consists of a widely dispersed group of monuments from sites as far apart as Cumbria (Carlisle 3), Northumbria (Jarrow 8 and 9) and Yorkshire (Northallerton 1 and 5), seemingly linked only by the use of a chevron moulding. The number of different voices in the book can also be jarring. Because Jim died before the volume was completed, the editors have added information or alternative interpretations to some of the entries. On the whole, this is helpful, especially when it comes to recent bibliography or information on the discovery or disappearance of a work, but it can also create confusion. It is unclear, for example, why the differing stone-types of Brompton nos. 3, 9 and 10 would mean that Lang's suggestion that either 9 or 10 capped 3 is invalid. If the sculpture were originally painted, as was the case with so much of Anglo-Saxon sculpture, the paint could have obscured the differences of stone-type. This is the argument one hears so often as regards the awkward juxtaposition of stones of different colour at Ruthwell. Lang interpreted the two seated figures on the unique fragment Newburgh Priory 1 as St Matthew and either St Mark or St Luke with their symbols on their laps, while in a footnote Derek Craig suggests an alternative interpretation of the two as the Virgin holding the Christ Child and Christ in Majesty holding the Agnus Dei. Neither addresses the problems inherent in either interpretation, or attempts to explain the presence of the animal head pendant between the two figures. There are pros and cons for both interpretations that should have been stated. If the figures are meant to be evangelists with their symbols, why does Matthew's symbol have a book and halo, while Luke's (or Mark's) does not? Can the pointed chins of the figures be understood as beards? (In which case the figure on the left could clearly not be the Virgin.) And why Christ in Majesty rather than John the Baptist with the Agnus Dei? The haloed, standing figure of the Baptist holding the Lamb of God at Ruthwell would provide an iconographic parallel for the latter interpretation.

It is the nature of the subject that scholars are bound to debate the way individual monuments are interpreted or described. It is one of the great benefits of the Corpus project that it generates discussion and debate by making the monuments accessible to a world-wide audience. Whatever its minor flaws, *Northern Yorkshire* is most importantly an impressive work of scholarship and an indispensable addition to the Corpus series.

CATHERINE E. KARKOV

The Art of the Anglo-Saxon Goldsmith: Fine Metalwork in Anglo-Saxon England, its Practice and Practitioners. By Elizabeth Coatsworth and Michael Pinder. 16 × 24 cm. xvi + 293 pp., 39 b & w pls., 8 colour pls. and 27 figs. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2002. ISBN 0-85115-883-8. Price: £60.00, \$110.00 hb.

The skill of the Anglo-Saxon weaponsmith has been much celebrated, but the smith who worked in gold, silver and copper alloys is equally deserving of our attention. This ambitious book attempts to provide a rounded picture, drawing on the technical analysis of their metalwork as well as examining the literary and manuscript art evidence for the smith at work. There is a chapter to explore the range of archaeological evidence for workshops including tools, crucibles and moulds. The following chapter examines the manufacturing techniques, especially casting, but also the use of sheet metal, wire, solders and rivets. The next describes various decorative techniques, including engraved and punched designs, together with the production of decorative foils using dies, inlays such as

niello and applied ornament, especially gold filigree. Then there are gem settings, particularly *cloisonné* garnet, but also glass, shell, amber and enamel inlays. The final chapter of part I explores the construction and design of fine metalwork. Its second section seeks to place the Anglo-Saxon smith in society, examining literary references for smiths, their portrayal in manuscript art, and exploring the few references to individual smiths working in Late Saxon monasteries. There is also the evidence of charters, wills, law codes and a few inscriptions on surviving products. Part of the problem for any such study is that the English evidence is usually too partial and incomplete by itself. We have to turn constantly to Europe or Scandinavia to fill out the picture. The career of Eligius, patron saint of metalworkers, who died as bishop of Noyon, has no equivalent in 7th-century England. Equally, the hundreds of moulds and crucible fragments recovered at Helgö in Sweden help us to appreciate an incomplete brooch mould from Mucking. At least we have the Tattershall Thorpe smith's grave now, but any survey of the archaeology must draw on a wide range of material and demonstrate enviable expertise over the published literature.

This review will concentrate on the earlier archaeological evidence and this is not always handled well. Correct dating presents problems, for the Mucking mould belongs simply to the 6th century (not the 6th or 7th century: p. 70) and saucer brooches were being cast in the late 5th or 6th centuries (not 5th to early 8th century: p. 77). Then the authors do not seem to have considered the possibility that lead models were used in the production of a duplicate for an existing item in cast silver or copper alloy. The Geneva lead model of a 6th-century Anglo-Saxon brooch need not represent evidence for an itinerant smith (242), but might instead be a local smith's attempt to produce a matching brooch in a region where dress fashion required the wearing of paired brooches. It is perhaps understandable that the authors were unaware of recent published studies of dated garnet jewellery from south-west German cemeteries. These have demonstrated that access to garnet from India and Sri Lanka had ceased before c. 600. Central European Bohemian sources became available in the second half of the 7th and the early 8th century, but such stones have a diameter of only 2–3 mm and were not suitable for extensive *cloisonné* designs. Sea trade between the Byzantine Empire and India had been disrupted by Sassanian activity in southern Arabia around 570. More worryingly our authors also fail to understand the processes affecting *cloisonné* garnet jewellery produced in Kent during the first half of the 7th century. At the same time as their gold was progressively debased with silver, so their supply of tabular garnet became exhausted. Unfortunately, the composite disc brooch from Monkton of c. 630–50 does not feature in their select catalogue or bibliography, yet it provides a fascinating example of the recycling of ever smaller reshaped garnets.¹ The Abingdon (Milton) composite brooches (misdated in the catalogue) with their honeycomb miniature garnets set into copper-alloy cells represent the final stage of this process, being assembled around the middle of the 7th century.

This book fails to provide the level of authority that one ought to expect. It remains a useful volume to acquire for your bookshelf, but you would be well advised to do some further research yourself before necessarily accepting its statements. Careless proof reading does not help. Thus Tattershall Thorpe is consistently spelt as 'Tattersall Thorpe' in the captions and even once in the text (234) and the caption for figure 25 transposes the Wilton and Ixworth crosses. It is at its best when discussing practical experiments undertaken and various insights provided from working metals.

MARTIN WELCH

¹ Sonia Chadwick Hawkes, 'The Monkton brooch', *Antiq. J.*, 54 (1974), 244–56.

Two Medieval Churches in Norfolk. (East Anglian Archaeology 96). By Olwen Beazley and Brian Ayers. 21 × 30 cm. xii + 104 pp., 33 b & w pls., 59 figs., 8 tabs. and 22 items on microfiche. Norfolk: Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, 2001. ISBN 0-905594-33-9. Price: £13.00 pb.

Church Monuments in Norfolk Before 1850: An Archaeology of Commemoration. (British Archaeological Reports, British Series 317). By Jonathan Finch. 21 × 30 cm. viii + 278 pp., 49 figs., 71 pls., 16 tabs. Oxford: John and Erica Hedges and Archaeopress, 2000. ISBN 1-84171-209-4. Price: £40.00 pb.

The two volumes considered in this review share a concern for Norfolk churches, but whilst the former contains two conventional excavation reports the latter is a much more wide-ranging study of the local developments in commemoration. The excavation reports examine two churches in or near Norwich: the first was the disused St Martin-at-Palace, where much of the interior was excavated in 1987 before its new use, but the exterior was tackled only by structural survey. There was evidence of pre-Conquest burial and of timber structures represented by post-in-trench construction and then by post pits. The earliest stone church was late Anglo-Saxon in technique but probably post-Conquest in erection. The complicated above-ground sequence of building expansion c. 1100–1832 could not be matched in the arid archaeology. Only the soakaway for the font, the ghost traces of screens and pews, and the extensive Post-medieval burials indicated liturgical use. Bradley's report presents a careful combination of archaeological and architectural survey, documentary search and a thorough assessment of the material culture. The second church was at Bowthorpe, a depopulated village west of Norwich, but now within the city's boundaries. The chancel stood in ruins; the nave and tower had been demolished. A structural survey in 1984–5 recorded the chancel walls. Excavations exposed an 11th- or 12th-century chancel within the 14th-century rebuilding and the 1638 re-use of the chancel. It also revealed an aisleless nave, a later north porch, and a round west tower with the Post-medieval insertion of a corn-drying oven. The finds were few but indicated structural decoration and personal possessions; a Post-medieval burial in the drying-oven before the tower was deliberately collapsed could have invited speculation. Instead the author (Ayers) places Bowthorpe in its wider context aided by documentary evidence. In both reports there are matters left unanswered. At St Martin the existence of mid-17th-century painted texts was revealed by chance survival behind a wall monument, but the monument's date is not given so a *terminus ante quem* for the life of the paintings is overlooked. At Bowthorpe the new east window was clearly not 'an oval opening' but has become so after two centuries of erosion caused by the robbing of the brick sill below a timber-framed Italianate window.

The second work is a substantial contribution to the lively debate on commemoration. Dr Finch opens with a devastating critique of the art-historical approach to church monuments which divorces them from their setting and context. He then explores the potential of various theoretical stances to interrogate this form of commemoration but refreshingly does not shackle himself to one favoured theory. Despite his title the author does not discuss all Norfolk but limits himself to a selection of churches based on landscape regions and agrarian systems, allied to their diverse social structures, in three rural areas and in Norwich. He examines a sample of 102 churches and 3,065 monuments. These are considered in broad periods but only his first two sections, up to 1549, are within this journal's purview. However the author frequently stresses the need to see the entire range of monuments in each church 1100–1850; one must not be limited by period, material or monument type. Both the continuity and the availability of monument types are emphasised, in order to perceive iconographic developments, to characterise social structure and to isolate purely local trends. Problems of survival, especially the less durable monuments and those targeted by religious fanatics, are assessed. The author shows his

willingness to question, however politely, long-held assumptions and to identify inconsistencies in familiar arguments. This gives his approach a greater validity as he strives to understand the role of monuments in the search for social identity, the safeguarding of status and the proclamation of personal beliefs.

This volume does present some difficulties. There is an unexplained discrepancy between the monument totals given in graphs 4–8 and those in the accompanying tables 1–4. The author regards the opening formula ‘Pray for the soul of . . .’ as more religious in intent than the opening ‘Here lies the body of . . .’, but omits to mention that the second formula always finished with ‘on whose soul may God have mercy. Amen’. Perhaps Dr Finch could have examined whether the use of stained glass for commemoration, intercession and the display of heraldry was additional to depiction on tombs or was its alternative. Similarly the assertion that the early 16th century witnesses a decline in donors’ commitment to the parish church seems to be at variance with the continuing foundation of chantries and altar lights. Was it, rather like home improvements, that all possible adornments had been accomplished apart from finer roofs? Some of these conclusions might now be tested by taking a wider sample within a narrower period (e.g. 1450–1549). However these doubts do not undermine a stimulating piece of research, cogently argued, supported by wide reading, attractively illustrated and meticulously presented.

LAWRENCE BUTLER

Manoirs et châteaux dans le comté de Rennes: Habitat à motte et société chevaleresque (XI^e–XII^e siècles).

By Michel Brand’Honneur. 16.5 × 24 cm. 317 pp., 9 maps, 2 figs., 5 genealogies, 2 graphs, 39 plans, 7 tabs. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2001. ISBN 2-86847-561-2, ISSN 1255-2364. Price: €21.34 pb.

The depiction of the castle of the count of Rennes on the Bayeux Tapestry as a massive earthen motte supporting a timber tower enclosed by a palisade might appear to lend support to the often-held view that mottes represented no more than an early stage in the development of the medieval castle, the fortified residence of a feudal lord. Indeed, the earth and timber castle of Rennes was later superseded by a massive stone one, albeit built on a different site. Within the medieval county of Rennes, however, Michel Brand’Honneur has now documented some 233 mottes, about 50 of which still survive in some form or other. If each of these was a castle, serious questions might be raised about the stability of the county and the authority of its counts during the 11th and 12th centuries.

Following Brand’Honneur’s analysis, however, to raise such questions would be to misinterpret the role of mottes in the medieval Rennais. For, as he shows, the interpretation of mottes by archaeologists — no less than by historians concerned primarily with written sources — has tended to be conditioned by a historical model, prevalent since the late 1960s, which saw the period around 1000 as a time of upheaval, when castellans surrounded by low-born knights set themselves up against the counts and princes by building private fortresses. Mottes appeared to scholars such as Michel de Bouiard and A. Debord as archaeological confirmation of the disintegration of the power of the counts in the 11th century and the development of semi-independent ‘*seigneuries châtelaines*’.

In this important study, based on a detailed investigation of the county of Rennes, Brand’Honneur challenges the assumption that mottes were invariably castles. By combining archaeological research in the field with a thorough examination of written and cartographic sources, notably the Napoleonic survey of 1810–60, he has increased considerably the number of mottes known to have existed in the county, suggesting in so doing that the numbers recorded in other regions are likely to represent severe underestimations. By combining the physical evidence of mottes and their settings with research

into the genealogies of the families associated with them, he opens up new perspectives on the place that mottes occupied in the social, political and economic landscapes of the 11th and 12th centuries.

The first chapter examines the distribution of mottes, their settings and morphology. The author argues against the use of the common term '*motte castrale*' (motte-castle), except for sites that are known to have been major castles. Most mottes were not easily defensible and were associated with sites having a status closer to that of a manor; they are therefore better referred to as '*manoirs à motte*' (motted manors). The function of the motte in these, the majority of cases, was similar to that of a manorial tower: to demonstrate status. The functional distinction between *manoirs à motte* and castles becomes even clearer in the second chapter, devoted to the 11–14 castles of the Rennais in the 11th to mid-12th centuries. All existed by the 1050s and no new ones were added until 1225, although some secondary castles appeared after 1150. Most castles were sited in naturally defensible positions that had been occupied in Gallo-Roman or Merovingian times, and most came to be associated with towns. At least five and possibly as many as nine, including Dol and Rennes (as shown on the Bayeux Tapestry), had mottes topped by a defensive tower. These were evidently the symbols of power and privilege that the builders of *manoirs à motte* — and some 17th-century château-owners — later sought to imitate.

The third chapter examines the role of castles in the political conflicts of the period 970–1150. The chronicle accounts provide no support for the idea that in the years around 1050 the followers of the count attempted to detach themselves from obedience to him by setting up their own *castra*. On the contrary, all the castles in the Rennais, bar Combourg and perhaps Dol, were of comital origin and despite the sometimes doubtful fidelity of castellans they generally continued to remain under the count's control. The proliferation of motted manors does not therefore appear to have been related to any breakdown in comital authority.

It is usually assumed that the builders of mottes belonged to the lesser orders of the feudal structure, though there is little consensus between scholars as to who precisely they were. As Brand'Honneur shows in his fourth chapter, however, in the Rennais, as in Normandy, Mayenne, Haute Bretagne and parts of Anjou, motted manors were clearly the normal residences of knights (*milites*) and were similar in function to *maisons fortes*. His analysis shows a clear correspondence between mottes and *milites* up to 1150, after which there was a greater correspondence between *milites* and manors lacking a motte. It appears in effect that after 1150 mottes were hardly constructed at all.

The fifth chapter looks in more detail at the inhabitants of motted manors and castles. Unfortunately little is known of those *milites* whose influence did not extend beyond parish level. Through genealogical research, however, Brand'Honneur is able to suggest that the occupiers of *manoirs à motte* were usually relations of the castellan of a major castle, who had lost status through the operation of primogeniture. They therefore became a secondary class of knight, performing service to the castellan in the same way that he owed service to the count. Despite legal differences, their social status may have been equivalent to that of the town burgesses, alongside whom they served as witnesses in the court of the duke of Brittany. Between 10 and 86 *manoirs à motte* seem to have been linked to each castle, depending on the size of its territory. Castles of secondary rank also appear in this hierarchy, including the mottes of Aubigné and Les Ponts, so that the distinction between *manoirs à motte* and *mottes castrales* is sometimes blurred. Mills, ponds, fields, farm installations, woodlands and paddocks for horses also give an idea of the economic activities dependent on mottes, which in a few cases included the specialist production of iron or pottery. Unlike castles, however, the *manoirs à motte* were not usually associated with towns.

In chapter 6, Brand'Honneur notes that the end of the main phase of castle building and the beginning of motte construction coincided with the period when the Gregorian

reform of the church was beginning to take effect, around the middle years of the 11th century. At local as at comital level, knights were no longer able to draw on the revenues of parish churches, which were now often transferred to abbeys, while priests and canons were to be celibate, thus restricting the possibility of church livings being passed on to their relatives. In this context, Brand'Honneur suggests that the construction of *manoirs à mottes* may be interpreted as an act of defiance on the part of the *milites*, who wished to dissociate themselves from the ascendancy of the church within the parish. Not only would the motte provide a counter-symbol to the church and its tower, but the location of *manoirs à mottes* seems to imply an attempt at distancing the centre of lay power from that of the church: thus 52.5% of *manoirs à mottes* are found to lie on the peripheries of parishes, 36.5% in an intermediary position and only 10.5% anywhere near the parish church. Evidently in the Rennais the struggle took a somewhat different turn to what occurred at La Garnache in Vendée and Villars-les-Dombes in Ain, where excavations have revealed remains of churches underlying mottes. The decline in the construction of mottes around 1150, however, would have corresponded with a time when the transfer of rights to the church had been largely achieved, while the new economic activities associated with mottes and manors would have compensated their owners in some respect for the church revenues that they had lost.

The depth and scope of Brand'Honneur's historical and archaeological research is impressive and the ideas that he puts forward have far-reaching implications for the study of mottes in other regions, including Britain. The writing is dense, yet well organised and including a wealth of case studies of sites and family histories. It is unfortunate that the publishers have reduced some of the site plans to the size of postage stamps and the lack of photographs is also regrettable. None the less the book is a *tour de force* and admirably vindicates Brand'Honneur's methodological approach, in which, as he says: 'The choice between written or material sources ought less to depend on disciplinary divisions than be directed by the lines of research being tackled' (249) — a view with which this reviewer wholeheartedly concurs.

DENYS PRINGLE

Pontefract Castle: Archaeological Excavations 1982–86. (Yorkshire Archaeology 8). By Ian Roberts. 21 × 30 cm. xii + 489 pp., 168 figs., 34 pls., 433 tabs. Leeds: West Yorkshire Archaeology Service, 2002. ISBN 1-870453-38-X. Price: £31.50 (plus £7.00 p&p) hb.

This hefty volume brings together the results of excavations on the site of the great castle of the de Lacys and Lancasters at Pontefract. Coordinated by West Yorkshire Archaeology Service and carried out between 1982 and 1986 as part of a Community Programme initiative, the excavations were closely tied into a programme of conservation and preservation. As a result, the excavations primarily focused on recovering the plans of masonry structures around the perimeter of the site rather than on open areas within its interior. The report will provide much scope for comparison with the de Warenne's great castle at Sandal, located some 12 km to the east, the subject of detailed excavations in the '60s and '70s.

Scholarly and comprehensive, the core of the report takes each component part of the masonry castle in turn — including various towers, apartments, chapels, service buildings and, perhaps most important of all, the enigmatic keep or 'Great Tower' — and presents the results of excavation alongside documentary analysis and standing building survey. While the Great Tower has traditionally been cited as a 'transitional' architectural feature, typologically mid-way between 'quatrefoil' keeps such as Clifford's Tower, York, and rectangular examples such as Dudley, it is encouraging that this report reflects more progressive thinking on the architecture of donjons. Dated here to the second half of the

13th century, the structure is interpreted as a unique and idiosyncratic design reflecting the circumstances and ambitions of its builders.

A particular quality of the volume is that it places the medieval castle's development within a longer-term sequence of occupation and activity on the site. Tantalising and important evidence of antecedent Late Saxon occupation is discussed in particularly thorough detail, as is the castle's military re-use in the 17th century. Pontefract Castle was subjected to no fewer than three sieges in the English Civil War, the last (1648–9) resulting in a systematic programme of demolition that left a once imposing masonry complex a shell-like ruin later used for the cultivation of liquorice. All sorts of artefactual and environmental data are amassed in a mammoth two chapters, comprising 26 separate reports that take up more than half of the entire volume. Without exception, these contributions are produced to extremely high standards, and many venture well beyond the purely descriptive, including especially enlightened reports on the pottery and bone evidence.

While packaged as a castle excavation report, perhaps the most significant aspects of this monograph actually concern the periods preceding and following the fortress's medieval heyday. In particular, archaeological evidence has cast new light on the development of a Late Saxon high-status complex preceding the first Norman castle, which appears to have been raised over a black ash layer, providing the most tentative of hints that the earlier site was razed. This evidence raises many questions. Is the castle chapel pre-Conquest in origin? Was the castle preceded by a high-status (perhaps royal) defended residence and/or a minster or monastic site? While firm answers are not possible, it is clear that Pontefract Castle can now be added to the rapidly growing list of sites where Norman castle-builders appropriated sites of prior significance. That the report is of such value in illuminating Early-medieval activity preceding the castle, including a substantial cemetery, reminds us that castles contain some of the best-preserved islands of stratigraphy in modern British townscapes. It should also not escape note that the best-preserved and stratified assemblages of artefacts from the castle site relate to Civil War activities, making Pontefract Castle one of the most significant sites in this respect anywhere in Britain. As well as providing a remarkable picture of 17th-century military material culture, more mundane aspects of the everyday lives of the garrison are also illuminated, including aspects such as diet, smoking habits and even personalised styles of graffiti.

A major regret is that the castle's wider landscape context receives so little attention, and in this respect the monograph falls a little behind standards set by recent reports on the castle sites of Hen Domen, Ludgershall and Stafford. Located at a key node on the national communications grid, Pontefract Castle formed the centre of a great medieval honour studded with other castles. The castle was intimately related to a complex and multi-phase medieval town-plan that in all probability succeeded an earlier Saxon settlement, and the influence of its lords was also expressed through a network of ecclesiastical patronage and the creation of deer parks in the immediate locality. There are also one or two minor proof-reading errors noted: e.g. on p. 404 the earliest masonry defences are confusingly dated to the 'mid-11th century' (rather than the 'mid-12th century', as elsewhere), and on p. 21 the misspelling of 'assymetry' for 'asymmetry'.

None of these comments should detract, however, from what is a scholarly and impressive account of a type of project that is now, sadly, all too rare in British archaeology, and West Yorkshire Archaeology Service should be congratulated on it.

Behind the Castle Gate: From Medieval to Renaissance. By Matthew Johnson. 16 × 24 cm. 209 pp., 59 figs., maps and plans. London: Routledge, 2002. ISBN 0-415-26100-7. Price: £15.99 pb.

Matthew Johnson, well-known for his stimulating books on vernacular architecture, archaeological theory and the archaeology of capitalism, has now published an immensely challenging yet highly readable book about Late-medieval castles. Not claiming in any way to present a definitive new synthesis of Late-medieval castle development, the book seems intended rather as an eye-opener, designed to expose and deconstruct familiar narratives and provide a stimulus for future work and thought about castles and contemporary societies. Pioneering a welcome 'through the keyhole' approach to castle study, the book's central theme is the rôle of the castle as stage setting. Building on the concept of 'castle as theatre' developed by Philip Dixon and others with regard to medieval donjons, Johnson explores how the changing social identities of members of the castle-building classes were encoded within the architecture, plans and wider landscape settings of castles during the Late-medieval and Renaissance periods. The net result is to sweep away many preconceptions about the so-called 'decline of the castle' and explode as a false dichotomy the debate that has hung over castle studies for many years concerning military versus social interpretations of castle function.

A key attribute of the book is Johnson's ability to extract 'classic' castle sites of one form or another from cosy and familiar narratives. Throughout, the author delights in presenting familiar castles from unfamiliar angles, turning supposedly well-known structures inside out to explore their significance as contrived and manipulated arenas for a range of social activities and the negotiation of identities. The outer gate of Cooling Castle built for Sir John de Cobham in the 1380s is used as a guiding metaphor — the reader being enticed beyond the 'textbook' view of this feature, via a series of revelations about its architecture and context, to question traditional theories about castles and their place in medieval society.

Chapters entitled 'Watery Landscapes' and 'Beyond the Pale', it is refreshing to note, devote attention to the wider settings of castles in different ways, and acknowledge, crucially, that castles were built for more than one audience. Using the now rather familiar site of Bodiam Castle as a starting point, the manipulated landscape settings of Late-medieval castles are explored. This section includes valuable observations about sites such as Raby and Fotheringhay whose visual appearances appear to have been enhanced by water features, as well as those whose associated designed landscapes are more widely recognised. In many places the evidence of archaeological field survey is enriched by reference to medieval literary culture. That Johnson dips deeper into the poorly exploited pool of medieval literary material making reference to castles than others have dared is commendable, and is one of a number of ways in which this book shows a way forward for future studies of castles. Another tremendously welcome section questions how élite buildings and their settings were experienced by 'ordinary people', dipping into vernacular reactions to castle-building and the articulation of resistance.

In unravelling 'The Ordering of the Late Medieval Castle', the author resists the established and somewhat formulaic technique of using 'circulation diagrams' to examine the organisation of space and issues of privacy. To be applauded is Johnson's willingness to progress beyond principal buildings and examine how routes of entry to such structures, for instance through courtyards, were contrived, and how external architectural details were experienced.

In keeping with the author's reflective style (always self-critical — sometimes almost confessional), the book's only real shortcoming is highlighted as a disclaimer paragraph in the concluding chapter 'Rethinking Castles'. While ostensibly a study of castles in England at the end of the Middle Ages, the vast majority of the text is devoted to a very small number of case-studies 'cherry-picked' from the overall sample of sites. Such architectural

gems as Castle Bolton, Old Wardour, Raglan, Tattershall, Warkworth and Kenilworth (Johnson's 'evidence house', allotted a chapter of its own), all built and re-built by the superstars of their age, dominate the pages at the expense of the 'background noise' of castles of lesser sophistication and expense.

That this book is written in a style that those brought up on traditional castle-related literature may find jarring to the eye seems a rather good thing, and fully in tune with the rejection of conventional approaches to synthesis. A lively and engaging style, combined with a studied avoidance of technical jargon, make for an entertaining read, spurred on by the author's technique of continually raising questions. Continual generalisations about the prejudices and preconceptions of 'castle buffs' and a tendency to portray those concerned as tweed-jacketed duffers obsessed with all things military are seen by this reviewer as calculated overstatement that, while entertaining, runs the risk of caricaturing what remains a vibrant field of study.

Overall, this is a thought-provoking and genuinely ground-breaking book; it can only be hoped that its impact is felt well beyond the world of castle study.

OLIVER CREIGHTON

Strangford Lough: An Archaeological Survey of the Maritime Cultural Landscape. (Northern Ireland Archaeological Monographs 6). By Thomas McErlean, Rosemary McConkey and Wes Forsythe. 23 × 28 cm. xxv + 689 pp., 250 figs., maps and plans, 33 colour gazetteer illus. Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 2002. ISBN 0-85640-723-2. Price: £25.00 hb.

We are not used to seeing archaeological surveys published in such a lavish format. Instead of a word-processed, spiral-bound report, this survey comes with colour dust jacket, hard covers and colour illustrations throughout. This is a book worthy of the coffee table rather than the shelves of the planning office. Indeed, the volume was specifically intended 'to cater for a wide and varied audience . . . the more general readership . . . local historians and the people of the lough shore'. In this aim it was clearly successful as the first printing sold out within a few months of publication.

The book reports the results of a survey along the shores of Strangford Lough, which lies about fifteen miles to the east of Belfast. The lough is a large tidal inlet with a narrow mouth near the medieval port of Strangford. The survey was limited to the subtidal, intertidal and coastal zones, the latter interpreted as the area adjoining the coast. While such a brief presents little difficulty for a survey undertaken for planning purposes, there is a clear tension in this study which seeks to provide a synthetic overview. The area of the lough and its shores are just one type of environment in a wider landscape. It is inevitable that the historical introduction has to range much more widely to set the lough in its context.

By far the greatest number of discoveries made by the survey were Post-medieval in date, but significant results for the medieval period were achieved in two fields. The first was the identification and recording of a series of fish traps on the foreshore. Seven of these were constructed of wood. Lines of stakes were recorded in the coastal silt and when dated by radiocarbon were found to belong to the 7th–9th and 11th–13th centuries. Sometime in the late 12th or early 13th century timber was replaced for the boundaries of the traps by stone. Thirteen stone traps were found. Half of all the traps in the lough were located in the relatively restricted area of Greyabbey Bay, near to the Cistercian monastery of the same name. Since the monastery was not founded until 1193, the authors suggest that it may have been established on existing church land, on an estate which had already been used to supply fish, probably to the Early-medieval monastery at Movilla some distance to the north. The explanation of the distribution is entirely convincing, but one wonders why

others did not attempt to exploit the lough more extensively for its fish stocks. Topography was not a significant constraint; the explanation is likely to be social, economic or cultural.

The second significant discovery of medieval date made during the survey was the site of a sequence of tidal mills lying just beneath the early monastic site of Nendrum. The site was subsequently excavated and the preliminary results are reported in the volume. The earliest mill, dated by dendrochronology to 619–21, was powered by water trapped in a large triangular millpond. The substantial embankment constructed to hold the ebbing waters reflects the ability of the monastery to mobilise a substantial workforce. In the late 7th or early 8th century a new embankment and mill were built, which was replaced in turn in the 780s by a third mill. The mill in all its phases was a horizontal or ‘Norse’ type, and part of the paddles of the wheel and granite millstones were found in the pit of the final structure.

The discoveries made during the survey are of interest not merely for those concerned with the littoral region, but also because of their implications for the medieval economy of Ireland. The survey has demonstrated that the coast of Northern Ireland holds a rich source of archaeological information, particularly because organic material is preserved in the waterlogged conditions of the foreshore. While the survey has added a new dimension to our understanding of medieval Ireland, the next stage of work will be to incorporate the results of this study into the larger picture which will include the inland areas.

MARK GARDINER

Foragers, Farmers and Fishers in a Coastal Landscape: An Intertidal Archaeological Survey of the Shannon Estuary. (Discovery Programme Monographs 5). By Aidan O’Sullivan. 22 × 30 cm. xxii + 345 pp., 84 figs., 92 pls. Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 2001. ISBN 1-874045-85-2. Price: not stated hb.

The River Shannon has the largest tidal estuary in Ireland and Britain, draining a large proportion of the Irish midlands into the North Atlantic. Less urbanised than its major British counterparts, with the exception of Limerick city it flows through a largely agricultural landscape. Within the upper estuary (the focus of this study), the main channel of the Shannon is joined by the estuaries of the rivers Fergus and Deel, together with a host of smaller streams. The current margins between land and river are in large part a Post-medieval to modern creation, the estuary margins having seen numerous land reclamations, creating a characteristic spread of flat coastal fields known as *corcass*. Within the estuary are a myriad of shoreline deposits, peat exposures and sand and mud banks representing fragments of former land surfaces and tidal fisheries, with evidence of human activity from the Mesolithic period onwards.

The Shannon survey began in 1992 as an adjunct to the North Munster survey, a landscape investigation funded by the Discovery Programme. O’Sullivan’s experience of work on the Gwent Levels in the Severn Estuary led him to suggest the Shannon as a likely area for productive intertidal research (as yet paralleled in Ireland only by the work of this author and others at Strangford Lough, Co. Down). O’Sullivan readily acknowledges his debt to the tradition of intertidal archaeology developed in Britain (he includes a useful potted history of this, although I would argue that it had its beginnings with Hume and Ecroyd Smith’s observations of Meols in Liverpool Bay in the 1850–60s as much as Piggott’s work in Essex in the 1930s). The methodology described here was adapted by trial and error once the survey had begun. From small-scale beginnings, including the author sometimes surveying alone, the project developed subsequently into a major piece of multi-disciplinary research. Once identified, sites were quickly exposed, photographed and sampled between tides. Most of the earlier work was conducted on foot — only latterly (and to their great advantage), did the survey team acquire a suitable fast inflatable boat.

The work consisted largely of survey, rapid site recording and limited excavation; enough individual palaeoenvironmental studies were carried out to show the likely benefit of a wider and more systematic coverage, but this has yet to be achieved.

The narrative is absorbingly well-told, with enough self-critical insight to balance the exuberance prompted by the discoveries. O'Sullivan vividly describes the particular travails of working in this type of landscape — the glutinous and exhausting mud, danger of drowning and erratic working hours imposed by the tides would be familiar to anyone with an interest in estuarial exploration, although the relatively slow pace of the tides and comparative lack of industrial pollution here could be seen as advantages.

The results of the work are impressive. Most of the sites had a large range of well-preserved organic remains, including wooden structures, wooden artefacts, basketry and animal bones. Stone tools and human remains were also found. The two principal types of site discovered were neolithic and Bronze-age occupation sites and submerged woodland, and early historic to Post-medieval fish-traps. The predominant dating method was ¹⁴C, split for control purposes between two laboratories. Complexes of sites such as the assemblage of neolithic and Bronze-age surfaces, activity areas, houses and trackways found along the shoreline in the vicinity of Carrigdirty Rock on the south bank, and in the upper Fergus estuary, are major discoveries in their own right. Only one fish-trap (a post and wattle fence in the upper Fergus estuary) was shown to date from the early historic period (A.D. 400–800), but a spectacular later medieval group (A.D. 1100–1350) was discovered close to Bunratty, Co. Clare, on the north bank of the main estuary. These comprised various post and wattle alignments directing the tidal flow into large conical baskets, many of which were well-preserved. Wood studies showed that the early historic fish-trap was principally constructed using willow, whereas hazel predominated in the medieval examples, with ash, alder, oak and birch also represented. The Post-medieval and modern fish-traps are more numerous and widespread, and coverage of this period is extended with a historical study of lighthouses, shipwrecks and harbours. Lastly, there is a thoughtful and perceptive study of the social significance of the estuary over the human time-scale and a round-up of future research priorities.

The monograph is handsome and well illustrated, with useful hand-lists of sites and ¹⁴C dates. Whilst it has not yet succeeded in elucidating every aspect of its chronological scope (the period 500 B.C.–A.D. 500 is barely represented, for instance), the Shannon survey (so far) has clearly been a great success; its results will be read with interest and satisfaction far beyond Irish shores.

DAVID GRIFFITHS

Frocester: A Romano-British Settlement, its Antecedents and Successors (2 vols.). By Eddie Price. 21 × 29 cm. xl + 578 pp., many figs. and pls. Frocester: Gloucester and District Archaeological Group, 2000. ISBN 0-9537918-0-7. Price: £35.00 pb.

From the 9th century until the Dissolution the Gloucestershire estate of Frocester was a possession of St Peter's Abbey, Gloucester. In the 18th century Frocester Court, the former demesne manor, was farmed by a cheese factor, and in the 19th it was upgraded by an agricultural improver. Eddie Price took over the farm from his father in 1950, and in 1961 excavations began on a substantial Roman villa site there. From the start Eddie was an enthusiastic helper, and by 1979 was sufficiently experienced to take over direction of the work. Work still continues on what is now the longest running excavation in Britain, but meanwhile Price has self-published two substantial volumes largely bringing the archaeological story to date. More is to come, for instance on Frocester's history, and with the site's significance established by the work under review future reports are all the more keenly anticipated.

Two sections of the present work will be of especial interest to readers of this journal. First, people clearly continued to occupy the Frocester villa, or came to reoccupy its remains, well beyond the formal end of Roman administration in Britain. By the 4th century this was a complex of some substance, with a winged, stone built, house in part of at least two storeys and with mosaic floors. During the post-Roman period when grass-tempered pottery was in use the main villa appears to have been largely if not wholly abandoned as a dwelling, although its mosaic-floored front corridor became a form of long house with one end used for animal housing and the other for human occupation. This was apparently subsidiary to a three-bay timber hall just outside the villa courtyard. The date, and longevity, of this phase is clearly crucial, and it is to be hoped that future work, and perhaps scientific dating methods, will address these questions. Recent discoveries in the medieval ploughsoil of a piece of claw beaker and an annular bead indicate that occupation around the site may have continued well into the later 6th century, while the suspicion must be that the associated estate retained its coherence until its historical emergence in the 9th century.

The second section of interest to medievalists discusses the archaeological evidence for later Saxon and subsequent arable cultivation at Frocester, and here Price's intimate knowledge of what it is actually like to farm the local soils shines through. The photographs and plans show some of the best excavated evidence for early ridge and furrow yet published from what in the Middle Ages was an area of Frocester's open-field land called, tellingly, Stanborough. The first phase, stopping just short of the Romano-British stone courtyard, included furrow bottoms either side of a strip of plough soil 12.8 m wide. Although undated, the horizon contained only residual Roman material, although not tesserae; at this stage, the villa site was being ploughed round, not over. In the second phase however, pre-dating the 13th century, parts of the earlier complex, although not the villa itself, were ploughed over, and the evidence suggests a 'mature' open-field system with ridges 4.8 m apart. Then, in the 13th to 16th centuries, ploughing extended across the villa itself, with a broad headland across the earlier courtyard. That was drained along its length by narrow gullies, annually cut water furrows or gutters, designed to assist in water run off to prevent stagnant water lying on the plough land. Altogether this comprises a telling example of the contribution archaeology can make to the study of the development of medieval agriculture, especially in terms of pre-13th-century (that is, fairly well-documented) practices. This is an important lesson which should be carried forward into the planning of all future excavations of Roman sites subsequently subsumed in medieval arable land. As a footnote it is worth recording that the ridge and furrow Price later excavated was largely flattened by him during the ploughing up drive of the Second World War under the instructions of the county WarAg Committee and during later campaigns of improvement, a fact he often recounts with the wry amusement born of an intimate understanding of thousands of years of landscape change and changing farming practices.

PAUL STAMPER

Novgorod: The Archaeology of a Russian Medieval City and its Hinterland. (British Museum Occasional Paper Number 141). Edited by Mark Brisbane and David Gaimster. 21 × 30 cm. x + 136 pp., 16 colour pls., 106 figs. and 13 tabs. London: British Museum Press, 2001. ISBN 0-86159-141-0, ISSN 0142-4815. Price: £25.00 pb.

Excavations in Novgorod have been ongoing since 1932, their only break enforced by the Second World War. Results have periodically appeared in English — including this Society's own excellent monograph of 1992 (also edited by Mark Brisbane) and B. A. Kolchin's highly detailed BAR International Series report of 1989 on the wooden artefacts. The immediate impetus for this new volume was the symposium on the latest developments

in the archaeology of Novgorod, held as part of the European Association of Archaeologists conference at Bournemouth University in 1999. This volume brings together eighteen papers from the symposium, encompassing an overview of the whole Novgorod project and international collaboration in it; the role of Novgorod's hinterland; medieval town planning; dendrochronology; trade with the Hanseatic League; building construction; wooden artefacts; jewellery; bone artefacts; pottery; plant remains; faunal remains and birch-bark letters.

Medieval Novgorod, because it lay on the southern edge of the North Russian pine forest zone, was built almost entirely of wood: houses, streets, yard pavings, drains, furniture, tableware, toys and documents, all of wood. The exceptional preservation of the wood makes it possible to both reconstruct the layout of the medieval buildings and their streets and has also enabled dendrochronological dating of them to within 15–20 years. This same preservation has also allowed the exploration of a wide range of wooden objects that personalised or domesticated these properties. So far an astonishing 915 11th- to 15th-century birch-bark letters — many including the names of people living in the town — have been recovered, constituting the earliest documentary evidence for Novgorod and delightfully blurring the boundary between archaeological and documentary, much as the Vindolanda tablets from Hadrian's Wall have done for Roman studies.

The work summarised in this book chiefly results from projects that have taken place over the last ten years or so. These have been supported by European level funding, which has facilitated collaboration between Russian archaeologists and colleagues from Sweden, Germany, Ireland and the United Kingdom. Space precludes mentioning more than one example, that of one of the U.K. projects involved, which was able to take a different approach to Novgorod's deposits. The standard approach to excavation in Novgorod is that of large open area excavation, removing levels or spits of 200 mm thickness at a time. This method continues to enable a typological understanding to evolve of the buildings and their contents and to give a broad understanding of that evolving townscape/urban environment as well as contribute crucial data to European artefact studies. The U.K. team led by Andrew Reynolds dropped this approach in favour of Single Context excavation. This was done to facilitate a more detailed exploration of the techniques and materials used in individual buildings. It is hoped that a future project will be based on marrying the two approaches of Area and Single Context.

As a museum curator my interest is inevitably drawn to objects and it was pleasing to see a number of different artefact studies brought together in this volume. Previous volumes have understandably focused on the wooden artefacts from Novgorod and although this volume includes two papers on wooden artefacts — stave-built vessels and birch-bark documents — both are highly useful developments of previous discussions. This volume has room for a range of other artefacts: pottery, skeletal materials and jewellery. All are concerned to go beyond cataloguing, typology and chronology to seek for the human dynamics behind the creation and use of these objects. David Gaimster's paper on Hanseatic Trade in Novgorod is a good example. It uses the evidence of artefacts to explore the way they and so people moved about northern Europe (and beyond) and teases out the social and economic issues behind the archaeological distribution of objects and their centrality to those human discourses, indeed, to human behaviour in general.

Novgorod remains the most fully excavated medieval urban environment in Russia and possibly in the whole of Europe and must surely be a contender for the longest running excavation in medieval archaeology. This book reminds us how important and how rich the results of the excavations in Novgorod are and how those results can broaden our U.K. wide debates. A number of the papers have a necessarily provisional flavour and no doubt several have been to some extent superseded during the three years between the giving of the papers and their publication. Nevertheless, the whole volume encompasses a richly diverse range of subjects, described with insight and in a succinct, jargon-free style. It

should wet anyone's appetite for more about Novgorod and deserves a place on the bookshelf of anyone interested in the behaviour of people in the medieval period.

MARK A. HALL

The Excavation of a Medieval Manor House of the Bishops of Winchester at Mount House, Witney, Oxfordshire. (Thames Valley Landscapes Monograph 13). By T. G. Allen and J. Hiller. 30 × 21 cm. 263 pp., 87 figs., 40 pls. and 32 tabs. Oxford: Oxford Archaeology, 2002. ISBN 0-9478-1678-X. Price: £29.95 pb.

Mount House stands at the south end of the long green triangle of Church Green, Witney a few yards to the east of St Mary's church. Its predecessor, the manor house of the bishops of Winchester, occupied its grounds from the early 12th to the 17th centuries. A series of excavations under the direction of Oxford's urban archaeologist, Brian Durham, in the 1980s and 1990s aimed to recover the ground plan and building sequence of the 'palace' (it is referred to frequently in the text as such) and to ascertain the presence or absence of a (previous) Saxon nucleus. Durham's work was largely restricted to the footprints of proposed new buildings (which in fact were never constructed since the site was scheduled) and so in effect was limited to exploring the south-east and north-west corners of the medieval site. Caution was the keyword to this piecemeal approach. An astonishing rag, tag and bobtail of excavation trenches is illustrated, some labelled in Arabic some in Roman numerals, some sondages, many to wall top level, some all the way to the natural. The mortars were not systematically recorded. And yet a coherent story, albeit with options in certain key areas, emerges, and it is much to the credit of the joint authors that it does.

Although the title on the cover interprets the site as an episcopal 'manor house', the buildings excavated and the documentary record, profuse from the 1200s, suggest that it was more; the references to numerous chambers for knights, for esquires, for the bailiff, mark this out as different from a normal manor house. One is reminded of the congerie of buildings around the Bishop of Winchester's palace at Southwark, London. The report itself frequently drops into the habit of referring to Witney as a 'palace'. Dominating the complex was a great solar tower sited to command an early crossing of the river Windrush and matched by the Norman ringwork on the eastern side at Cogges. Although steps were taken to render the site more defensible in the 12th century its massive bulk was designed more to impress the neighbourhood with episcopal power than to withstand serious assault. The masonry block inserted at cellar level was interpreted as the base for a central column at first-floor level; it could equally have formed the support for a central hearth heating a first-floor chamber. The walls were too thin to admit galleries, garderobes or chimneys. Some window glass was found dated to the 12th century: if so the Witney 'palace' was not as draughty and comfortless as one might imagine. Fragments of lead comes suggest that the casting process was carried out on site. The bone report claims that the high proportion of pig bones suggest a high-status site because pigs, unlike cattle and sheep, do not offer secondary products (such as wool, skins, milk) and therefore are only kept in large numbers by those who could afford animals primarily for meat. If this is so it is not backed up by the evidence from the small finds which are exiguous and of poor quality, giving little support to splendid presence of the retinue of an itinerant bishop. The bishops and their entourages, in fact, are not known to have visited Witney to any great extent but there was a visit of King John in 1208-9. Its proximity to hunting grounds in royal Wychwood forest and, more important, the fact that the royal manor of Woodstock was only seven miles to the east would have been attractions and may explain why the house was built in the first place.

One interesting observation made by Mark Robinson who analysed the environmental evidence is that food debris, found in the fill of the solar tower, included the kinds of seeds found in impure bread, suitable for feeding a prisoner; while the exotic fruit seeds suggesting an expensive diet, were found in the garderobe attached to the north-west building. This was hard by the north gate opening towards the planned town (founded after 1130), and is paralleled by a similar building found near the gate of the outer bailey of Launceston Castle, interpreted in its later phases as an administrative or court building connected with the Duchy.¹ Witney 'palace' in fact was an estate and judicial centre.

There are intricate if inconclusive discussions about the various buildings fed by a stream of ideas based on a close study of the documentary record (the Winchester Pipe Rolls) by John Blair, but in the 12th century we have to fall back on the archaeology, the pottery and the coins, to try to understand the sequence of operations. Two chronologies are proposed, an early one supported by the excavator and a late one sustained by the major writer of this report. We are left with options, unsure whether the destruction and radical alteration of parts of the palace in this Early-medieval period was caused by Henry II's anti-castle policy or whether it was a planned reconstruction by the bishops.

However one interprets the archaeology, the ultimate fate of the ruin on the site was a triumph. Snatched from dithering planners and unsure developers, it stands stabilised, protected and displayed to the public under a white teflon tented pavilion. This reflects great credit on the Oxford Archaeological Unit, English Heritage, who funded both excavation and display, the district council and the final owners, the County Council. Lodged between two supermarkets Witney 'palace' is a place to rest on one's shopping trolley and meditate on the past.

JOHN STEANE

Hampshire Houses 1250-1700: Their Dating and Development. By Edward Roberts with contributions by John Crook, Linda Hall and Daniel Miles. 21 × 30 cm. xii + 275 pp., 18 colour pls., many figs., maps and plans. Winchester: Hampshire County Council, 2003. ISBN 1-85975-633-6. Price: £15.00 (+ 3.50 p&p) pb.

This book has been long awaited by those interested in both Hampshire buildings and in vernacular architecture throughout the country. Primarily the work of Edward Roberts, it also draws upon recording undertaken by previous and present members of the Hampshire Buildings Survey Group, and upon the contributions of three other authors. The focus is the 98 buildings (over 150 phases) dated by means of dendrochronology. For the resources to undertake such a large tree-ring dating project the team are indebted to Hampshire County Council, who also published the book, and to several district councils, as well as many societies and house owners. The fact that so many people in Hampshire, from officials to private individuals, supported the enterprise is testament to their confidence in Edward Roberts and his colleagues, and that confidence has been well justified.

For anyone who wants to know about the medieval and early modern small houses of the county, the book will be a gold mine. Although it is constructed around the dated buildings, many others are discussed, and the entire range of historic house types in the county has been covered. John Crook provides a useful overview of the early aisled buildings. Linda Hall has produced an enormous amount of material about fixtures and fittings, ranging from the more normally expected information on doors, windows, fireplaces and joinery, to a discussion of apotropaic marks. Most of her examples are dated,

¹ D. Reuter (ed.), *Warriors and Churchmen in the High Middle Ages* (London, 1992), 195-217.

and this section will become a quarry for those working in other parts of England. Daniel Miles has not only undertaken most of the tree-ring dating, but has written a chapter setting the results in context, so that we can understand better what the technique can do and what has been achieved.

However, the major part of the book is the work of Edward Roberts. The first section concerns structure and materials, with chapters on crucks and box-framed construction, as well as on other aspects of framing and on buildings of stone and brick. The second section is dedicated to understanding how houses were used in the medieval and Post-medieval periods, and how this changed over time. And the third section considers who built the houses and what effect social status had on what was built and when. One very welcome aspect is the inclusion of separate chapters on urban buildings; and this reviewer was particularly glad to see that the 'ambivalence of functions' in town houses was recognised, even though the reasons for this are not yet well understood. Finally, the book concludes with a gazetteer of 150 buildings dated either by dendrochronology or by documentary or inscribed evidence. The whole is copiously illustrated with photographs, drawings and charts.

Using dated buildings as the core to the discussion means that one can have considerable confidence in the progression of form and style described, and this is well-illustrated by numerous charts showing the date ranges of particular features, often indicating considerable overlapping. Thus open halls, new floored halls, and ceilings inserted into former open halls are combined within one chart to show how new open halls continued to be built until the 1560s, despite the first appearance of new floored halls 100 years earlier in the 1460s, and how the ceiling-over of earlier open halls lagged behind the building of new floored halls, starting only in the 1520s and 30s and continuing well into the 17th century. Obviously, the number of dated examples is small, and dating will be refined in future years, but for the first time many of the changes in structure, plan, and the way people lived during and after the Middle Ages have been pinned down to believable date ranges. This has been made possible by tree-ring dating, the results of which have been used to great effect throughout the volume. Other key points brought out by the interaction of building recording, dendrochronology, and documentary research where appropriate, are insights into the management of large estates, particularly in the Late Middle Ages, the fact that cruck buildings tend to appear earlier than box-framed ones, that the lobby entry occurred earlier in small houses than in large ones, and the decline of town building in the second half of the 16th century. In these and many other issues the buildings reveal significant changes over time.

So much has been achieved in relating buildings to documentary research and thus to tenure, landholding, occupation and status, that it seems unfair to criticise, but one thing lacking are maps of the topographical and agricultural regions of the county, and a discussion of the extent to which these aspects may have played a part in the distribution of building types across the county. Despite this caveat, this is an extremely important and stimulating book that will serve as a benchmark for future county studies; it should be on the shelves of anyone, anywhere, who wishes to learn about vernacular buildings and how they can be used.

SARAH PEARSON

Excavations at a Templar Preceptory: South Witham, Lincolnshire 1965–67. (Society for Medieval Archaeology Monograph 19). By Philip Mayes. 21 × 30 cm. xv + 158 pp., 125 figs., maps and plans. London: Society for Medieval Archaeology, 2002. ISBN 0-340-70647-3. Price: £30.50 (members £26.00) pb.

Here is one we thought we would never see. Long trailed through summary reports and reconstruction drawings such as that in Colin Platt's *Medieval England* (1978), South

Witham has long been an iconic site in the annals of medieval archaeology, an heroic 1960s 'big dig' (3,600 sq m) on a scale now rarely seen. For the report's tardy but extremely welcome appearance we have to thank not least the Society's own Monograph Editor, who not only melded the report into shape and guided it to publication but contributed a valuable introductory note contextualising what follows with an overview of Templar studies.

The Crusading Order of the Knights of the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem was introduced to England in 1128. The preceptory at South Witham was probably founded after 1150, first appearing in the documentary record in 1185. Overall the report on its excavation represents an interesting interplay of documents (with substantial contributions by Eileen Gooder), archaeology, and vernacular architecture, and is of significance in two particular regards. First, as long appreciated, it represents an exceptionally complete view of an entire preceptory complex, one which saw substantive alterations over its 150 or so year existence in response to changing circumstances. Second, that same period saw the transition from earth-fast halls and barns to ones built from, or at least founded on, stone; at South Witham J. T. Smith's interpretations suggest the carpenters' groping progress from the one to the other, marking it out as an important type site for this transitional phase.

The preceptory, alongside the River Witham, may have been developed to exploit and manage possessions in Rutland and Leicestershire as well as south Lincolnshire. Rents and other dues were collected, justice and administration dispensed, and a 650-acre home farm worked by a resident labour force of some 20 *famuli* together with tenants come to do labour services from thirteen surrounding villages. The excavations amplified this documentary framework, showed the growth and subsequent contraction of the preceptory, and allowed at least an outline characterisation from the physical evidence of what it meant to live there.

Three phases mark out the site's development. In the first, spanning its establishment before 1185 and early years, there was an earth-fast hall, two auxiliary buildings (perhaps kitchen and store), and a watermill. The last, set on a stone platform alongside the River Witham 40 m beyond the corner of the preceptory enclosure, had a mill race 15 m long and 1.00 to 1.35 m wide. An undershot wheel seems likely, although unfortunately few details survived of the structure's form or working. In Phase II, beginning about 1220, the site was massively expanded and rebuilt in stone with domestic buildings grouped together in one corner of an extensive agricultural court. It is argued that this transformation marks the arrival of a preceptor and Templars, although unfortunately the documents fail to reveal their number. They were presumably accommodated in the 18.6 m long great hall, a ground-floor structure with a two-storey cross-wing, probably a dormitory. This lay apart from a lesser hall, 12.8 m long and partly two-storeyed, wherein the *famuli* ate and slept. Between the two was a rectangular chapel, its western part two-storeyed to separate the Templars on the upper floor from the agricultural workers and servants below. Two burials flanked the chapel (three further unprovenanced sets of human remains are noted in the bone report). Where the community's other dead were laid to rest is not discussed; one possibility is the village church at South Witham, a mile to the south, which was among the preceptory's possessions. To one side of the halls were kitchen and pantry, with smashed jugs, pancheons, cooking pots and dripping pans attesting to the logistics of catering for this substantial establishment. Beyond the kitchen stood a brewhouse and dairy; stored in 1308 were 111 seven-pound cheeses and four stone of butter. Ranged around the agricultural court were a gatehouse, animal houses, a workshop, blacksmith's forge, and five barns (two of six aisled bays and one of five), the last providing much greater capacity than demanded by the demesne and suggesting the preceptory's role as a gathering centre for a wider area. Overall the impression is of a thriving agricultural centre

whose inhabitants ate well but occupied fairly spartan and functional quarters; tellingly although part-glazed both halls were clay floored.

Phase III, from the later 13th century, saw changes which it is argued reflect the results of the contraction of personnel at South Witham as the Templar brethren were moved elsewhere leaving the site to the lay workers. These seem likely to have been moved in to the great hall which was enlarged, allowing the lesser hall to be demolished. It was also at this time that the watermill was abandoned and replaced by a windmill whose site remains unlocated. By now there are hints that the preceptory was beset by problems common to the Order as a whole, notably a numerically declining and aging community. In 1308 Edward II arrested the Templars, and in 1312 the Order was suppressed. By 1338 documents suggest the preceptory had been demolished, the site then to lie dormant until threatened by ploughing more than six centuries later.

Although revised, the work published here was substantially completed by 1977. It stands up remarkably well nonetheless, and the site merits the full treatment it is accorded. The report is clearly structured, with plans, drawings, and reconstruction drawings of a high quality. Of especial note are the photographs taken by Philip Mayes during the original excavation, especially the vertical mosaics of every building. The last is not an especially difficult process, and should be far more commonplace than it is. In his introduction Gerrard notes how, following the success of the work at South Witham, other rescue excavations took place on Templar sites before the 1960s were out: Temple Ewell, Kent; Faxfleet, East Yorkshire; and Washford, Warwickshire. None has been published, and it would seem that an assessment of what of significance from these excavations is recoverable for publication would be a very worthwhile exercise.

PAUL STAMPER

Christ's Poor Men: The Carthusians in England. By Glyn Coppack and Mick Aston. 17 × 25 cm. 160 pp., 110 figs. and plans. Stroud: Tempus Publishing, 2002. ISBN 0-7524-1961-7. Price: £17.99, \$29.99 pb.

The London Charterhouse. (Museum of London Archaeology Service Monograph 10). By Bruno Barber and Christopher Thomas. 21 × 30 cm. xii + 126 pp., 95 figs., maps and pls., 26 tabs. London: Museum of London Archaeology Service, 2002. ISBN 1-901992-23-3. Price: £14.95 pb.

One of the proud claims of the Carthusian order was *nunquam reformata quia nunquam deformata* (never reformed because never deformed). The first Charterhouse in England was established at Witham (Somerset) around 1179. Over the next centuries houses were founded at Hinton (Somerset), Beauvale (Nottinghamshire), London, Hull, Coventry, Axholme (Lincolnshire), Mount Grace (North Yorkshire) and finally in 1414 at Sheen near Richmond (Surrey). The Carthusian order is remarkably well documented but, surprisingly, information on it is very hard to find in print and much of what is available is out of date and potentially problematic. Therefore the recent publication by Glyn Coppack and Mick Aston entitled *Christ's Poor Men: The Carthusians in England* is an essential addition to our understanding of this influential order. Five out of the nine houses have substantial remains in the form of substantial fabric, as in the case of Mount Grace and London or earthworks as at the early foundations of Witham and Hinton. This work consequently examines this archaeological evidence and traces the development of the Carthusians from their origins in France through to their establishment and growth in England up to the period of their suppression in the 16th century. Importantly it provides the first full account of the order in England and providing a synthesis of existing work with recent research focusing on several areas such as comparative claustral layouts, communal buildings and

the monastic church. In particular it examines the evidence from the individual cells in some detail and provides a fascinating insight into the daily lives of the monks. It reveals that life for the monks in their individual cells was not necessarily grim and that a certain amount of individuality in cell layout and decoration was permitted or at least tolerated. Evidence for cills and sockets cut into walls for wooden partitions suggests that individual walls could be moved to change the size of individual rooms, some of which contained fireplaces, wood-panelling and painted walls. Some of the artefacts recovered from the excavations indicate the various occupations of the monks. At Mount Grace evidence in the form of oyster shells with coloured pigments, copper-alloy pen nibs, marking-out pencils and book clasps and covers reveal that some monks were involved in the illumination of manuscripts. Other evidence from individual cells suggests such diverse activities as the handling of cash, printing as well as alchemical or medicinal work.

The second series of the MoLAS monographs on the religious houses of London examines the archaeology of the Carthusians more specifically by discussing the excavations and structural analysis of The London Charterhouse, in Smithfield. The publication provides a synthesis of work carried out by W. F. Grimes in the late 1940s and 1950s as well as from archaeological work carried out by the Department of Greater London Archaeology and MoLAS from 1988 to 2000. The report successfully ties together these various campaigns of watching briefs, structural analysis and excavation and provides a fully illustrated chronological account of the complex development of the site from Black Death cemetery through to the foundation and development of the Carthusian monastery from 1371 onwards. It also discusses the suppression of the house in 1538 (which led to the deaths, by execution or starvation, of seventeen monks including the prior) and re-use of the site in the 16th and 17th centuries. The development of Charterhouse is discussed in relation to current monastic studies. In particular it considers the somewhat unusual relationship between the largely reclusive monastic order and its suburban setting. The report includes independent discussions of building materials, ceramics and environmental remains which provide an insight into the nature of the economic and human activities as well as diet and the character of the local environment. In particular the use of three-dimensional reconstruction models and the clear presentation of data in the form of user-friendly tables make the report clear and accessible.

This being said however, to the purist any publication on the Carthusians may go against the grain as decreed by another traditional Carthusian maxim of *non sanctos patefacere sed multos sanctos facere* (to make saints but not to publicise them). But in these cases I think we can be a little flexible. Each publication provides an up-to-date account of the Carthusian order in England furnishing a much needed addition to our limited knowledge of one of the most influential, if not inspirational, religious orders of the later medieval period.

SIMON ROFFEY

Patterns of Re-Use: The Transformation of Former Monastic Buildings in Post-Dissolution Hertfordshire, 1540–1600. (British Archaeological Reports, British Series 331). By Nicholas Doggett. 21 × 30 cm. viii + 223 pp., 25 figs. Oxford: John and Erica Hedges and Archaeopress, 2002. ISBN 1-84171-296-5. Price: £35.00 pb.

This is a thoroughly worthwhile study of a type of site and a problem that is all too often neglected. What happened to the monastic buildings after the Dissolution? We are familiar with developments on a few classic sites, but these are exceptional in their survival. Here, Hertfordshire provides a small case study of thirteen monastic sites, and it emphasises the need for further studies elsewhere.

The monastic scene of Hertfordshire was dominated by the great abbey of St Albans, which is so exceptional in its size and wealth, that the author has reasonably excluded it. But this has left the county with a collection of monasteries that were untypical in their small size and impoverished nature. It would have been helpful to give an indication of this scale of this monastic world from the easily available basic data of the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*. Only two survived the dissolution of the lesser monasteries in 1536: the others were far too poor, well below the £200 cut-off point (six had incomes less than £40). They were also very small in monastic membership. Only Ashridge with an income of over £400 and a convent of seventeen monks in 1539 provides an exception, and this fits in to a pattern of Late-medieval foundations that continued to receive substantial bequests. Perhaps significantly this is the monastery where the conversion to a great house is clearest, initially with the courtyard house converted from the claustral monastic plan, until this in turn was swept away by an extravagant early 19th-century country house.

When historians and archaeologists consider what happened after the Dissolution it is a picture usually dominated by such complete conversions, where, in a few noted cases, the remains still echo the dramatic quality of these developments. One of the great values of this book is that it reminds us how limited is the documentary and archaeological evidence for most of our monasteries and, above all, for the lesser houses. The documentation and the standing buildings tend to be poor and sometimes non-existent.

The author thus has to come to terms with familiar problems with this type of site. How, when so little survives, do we distinguish small-scale conversion of part of the monastic building to provide accommodation for a tenant, or for the lord's occasional use, from conversion into a major residency? How do we distinguish between the new manor house and the great residence? How do we distinguish, when new work occurred immediately after the Dissolution and when it belongs to a generation later after its former monastic role had long ceased?

From the historian's point of view, what happened to the monastic buildings immediately after the Dissolution has a very different significance than what happened much later in the century to a monastic ruin. As expected, the sample shows great variety, some were used as quarries and successor houses seem to have used fresh sites, some used the monastic buildings to a greater or lesser extent, some produced new large houses. Except at Sopwell, archaeological excavation has yet to play a major role. The nature of the evidence makes it difficult to draw firm conclusions, and what stands out more than anything is the considerable variety of developments after the Dissolution.

Two-thirds of the book consists of a gazetteer that seeks to collect and sort out all the evidence about the monastic buildings and the post Dissolution use of the sites. This seems to be a thorough survey that will be an essential port of call for anyone wanting to find out more about any of these sites. The author has examined all but one of them, where access was not allowed. No doubt there is much evidence that lies hidden under the ground or is concealed behind the coverings of later private houses. Perhaps in the future one of these sites will get its own major research project and we will learn something of what is now concealed. In the meantime plans of the sites, where available, and a few more images would have helped to enhance and clarify the text.

The Dissolution of the monasteries has tended to be seen in terms of what was destroyed. With some notable exceptions there has been a tendency to neglect what happened afterwards. We need more work on particularly well-documented or surviving buildings, but we also need studies of groups of monasteries like this, that remind us of how untypical are the classic sites of conversion.

Pottery in Medieval Southampton c. 1066–1510. (Southampton Archaeology Monographs 8; CBA Research Report 133). By Duncan H. Brown. 21 × 30 cm. xii + 196 pp., 7 colour pls., 48 figs. and 38 tabs. York: Council for British Archaeology, 2002. ISBN 1-902771-30-3. Price: £28.00 pb.

Southampton has seen systematic excavations in the town centre since the 1950s. The two-volume report published in 1975 with the results of the excavations carried out during the 1950s and 1960s has, however, been followed by a slow trickle of publications which have not kept pace with the backlog and rhythm of archaeological exploration in the town.¹ In this volume Duncan Brown presents the study of medieval pottery from just nine excavations which took place in the 1970s, some 36,000 sherds of pottery; in all, a valuable and much needed contribution to the understanding of the material culture from the town.

This study is organised into nine chapters running through several themes: fabrics, quantification and chronology, technology, production and distribution, form, function and use, context, interpretation and a short overall conclusion. The book is well illustrated, including colour plates which add considerably to the understanding of types described. The engaging cover shows an oil painting of c. 1650 though, well outside the period covered by the text within! Among the editorial shortcomings, apparently missed by both author and referees, are missing bibliographical references and several very obvious typos, among which the most glaring ones are 'Albicola' and 'Alentjo' which should read 'Albisola' and 'Alentejo' throughout.

Local wares are of interest amongst the types considered here and include wasters thought to have been produced in the town. This production is very similar to that of the Laverstock wares from outside Salisbury and, given the distribution of these across Wiltshire and beyond, it is disappointing that no further fabric analysis has been carried out to try and define the Southampton types more systematically. In fact, the chapter on fabrics is rather slight and does not include standard macroscopic descriptions, varying in the detail presented from type to type.

The main attraction in the ceramic assemblage from this major historic port is the wide range and variety of pottery-types. Southampton is especially rich in this respect, and wares from the Mediterranean, France, Low Countries and Germany are all present. The author deals with this variety with great enthusiasm, although maybe due to the range of vessels and sources present, some problems with identification of certain types have gone unnoticed. For example, recent studies have demonstrated that it is not possible to differentiate visually between Italian and South Netherlands maiolica, both types sharing similar profiles, decoration and a very fine fabric.² Brown does not take this into account and the presence of South Netherlands maiolica in town might be more important than stated. A 14th-century Malagan lustreware with characteristic Islamic design has also been misidentified (no. 351). At times the author seems at pains to avoid the nomenclature of well-established types, hence the traditionally termed Spanish 'olive jar' becomes 'oil jar', although the vessel in question was not used for carrying oil any more than it carried olives. There is also little sense in reducing the range of Sevillian vessels to 'blue' or 'green and white'; Brown may feel these names are easier to use, but they carry no significance for anybody else, especially when blue or green decoration have been used by Seville potters for well over nine centuries. Goggin's (1968) terminology might seem complicated at first glance,³ but more recent classifications exist which do take into account not only the source of the pottery, but the range of chronological and decorative techniques in use, using names which are accepted — and understood — by the international community.

¹ C. Platt and R. Coleman-Smith, *Excavations in Medieval Southampton, 1953–1969* (Leicester, 1975).

² D. Gaimster (ed.), *Maiolica in the North*. (BM Occasional Paper, 122, London, 1999).

³ J. M. Goggin, *Spanish Maiolica in the New World: Types of the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries* (London, 1968).

The chapter on quantification and chronology deals in detail with numbers of pottery sherds present by period. Such detailed analysis contrasts sharply with the chapter on technology, where descriptions of the manufacture of all the types present (local and imported) are considered. This section draws on modern value judgements, such as 'skill' or 'quality' and applies them to medieval production. This may make some sense at a local scale but it is hard to see how imported wares fit in, especially those types with no local parallels and whose techniques were heavily influenced by a specific socio-cultural context which is quite beyond the scope of this book. The chapter on form, function and use is a good overview by period, although it would have benefited from drawing on documentary sources in supporting some of the arguments ('dripping pans . . . may also be related to the making of gravy') or introducing parallels from other better documented sites in the country. Such lack of parallels is also evident in the final chapter of interpretation, where a summary by period is presented, together with aspects of economy and identity for each site; whether the conclusions are unique to Southampton or typical of every port in the country, however, is not explored. This is surely a missed opportunity to provide context for the years of research carried out here and raises again the question of the balance between description, catalogue and interpretation in archaeological archives and texts.

ALEJANDRA GUTIÉRREZ

Short Reviews

The Secret Middle Ages: Discovering the Real Medieval World. By Malcolm Jones. 20 × 27 cm. xxvi + 374 pp., 24 colour pls. and 131 figs. Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2002. ISBN 0-7509-2685-6. Price: £25.00 hb.

This is a book with a very clear purpose and one that it achieves with great, multi-disciplinary scholarship, passion and enthusiasm. It is a cultural history that fuses archaeology, folklore, history, onomastics, lexicography, anthropology, and art history/iconography in its mission to demonstrate and elucidate a fuller complexity of medieval art and culture, to explore what its author describes as 'the other half of late medieval art'. The book ranges over a wide array of subjects, its thirteen chapters covering (in summary): Love and Death, Popular Religion, Animal Symbolism, Nationality, Love, Gender Relations, Humiliation and Insult, Fools, Proverbs, Nonsense, Narrative, Sex, and Scatology.

Its archaeological importance lies in two main spheres. First its author makes it clear in his approach that he sees archaeology as a natural ally in seeking to understand Late-medieval culture. This does not mean the author seeks to maintain a status quo of opposition between some socially disadvantaged popular culture and socially privileged high culture. What comes through time and time again is that across all social levels a common but by no means identical culture can be perceived. This chimes well with another broad, adroit and discerning survey of medieval life, Chris Dyer's *Making a Living in the Middle Ages* (2002) and its concern to show that the medieval world was not made solely by the rich and powerful but by 'the uncoordinated ambitions and actions of thousands of ordinary people'. *The Secret Middle Ages* reveals some of these ambitions and actions. The second sphere is in the pivotal importance that the author attaches to a broad range of finds (though pottery is notably absent) and in particular to the increasing profusion of lead and pewter badges from the Netherlands in particular but also from, for