



<http://kentarchaeology.org.uk/research/archaeologia-cantiana/>

Kent Archaeological Society is a registered charity number 223382

© 2017 Kent Archaeological Society

REVIEWS

Anglo-Saxon Jewellery. By Ronald Jessup. $8\frac{1}{4} \times 5\frac{3}{4}$ in. Pp. 96, including 33 plates. Shire Publications Ltd., Princes Risborough, 1974. £2.25.

This is Mr. Jessup's second book on this subject: an abbreviated and partly updated version of an identically titled work first published in 1950 and now, alas, virtually unobtainable. Comparing the two, while most objects described and illustrated in the new book are old friends, one notes with pleasure the inclusion of the Late Saxon Strickland and Fuller disc brooches and the addition of several outstanding recent finds; the fifth-century belt-set in 'quoit brooch style' from Mucking, Essex, and two splendid seventh-century pieces from Kent, the 'Finglesham Man' buckle and the composite jewelled disc from Monkton. A sad omission is the austere beautiful little gold cross from Thurnham, also in Kent, which was found in 1967 and never adequately published before it was tragically lost to view in a private collection: a good photograph of this would have enhanced the value of the book. Compensation is at hand, however, in the form of another seventh-century cross and jewelled disc from Winster, in Derbyshire: here is the best and most accessible reproduction of them since they were found over two centuries ago. Most of the new photographs are good but some old prints (e.g. the bracteates, Pl. 5) should never have been re-used and some grotesque contrasts in scale should have been avoided (Pl. 3). The quality of the photographs is thus very uneven and the visual impact of the book is further reduced by the lack of colour reproduction of any of the finer polychrome jewels. Though each illustrated object is fully and generally well described, one misses the individual bibliographies which made the earlier book such a handy work of reference and one regrets the perpetuation of old errors. For example, the little silver 'safety-pin' brooches, found with the famous composite brooch from Kingston, are not survivals from the Early Iron Age (p. 74) but variants of a type of miniature brooch known from other Anglo-Saxon graves of the seventh century (Uncleby, Yorks.; Shudy Camps, Cambs.; Swallowcliffe Down, Wilts.).

Mr. Jessup is the acknowledged master of British archaeology's antiquarian literature and, when citing such sources, is scrupulously correct and brilliantly in his element. With the course of modern research he is less at home, however, and there are omissions in his published bibliography which go far to explain some outdated statements and a general unawareness of recent developments on the Continent. Kent's earliest square-headed brooches are now known to have

REVIEWS

come not from the Rhineland (p. 39) but from Denmark (Egil Bakka, *On the Beginnings of Salin's Style I in England*, Bergen, 1958; and the reviewer in *Medieval Archaeology*, ii (1958), 45-57), and our knowledge of the techniques used in their production, particularly the casting processes (p. 23), has been rendered less speculative since the discovery of a large sixth/seventh century workshop site in Sweden (W. Holmqvist and others, *Excavations at Helgö IV*, Stockholm, 1972). There square-headed brooches and other dress-fasteners were being mass-produced, complete with their so-called 'chip-carved' ornament, in bi- or multipartite moulds of fine clay, which were remade for each casting from existing bronze models. Probably only the jewellers' models, examples of which are known from goldsmiths' graves from various parts of Europe (J. Werner, *Early Medieval Studies*, i, Stockholm, 1970), were made by the more laborious lost-wax process. The mass production of Kentish disc or Anglian cruciform brooches must have been carried out in similar workshops by virtually identical methods.

The author tells us that it was his intention in this book to 'interest the many, not to inform the select few', but that is begging the question. In these enlightened days an attractively low-priced book that happens to be the only work in print about such a fascinating topic as Anglo-Saxon jewellery is bound to enjoy a large sale to all manner of people seriously interested in archaeology. No matter who they are, they deserve of the best. It is the unhappy duty of this reviewer to point out that the manifold virtues of this little book are disfigured by too many avoidable errors of omission and commission. So out with the paste and scissors again, Mr. Jessup, and let us have a third edition, up to date and up to scratch, which will measure up both to the subject matter and to all our expectations and requirements.

SONIA CHADWICK HAWKES

A History of Kent. By Frank W. Jessup. 9½ × 7½. Pp. 168, 57 plates (3 in colour), 16 maps and numerous line-drawings. Phillimore & Co. Ltd., London and Chichester, 1974. £3.75.

This handsome volume, by one of our vice-presidents and part of the publishers' *Darwen County History Series*, is a second edition of a well-known book long out of print and something of a veritable *tour de force*.

In twenty chapters, the author traces the history of the County from 'before the Romans' to 'industrial development in the nineteenth (*sic*) and twentieth centuries'. Mr. Jessup is well aware of the horns of the dilemma almost certain to ensnare any author attempting to compile the history of a county so rich in material as ours and he has aptly

REVIEWS

dubbed them Scylla and Charybdis in the preface to his first edition; yet, his readers ought to be grateful that he did not consider the prospect too daunting but rewarding enough to complete his self-imposed Herculean labour of love—nor, in the opinion of this reviewer, does he need to offer as an alibi for the shortcomings and omissions he readily admits to (p. 13) that he was 'influenced by his own personal interests'. For it is just this personal approach that is one of the main strengths of his book and a witness to the breadth of Mr. Jessup's learning. Certainly, specialists in the various periods of the County's history may find areas where their own personal and narrower interests would stress points which the author found perhaps less close to his heart; but to do this would surely mean a book of this size for each one of these specialised fields. Clearly, what Mr. Jessup set out to do was to write, as he himself says (p. 13), 'a series of accounts of the most important periods and topics', to set out before his readers' eyes the broad canvas with as much detail as would render his personal approach intelligible to them and to urge them onto the path of the detailed accounts which fall outside his conspect; in this aim, the author succeeds admirably.

Mr. Jessup is justly proud of 'the wealth of illustrative material' (p. 14) which enhances the value of his history and makes it come alive with this profusion of well-chosen and reproduced plates and distribution maps (specialists, again, may raise an eyebrow or two over some of the latter, but Mr. Jessup has already disarmed them for his treading on such tender toes!)—not least valuable are the delightful line-drawings which grace the generous margins of this book, the comprehensive index and adequate bibliography.

All in all, this is a history worthy of our County and an indispensable addition to members' bookshelves before its deserved success adds this volume, too, to the long list of unobtainable Kent books and forces Mr. Jessup to embark upon its third edition. A. P. DETSICAS

Through This Door. By M. Lawrence. 8½ × 5½ in. Pp. 28, 6 pls., 4 line drawings and a map. 50p.

St. Michael's Church, East Peckham, was declared redundant in 1972 after at least eight centuries of uninterrupted use as a place of Christian worship. Mrs. Margaret Lawrence has marked the occasion by compiling an informative and at the same time entertaining booklet about some of the people who must in former times have passed through the door of their parish church. It is a work of predominantly human interest, and there is nothing about the architecture or the monuments, as they have been dealt with elsewhere by other writers. Her list of references indicates the extent of the research undertaken to obtain

REVIEWS

the facts on which this account is based, and the thumbnail sketches interspersed in the text convey a lightness of touch which characterises the presentation without in the least detracting from its value as serious historical writing.

The numerous personalities who form the subject-matter are treated under such headings as The Homecomer, the Anabaptist, The Linen Lady, The Foundlings, The Commentator, The Heroes and The Finalists. Some were notables like Sir Roger Twysden, while others were orphan children fostered by local families who received them from Thomas Coram's Foundling Hospital. John Day, the excommunicated Anabaptist, had to be buried outside the churchyard 'between the gate and the walnut tree', and we learn that Isabella Twysden was buried in linen in 1681 despite the Act which insisted that nothing except wool should be used for such purposes. Mary Nichol was baptised here in 1833, her parents passing through the parish at that time, the Curate commenting of her mother: 'This woman I learn has been over the country with the same child and has again and again baptised the brat pretending destitution and currying favour with the clergy'. Captain John Norwood, whose family had farmed in the parish for six generations, won the Victoria Cross at Ladysmith in the Boer War, and the last bridegroom to walk through the door of the church in 1970 was Frederick Cheesman whose ancestors were in East Peckham before the registers began in the sixteenth century.

The fact that this remotely-situated church has now ceased to fulfil its former purpose is a matter of regret. That the final closing of its door has prompted Mrs. Lawrence to write so engagingly about those to whom it was once a spiritual home is a measure of compensation, as all who read her account will readily appreciate.

Copies may be obtained from 'Barnfield', Church Lane, East Peckham, and all proceeds go to the restoration of Holy Trinity Church, the Victorian successor of St. Michael's.

P. J. TESTER

Catalogue of Estate Maps, 1590-1840, in the Kent County Archives Office. Edited by F. Hull, preface by H. M. Wallis. 11½ × 8½ in. Pp. xiii + 288, pls. 28, Kent County Council, Maidstone, 1973. £2.50.

The County Supplies Department has produced a large and elegant volume by typewriter and photo-litho, at a modest price, and has in no wise skimped the plates—nearly everything on them is legible with a glass. Dr. Hull's editing, or rather, 'calendering', is crisp and impeccable, his introduction brief and to the point. He salutes the pioneering work in this field by Dr. Emmison at the most active and educative Essex Record Office, but he need defer to no others: the riches

of the Kent Office are now patent to all. They include a number of Sussex items and a few from further afield.

These manuscript maps are the indispensable material of local history as practised today, inextricable from geography and archaeology (as the unworded elements in the maps imply) and interested in land-user as much as in land-tenure. As a bonus, they also provide visual evidence, elevations as well as plans, for architectural, and especially 'vernacular', studies. Finally, as the gorgeous selection of the Kent maps recently exhibited made clear, at their best they are works of art of much more than local reference. Here I might take issue with Dr. Hull: though the earliest in the Kent collection date from c. 1590, the English estate-map, as he says, flourished from the 1570s, but this was *not* a 'late arrival'. The craft and instruments of surveying had only recently been perfected in the Low Counties, and the small-scale engraved maps and charts of Mercator, Ortelius or Waghenauer had only recently appeared. Italy and Spain were quite outdistanced, but Englishmen were not slow to learn from Antwerp and Amsterdam. The whole decorative idiom of the better estate-maps, borders, compass-roses and cartouches, stemmed from the printed maps and remained Mannerist rather than Baroque for a very long time in either field. Even on the Goudhurst map of 1726 Mannerist penmanship re-shapes Baroque forms, but with Rococo and Neo-classic it makes an effortless synthesis.

From the plates alone it is possible to see the pattern of agriculture in different regions of Kent better than from any amount of tabulated 'records': in 1709, we see strip-cultivation at Ringwould and a complicated feudal (?) palimpsest at Thurnham, while the assarts of the Weald remain the same—small fields, thick hedges and patches of Wood, from Little Sandhurst in 1599, perhaps unchanged since it came to Bayham abbey, almost to the present day. Rather differently, at Combwell near-by, we may discern the actual priory precinct. Much later, on the larger estates, we see the great square walled-garden, planted like a mill-wheel and standing like a legionary fortress against the *tumultus* of Brown and Repton and their kind.

S. E. RIGOLD

The Iron Age in lowland Britain. By D. W. Harding. 9½×7½ in. Pp. xviii+260, 37 pls. and 81 figs. Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., London and Boston, 1974. £6.95.

Barely within two years of *The Iron Age in the upper Thames Basin* (*Arch. Cant.*, lxxxvii (1972), 246), Dr. D. W. Harding, of the University of Durham, has now published a second study in which he expands the area of his research to encompass the whole of lowland Britain.

In thirteen chapters of closely argued and organised material,

REVIEWS

contained within this volume's main headings, Dr. Harding discusses the structural remains, the economic background and social life of the Iron Age communities, the chronology of the period and how these people first established an identity of their own and then evolved in this country. Whatever the genesis of this work (p. xvii), it certainly is not a reading-list, let alone a card-index of published material for undergraduates. The author sets the tone of the whole book at the very outset and his predominant interest by quoting (p. 3) Wheeler's celebrated *mots justes* about archaeology and people and, without playing down to his readers, proceeds to reconstruct, from the archaeological evidence and the work of his fellow scholars, a synthesis which achieves its primary aim to add to the Iron Age peoples those dimensions that archaeological reports, often and conspicuously, lack; that he succeeds in this object and on such a wide scope is undoubtedly a measure of Dr. Harding's enlightened approach to archaeological studies. Specialists in the author's field may find areas where they may not quite share his emphasis, but they should be grateful to Dr. Harding for not flinching from the attempt of such a combination of so many different strands; quite obviously, undergraduates, and many others, will be in his debt for providing them with a work certain to bypass hours of labour in the countless publications containing the evidence for our Iron Age as a casual glance at his extensive bibliography will amply show.

Dr. Harding has been well served by his publishers who, rightly, lead in the field of serious archaeological books. The entire volume is printed very clearly (perhaps the type-size is a trifle too small for tired eyes) and illustrated by magnificent plates and most informative text-figures; and, considering current printing costs, it comes as a very welcome surprise that, two years after the earlier volume, the price of this book is not beyond even modest means, for which the publishers must be congratulated—a happy compromise between their own interests and those of the author's readers.

This study is destined to become a *sine qua non* for anyone seeking to understand Iron Age society and the comparative ease with which the Romans were to superimpose on these tribalised communities their unifying concept of civilised living.

A. P. DETSICAS

Essays in Kentish History. Edited by Margaret Roake and John Whyman. 8½ × 5½ in. Pp. x + 301. Cass Library of County Histories. Frank Cass, London. 1973. (n.p.)

The twenty-three essays in this collection have all been reprinted from the pages of *Archaeologia Cantiana*, the earliest from 1917, and the latest from 1966. It is impossible to do justice to them all here, but

REVIEWS

the editors, and our society, can be congratulated on a most varied, interesting and significant group.

Taken together, they illustrate the present interest in local history, no longer an antiquarian by-way but increasingly a main stream of historical studies. The selection emphasises the study and publication of particular records, be they the Beadles Rolls of Canterbury Cathedral Priory, the basis of a most interesting study of regional differences in medieval crop production; the Faversham port books of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; the letter book of a Dover merchant of the eighteenth century; or several diaries of journeys through Kent at different periods. The essays give a very good idea of the kind of materials that exist for local history and of what can be done with them.

They are also very far from dead history. The present is in so many ways rooted in the past, that these essays very often have a topicality denied to more general history. The development of the Kentish orchards in the nineteenth century, discussed in an essay printed in 1964, was a product of the better living standards of the time, which created markets for fruit and jams; the demand in turn depended on the availability of cheap sugar. Throughout the century, too, Kent faced the competition of foreign fruit, and the prosperity of her orchards was at the mercy of the import duties. Ten years after this essay was first published, the advent of the Common Market and the sugar crisis make it disturbing reading. Sometimes, too, there are more trivial echoes of the present. The final sentence in the book, from a diary of a Kentish holiday in 1823, needs no comment:

'Wednesday October 1. Rain.'

Those whose set of *Archaeologia Cantiana* goes back to 1917 will not need this book. For the rest of us, it is absorbing reading.

BRUCE WEBSTER

Field Archaeology in Great Britain. Published by the Director General of the Ordnance Survey. 9½ × 6 in. Pp. ix + 184. 30 figures. Fifth Edition. Southampton, 1973. Paperback. £1.50.

This is the fifth edition of a handbook well known not only to field archaeologists since it was first published in 1921. Many developments have, naturally, taken place in field archaeology during the last fifty years as a casual comparison of its editions alone will amply demonstrate; the latest addition to the fields this book covers is industrial archaeology.

Apart from an introduction and initial section, dealing at some length with the various aspects of archaeological field work, this handbook contains other sections devoted to prehistoric antiquities,

REVIEWS

the Bronze Age, the Iron Age, the Roman period, the Dark Ages, which includes the Anglo-Saxon period, and the medieval periods. It is well illustrated by thirty text-figures, many of which are old friends; presumably in order to keep the cost of production within the modest price charged, no plates are included which is, in some ways, a pity. On the other hand, it is provided with an up-to-date and useful bibliography for each section, and an adequate index.

In the plethora of handbooks intended mainly for the beginner in archaeology and the informed general public, this book should be well to the fore; it is a mine of information, conveyed in lucid style, for all interested in field work.

A. P. DETSICAS

A Fourth Kentish Patchwork. By Robert H. Goodsall. $8\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{4}$ in. Pp. 121. Pls. 63, figs. 8. Stedehill Publications, Harrietsham, 1974. £3.

Members will be well acquainted with our Vice-President's earlier books in this field and greet with warm affection the appearance of Mr. Goodsall's latest *Kentish Patchwork*, which covers such a variety of Kentish topics that it cannot but attract a wide readership.

The book is illustrated by a large number of plates, mostly by the author, and text-figures, which add a great deal to the lightness of style with which he has approached his subjects. It is a book for the connoisseur of Kentish folklore, modestly priced, and certain to appeal to many members.

A. P. DETSICAS