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## REVIEWS

*The Cinque Ports.* By Ronald and Frank Jessup.  $7\frac{1}{4} \times 4\frac{3}{4}$ . Pp. x + 128, Figs. 52. London, Batsford, 1952. 9s. 6d.

One of the exhibits at the 1952 Antique Dealers' Fair was a tankard inscribed: "This pott was made from ye silver of ye canopie when Charles ye 2nd was crowned, April 23rd 1661."

This year, at the coronation, the representatives of the Cinque Ports, the "coronation barons", will not actually carry a canopy (with silver staves and bells) as did their predecessors in unbroken line from the coronation of Richard I in 1189 up to the crowning of George IV. For one thing the Queen will not proceed from the Palace to the Abbey on foot and for another, things went a little astray at the fourth George's ceremony. But they will line the west side of the screen in the Abbey and they will receive for custody the standards borne before her Majesty.

So a privilege lives on and with it, as with the inscription on the "silver pott", sounds a clear echo from a most curious and interesting chapter of English history—the rise, the hey-day and the decline of the Cinque Ports, of the Two Ancient Towns and of the Corporate and Non-Corporate Members.

Read the first chapter of Ronald and Frank Jessup's book, and the story will come vividly alive, a story touching significantly on most of the elements which seem to crop up inevitably in any chapter of English history: geography and geology (and seldom can changes in the face of the land and in the line of the sea coast have affected the fortunes of a group of towns more decisively); the provision of fighting men and equipment (in this instance nothing less than the provision of the entire Royal Navy); constitutional bargaining; the winning of practical privileges in the shape of courts and markets; the clash between local autonomy and the Crown; and, with the victory of the central authority, the survival up to the present day of ancient forms and customs. I beg leave to doubt whether, in the space of a single short chapter, such a tangled story has ever been told with greater authority, concision and clarity. It is a masterly and most attractive performance.

In succeeding chapters, linking the present with the past, the five Head Ports and the Two Ancient Towns are described as they exist to-day.

The authors make very modest claims for their book, and it is left to Miss Elizabeth Bowen, in her Foreword, to point out that they have

done a great deal more than to give "a short account" of these places of historic and of present interest. "As topographers and archaeologists", she writes, "(they) could have kept to being no more than informative. It is a gain, however, that they do also address themselves to feeling (though never to sentiment) and to the visual imagination."

Informative they certainly are. No visitors to these towns—Hastings, where new jostles old; New Romney, in, but not of, the Marsh; Hythe on its hillside; the busy port of Dover; land-locked, wall-encircled Sandwich; Rye with its pebble-cobbled streets; and the "new town" of Winchelsea—could ask for a better guide-book than this. It tells you what you should look for and it tells you, sensibly and often amusingly, about the things that you will see. But for myself (and I suspect also for Miss Bowen) it is the authors' gift for getting down on paper the present-day atmosphere—the feel—of these places which is so wholly captivating. It is achieved by sensitive observation, a great knowledge of the past, lightly worn, and a prose style which is at once muscular and elegant. These qualities are "a gain" indeed.

It fell to my lot constantly to visit the Cinque Ports and the Two Ancient Towns during the critical summer and autumn of 1940, when invasion threatened once again from across the Channel. One was living then very much in the present. Anything might happen any day. And yet I was conscious, always, of that sense of the past which Ronald and Frank Jessup describe so well. I wish that I had had this little book which would have slipped so comfortably into my tunic pocket.

RALPH ARNOLD.

*Timber Building in England from Early Times to the End of the Seventeenth Century.* By Fred. H. Crossley. 10½ × 6½. Pp. 168. London, Batsford, 1951. 30s.

It is rather surprising that this subject has not previously been dealt with so fully when as a structural material timber was so obvious and so adaptable. Certainly there was the need for such a conspectus of the subject and Messrs. Batsford were the natural publishers, but still the second edition of 1905 of Sidney Addy's *The Evolution of the English House* and C. F. Innocent's *The Development of English Building Construction* of 1916 have not been superseded. It is unfortunate that printing costs have risen to such an extent that the author has had to suffer such compression of type, and such insufficient paragraphing, that the make-up is unattractive. A further point is that as a specialist's book more drawings should have been included; and the scale of several plans is too small.

Reviewing the book from the Kentish aspect the Index only lists

17 references to examples in the county, and only two—Brookland and Eltham Hall—of note ; and with a barge board at Tonbridge.

The book is in two sections, Part I, Structures devoted to religious purposes and Part II, Secular building. In them chapters one and eight—recapitulations—could have been dispensed with and so allowed a more lively treatment of mediaeval construction which is the be-all and end-all of timber—that early primitive satisfaction of massiveness or the later reduction to framework. Here there would seem to be a need for more small prototypes where the craftsman is evident.

Treating of details the greater part of the interest attaches to such subjects as Bridges, Wind and Watermills, Timber-framing, and the joinery which ignored iron work. We rejoice in those buildings which have survived damp, and the insect pests of hundreds of years. Wood absorbs moisture, and weathering, both above and below, is all important. If roofs leak and walls are not rain-repelling damp can start decay in vulnerable ends, which also may be in darkness, and there the wood-worm has his first food on those traces of sap-wood which only too often were not adzed away.

In the use of the book the critic is inclined to note various gaps in the Index where such a word as barn is missing, and, in the references, no mention of Clapham and Godfrey's *Some Famous Buildings and their Story* or attention drawn to their account of the development of the timber hall, and the existence at Hertford and Pleshey in Essex of such halls into the seventeenth century.

In the compilation of the book the author has included much of interest in the use of timber in sea and marsh defences, and of those moveable structures made in earlier ages to overtop a defender's walls. The chapter on Bridges contains much of general information, and the same may be said of the account of Water and Windmills although there are a number of illustrations of the latter.

Details of the sources of supply and the carriage of mill-stones from Sandwich is noteworthy (p. 106) but there is only the slightest reference to Andernach from whence came the black querns (Niedermendig lava) so common on Roman sites. However, there are numberless details of value in the book—as on p. 112 of a carpenter who wrongly used willow instead of oak for building a house—but we fail to find mention of the setting out on the ground of timber framing for the walls of a house and then marking them with Roman numerals for ease in erection. Other trades are necessary even in our oldest wooden buildings, for example the work of the blacksmith with his hinges, locks, closing rings and knockers. The wooden latch was universal, but here in England the lock and key, both of wood, of the Eastern Mediteranean does not seem to occur.

W. P. D. STEBBING.

*Beginnings in Archæology.* By Kathleen M. Kenyon.  $7\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{3}{4}$ . Pp. 203, with 12 photographs and 14 text figures. London, Phoenix House, Ltd., 1952. 12s. 6d.

Directors of Excavations are usually too busy to explain all the *pros* and *cons* of excavation technique to their amateur helpers. This book should, therefore, be a godsend to them for they can safely lend it to beginners who, provided they read it conscientiously from cover to cover, can be reasonably expected thenceforward to work on a site in an intelligent and able manner. As its title might lead one to assume it is written in a straightforward way especially for the beginner and to the present reviewer is an easier book to read than R. J. C. Atkinson's *Field Archæology* which was previously the most useful work of this kind.

The first three chapters deal with the historical background of Archæology. There follows a chapter on how to become an archæologist, whether professional or amateur, and then comes the real "meat", 94 pages on fieldwork and excavation technique. Five appendices include a bibliography and details relevant to careers in archæology. Throughout Miss Kenyon makes it clear that her methods of excavation are not the only ones in vogue and it is to be hoped that some of her critics will be stimulated to produce better introductory textbooks to excavation—if they can.

Miss Kenyon has a maxim that "beginners are welcome on sites". However, she stresses the fact that a reading of her book will be futile unless two main points at least are kept in mind:

1. *All excavation is destruction, therefore no inexperienced person should undertake it on his own.*
2. *Excavation, however well executed, without adequate publication is WANTON DESTRUCTION.*

It is sad to think how many people have dug into Kent's early remains without due thought to these principles.

L. R. A. GROVE.

*Fawkham: The Story of a Kentish Village.* By Frank W. Proudfoot.  $7\frac{1}{2} \times 5$ . Pp. 142, illustrated. Arthur Barker.

It is a pleasure to notice this little book, written by a Member, for it sets an excellent standard for those who aspire to write parish histories. It is written in an easy and serene style which avoids alike the Guide Book manner and that of our more pedantic historians. In this "modest essay in local history" the outlines of the stories of the parish and church, farms and lands, families and houses are sketched into the general picture of a rural community in its slow development through the centuries. The book is well produced, with sufficient illustrations, and the admirable addition of a large scale folding

reproduction of the Tithe Map of 1838. We commend it to our Members, and suggest that all lecturers in local history slip it into their pockets and produce it as Exhibit No. 1 when facing village audiences. We are grateful to Mr. Proudfoot for this gift from his "scanty store".

J.H.E.

*Medieval Ecclesiastical Courts in the Diocese of Canterbury.* By Brian L. Woodcock. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ . Pp. xii + 160. Oxford: at the University Press, 1952. 18s.

In the years 1928-9 there were removed from the Diocesan Registry store over the Christchurch Gate to the Library of the Dean and Chapter, Act Books and records of the Consistorial and Archidiaconal Courts of the diocese of Canterbury, where they remained without further arrangement or adequate catalogue till, in 1947, a young scholar, Brian Woodcock, began to study them. Ultimately in 1952 the result of his investigations appeared in the Oxford Historical Series under the title of *Medieval Ecclesiastical Courts in the Diocese of Canterbury*. It is a work of outstanding merit and the author's untimely and sudden death, while the book was still in the press, has dealt an irreparable blow to the world of scholarship. All interested in the subject matter owe a vast debt to his widow, our Member, Mrs. A. M. Woodcock, who has so competently concluded the task of seeing the book through the press and we cannot be too grateful to her.

Mr. Woodcock tells us that about 300 Act Books survive from the Diocesan Registry of which about forty cover the period before 1535; the earliest surviving Consistory Court Act Book dates from 1364 and that of the Archdeacons Court from 1476. In addition to this source, much information was collected about the working of the Courts from the archives of the Prior and Chapter of Christchurch for the thirteenth century, during the vacancies occurring in the archiepiscopal see, when the officers of the Prior and Chapter were in control. Further, the wills coming under the jurisdiction of the courts and now preserved in the County Record Office at Maidstone, were consulted to add their quota of knowledge to the general picture, while behind all these, available for study, were the archiepiscopal registers of the diocese and province, preserved in the Library at Lambeth Palace.

All these sources have been most effectively used to produce a very succinct and illuminating account of the jurisdictions in question. Dividing the book into two parts, Brian Woodcock treated first of the jurisdictions involved and secondly of those jurisdictions in action as revealed in the surviving Act Books and records. To these chapters he added some important and most useful appendices giving the texts of some of the commissions issued, of some of the suits recorded, including a tuitorial appeal, and finally, and not the least valuable of all, lists of officers to be found acting in the two courts.



As all students of the evolution of jurisdictions are aware, and as Brian Woodcock pointed out, the movement is from "the less formal and ill-defined to the more formal and well-defined". A commission in a short form, conferring wide and undefined powers, may give more scope to the officer appointed than the much more elaborate and detailed commissions issued to his successors a century or so later. It is, therefore, of great importance that at the outset of this study there is noted the sense in which certain titles are used and the distinctions to be drawn therefrom. Thus "*Curia Cantuariensis*" is reserved to cover the jurisdiction of the Archbishop over all his province as Metropolitan, before the full delimitation of the various courts. The Court of Canterbury implies the actual court and its apparatus as it evolved to deal with provincial and metropolitical appeals. "Consistory Court" denotes the Court at Canterbury, irrespective of the jurisdiction exercised; and finally the title Consistory Court is restricted to the work of the actual diocesan court as it developed, with its judge the Commissary General of the city and diocese of Canterbury.

It is perhaps in tracing the rise of this last officer that the author makes his most solid contribution to the advancement of knowledge on this matter of the nomenclature of the presiding judge in the Consistory Court. If, following the parallel of the history of the *Curia Regis* and the splitting off from it of the various royal courts, we consider the "*Curia Cantuariensis*" and the development of provincial and diocesan courts from it, the story takes on a clearer form. It seems a reasonable supposition, and one borne out by surviving records, that, while the "*Curia Cantuariensis*" was for the most part holding its sessions at Canterbury, there was no clear distinction made between diocesan and metropolitical or provincial jurisdiction. When, possibly for reasons of convenience, the sessions of the Court of Canterbury, developing as the metropolitical Court of the Province, came to be held in London, in the Church of St. Mary le Bow in the Archbishop's Deanery of the Arches in his immediate jurisdiction, it was presided over by the Archbishop's Official, or in his absence by his deputy or commissary, almost invariably the Dean of the Arches. Similarly, no doubt, the purely diocesan work at Canterbury was entrusted to a commissary appointed by the Archbishop, and from the late thirteenth century certainly there survive commissions appointing a Commissary General to act in the city and diocese of Canterbury. Such a process would account satisfactorily for the title and when we turn to investigate the relations between this court, presided over by the Commissary General, and that of the Archdeacon, for whom his official most usually acted, it will be found that the jurisdictions of the two courts were for the most part concurrent. That is to say that there was no appeal from the Archdeacon's Court to the Consistory, but appeals from both courts lay

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either to the Court of Canterbury or to the Archbishop's Court of Audience. This in itself suggests the likelihood of the Commissary General being a later arrival on the scene than the Archdeacon.

The second and longer part of the book deals with the procedure and practice of these two courts in chapters devoted to the types of business and sessions, to the personnel and their duties, and to the practice of the courts in First Instance and *ex officio*. An analysis of the number and types of cases affords most interesting reading, as do the chapters on the enforcement of discipline and illustrations of the kind of information this class of records can be made to yield about the social manners and conditions of the time.

It is greatly to be hoped that scholars will follow up this pioneer work by investigating the records of other dioceses, now that information about them is more readily available through the work of the Committee on Ecclesiastical Records recently reporting to the Pilgrim Trust. In particular it is much to be desired that a volume, or volumes, giving the text of some of the earliest of the surviving Act Books at Canterbury may appear as soon as possible in the series "Kent Records".

IRENE J. CHURCHILL.