



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

Kent Archaeological Society is a registered charity number 223382

© 2017 Kent Archaeological Society

REVIEWS

Medieval Framlingham, Select Documents, 1270-1524. (Ed.) John Ridgard, for the Suffolk Record Society. Pp. x + 165 (2 illustrations and index). 1986. (£15, cased).

The Suffolk Record Society has a long and distinguished tradition of scholarship, and this book, beautifully produced and carefully edited, continues that admirable tradition. In those circumstances it is the more unfortunate to say that it poses many questions, that it does not seem to be the book which should have been written, that the title is inadequate, if not misleading, and that one cannot but ask for what readership it was prepared.

It is, of course, a volume of edited texts to which an introduction and various appendices on specific topics have been added. The six chosen documents are supreme examples of their kind, each individually worthy of a place in any study of Framlingham Castle in its hey-day. They consist of an extent of 1270; a very fine and detailed account roll of 1286-87; a household list of retainers of the Earl Marshall (Roger Bigod) in c. 1294-95; an account roll of the various officers of the castle in 1324-25; the account roll of the keeper of the castle hospice in 1385-86; and a remarkably fine inventory of the contents of the castle following the death of Thomas Howard, the last resident Duke of Norfolk in 1524. Each is given *in extenso* with the minimum of notes contained in an introductory paragraph to each text and with uncommon English words from the inventory treated within the index, which thus assumes something of the nature of a glossary. There are also copies of two maps of the Castle and its environs taken from R. Hawes, *History of Framlingham* (1798), and four appendices arising primarily from incidental references in the documents on Deer Parks and Hunting; Mills and Milling; the supply of Wines and Spices; and Markets and the Market Place. No one can fault the choice of items nor the care taken in their presentation, yet the whole remains unsatisfactory.

Basically the fault appears to lie in the purposes behind the publication. There is a sense in which the editor, in a brief preface, explains not so much why he wrote this book as why his real wish lay

in quite another direction. The like hesitancy applies to the title, for to the layman who has little or no knowledge of Suffolk, *Medieval Framlingham*, suggests a study of the small town in which the castle doubtless would find a place, and Mr Ridgard indicates more than once that the task of his choice would have been a study of the fine series of medieval court rolls at Pembroke College, Cambridge. Instead, one feels, he reluctantly chose a most important but disparate group of documents, widely spaced in time, concerning the castle of Framlingham with only the most tenuous links with the medieval borough and parish. One is therefore disappointed in the outcome and also senses a measure of frustration in the editor.

So one has to enquire for whom the volume is intended and first to raise again the question of whether in an age which eschews the teaching of Latin, the production of extended Latin texts without either translation or appropriate English notes is justifiable, especially bearing in mind the high cost of printing. The student of Framlingham who has sufficient knowledge of the Classics will be introduced to six splendid examples from the archival riches which relate to the castle and also receive some indication as to where other material can be located. Still more, the student of medieval castles and of life lived within them will find great fascination in this book; but for the ordinary reader, whether of Suffolk history or of local history in a general sense, there is little beyond the useful and interesting introduction and the four appendices. One can only hope that the editor, who clearly can offer so much, will one day be enabled to return to the court rolls of Framlingham and provide us with a true study of *Medieval Framlingham*.

F. HULL

Amphorae and the Roman Economy: an introductory Guide. By D.P.S. Peacock and D.F. Williams. 23.5 × 15.5 cm. Pp. 239, 139 figs. Longman Archaeology Series, London 1986. (£28.00, cased).

As any excavator knows only too well, by their sheer durability and size amphora and mortarium fragments are the two classes of pottery which add greatly to the bulk and weight of the finds on any Roman site. In recent years, Callender's *corpus*, *Roman Amphorae* (1965), was the only available study to gather together in a single volume information on this class of pottery scattered in many excavation reports and other studies in this country and abroad; however, it took some fifteen years after Callender had completed his work for it to be published, and in that time subsequent work had added much new

material and challenged some of his conclusions. More recently, the main impetus in amphora studies in this country has come from the Department of Archaeology at the University of Southampton under the inspiration of David Peacock, one of the joint authors of the volume under review, who also pioneered the concept of fabric analysis in Romano-British pottery studies.

Amphorae and the Roman Economy claims to be an introductory guide, but it obviously is much more than a mere introduction to its subject and consists of two distinct parts. Part I is a very valuable essay in which the authors review the scope of amphora studies and how they developed through the work of various scholars, the development of a tradition in amphorae, Roman food production such as wine-making, olive-oil and fish sauces, the areas in the Roman empire where and how such products were made and their trade containers manufactured, the technical aspects of amphora production and their trading and transport to the markets for their contents, and conclude with a comprehensive gazetteer of amphora kilns throughout the Roman world. Part II is a guide to the identification of the more common Roman amphorae and contains the authors' own classification of the material and the criteria for their system; however, they are also at great pains to point out (p. 9) that they do not intend to supersede already existing classifications, but rather to bring together all the available information – hence, this part ends with a concordance of common names and other systems of classification. In this part, amphorae are described in 55 classes, together with several examples of unclassified amphorae (nos. 56–66, pp. 212–7). Each amphora is illustrated by a sectional drawing, a photograph and a microphotograph of its fabric, and information is given on the distinctive features of each class, its origin and occurrence, the principal content, date range and fabric. At the end of the volume, there is also a detailed bibliography.

If the claim that this important study is an introduction strikes as being too modest, this volume will certainly 'establish itself as the standard work for many years to come', as the publishers proclaim on its dust-jacket. Part II alone will save excavators and other researchers many, often fruitless, hours spent looking for information and parallels in other publications; and if, as a by-product, the authors are inundated, even more than usually, with requests for assistance, it would not be a measure of their lack of success with this book, but of their acknowledged leadership in the field of amphora studies.

It is a pity, however, that the price of this volume may well put it beyond the means of the majority of those for whom it is intended. Clearly, such an excellently produced and profusely illustrated book is very costly to publish these days, but it is to be hoped that this study

REVIEWS

will eventually also be issued in paperback form and gain an even wider diffusion amongst archaeologists.

A.P. DETSICAS

The Amateur and the Professional: Antiquarians, Historians and Archaeologists in Victorian England 1838–1886. By Philippa Levine. 24 × 16 cm. Pp. x + 210, Cambridge University Press, 1986. (£25.00, cased).

This book attempts to analyse the transformation of historical and archaeological studies during the first fifty years of Queen Victoria's reign, from being a harmless pursuit for amateurs to providing legitimate employment for the trained professional. It is a vast subject, and it is perhaps therefore not surprising that the author has managed to deal more satisfactorily with some aspects of it than with others. Nevertheless, it is a book that can be recommended to anyone interested in the development of historical and archaeological studies in England.

The book, and the subject, divides into two main areas for analysis. One is the role of the learned institutions and the universities in the creation of the professional archaeologist and historian, and the author argues that it was the learned institutions rather than the universities that forced the pace in the nineteenth century. It was not until the last quarter of the century that professional historians were appointed to most chairs of history at the universities; prior to that the chief claim to a chair was on literary or political grounds and the appointee was not required to have specialised in any branch of the subject that he was in theory expected to lecture on. The author argues that, as a result, the earliest 'professionals' were the staff of the newly established public record office, a view not likely to comfort the disciples of the late Sir Hilary Jenkinson, who believe that 'the archivist was not an historian'. Perhaps, those modern archivists who dissent from Jenkinson are not as radical as they think, but are merely trying to return to first principles.

The second area of analysis is the development of both national and local societies interested in the promotion of archaeological and historical studies. This is rather less satisfactory than that of the role of the learned institutions and the universities, partly because of the large number of societies involved and the inaccessibility of some of their archives. The author has drawn her conclusions from an examination of the records of only some fourteen out of over one hundred national and local societies founded within the period covered by her book. She has concentrated, perhaps rather too

REVIEWS

heavily, on a sociological analysis of their membership and rather less on their internal politics, often the key to their development. Why, for instance, in some counties (e.g. Kent) were all branches of archaeology and history covered by one society, whereas in others (e.g. Sussex) there were separate societies for archaeological research and record publication? There is still plenty of scope, on either a national or regional basis, for further work on the development of these societies. Nevertheless, the author is to be congratulated for at least laying down some of the framework for future studies. In the more clearly academic field, she has gone much further and provided us with a stimulating account of crucial developments in the study of archaeology and history, which should be required reading for every practising archaeologist and historian, amateur or professional.

W.N. YATES

Dartford Country. By G. Porteus. 27 × 21 cm. Pp. 132 with numerous illustrations. Barracuda Books Ltd., 1985. (£15.)

At the beginning of this liberally illustrated book there is a map showing the extent of the old Hundred of Axstane which is the area chosen for a historical survey by our Member, Mr Geoff Porteus. He has already written two similar books on Dartford itself and has now turned his attention to the district south-east of the town, containing attractive and well known villages such as Farningham and Eynsford on the banks of the Darent. Despite the new motorways and encroaching urbanisation, this corner of Kent has still much to offer to lovers of the countryside and its historical associations. Popular books of this type help to increase general awareness of the value of our heritage and strengthen the hands of those who strive for its appreciation and continuance.

There are over 150 subjects illustrated by photographs and sketches and these are in some ways as informative as the text itself, as they frequently show buildings and other features now vanished. Many of the pictures have been gathered from public collections such as the Kent County Library as well as private sources – all courteously acknowledged together with help given in research by individuals and institutions such as the Kent County Archives Office.

The whole makes interesting reading and there is no doubt that the book will give pleasure to many – despite its price. Over 750 names are included in the list of subscribers and judging by the popularity of Mr Porteus' previous works there may eventually be a call for a second edition. In that event, the opportunity should be taken to

REVIEWS

comb the text for misprints overlooked by the proof reader (e.g. 'sheild' on p. 21 and West 'Kingsdon' on p. 35). Certain factual errors could also be eliminated: for example, most of the Saxon graves in the cemetery at Riseley were much earlier than the seventh century (p. 21), and Southfleet Rectory is fourteenth-century – not fifteenth as stated in the caption on p. 38, although correctly dated on p. 35.

In general, the book shows evidence of considerable research on the part of the author and provides a commendable addition to the literature of local history.

P.J. TESTER

The Archaeology of the Bexley Area. By P.J. Tester. 21 × 14.5 cm. Pp. 28, and 15 illustrations. Bexley 1985 (limp, no price).

Our Member, Mr P.J. Tester, has produced for the Bexley Libraries and Museums Department this booklet, which covers the archaeology of the area from prehistoric times to the Anglo-Saxon period.

Mr Tester is well known to members, through his lecturing to local societies throughout the County and the pages of *Arch. Cant.*, for his work on many sites in the Bexley area and elsewhere and is to be warmly congratulated for this publication, which is a very useful survey of what is so far known of the archaeology of Bexley. Mr Tester's work is not only a short summary of the evidence, but should also prove the starting point for further enquiry. Though 'opportunities for deliberate archaeological research are now very limited in and around Bexley', Mr Tester's labours in compiling this booklet would be amply rewarded, if his appeal (p. 23) were heeded and even the most casual of finds suitably reported and deposited.

This informative booklet, which has an attractive cover and is well illustrated, can be obtained from the Directorate of Education, Libraries and Museums Department, London Borough of Bexley.

A.P. DETSICAS

Thomas Becket. By Frank Barlow. 23 × 15.5 cm. Pp. xii + 334, 42 pls. and 5 figs. London, 1986 (£14.95, cased).

In the most minute detail Professor Barlow follows the life of Thomas Becket from his birth in Cheapside, the son of a London merchant, through his career as a clerk in the household of Archbishop Theobald; as Archdeacon of Canterbury; as Chancellor to Henry II; as Archbishop of Canterbury; and through the weary years of exile, after his flight from Northampton, to his death and canonisation. The

same story has been told so many times and in so many ways that it is difficult to imagine that more could be said, but here we have a very remarkable book which is a real move towards a new understanding of the enigma that is Thomas.

Under Barlow's guidance, sifting through the masses of documents that have survived, we can watch Thomas and his friends and enemies, and Henry II, Louis, King of France and Pope Alexander and their friends and enemies, as they journey backwards and forwards across Europe, negotiating, talking, arguing, writing letters, composing schedules, negotiating again, arranging meetings again and again. We can follow the spies at work on both sides and gain much new light on the system of carrying letters across Europe. The whole is like a game of three-dimensional chess and has many resemblances to the present negotiations towards an American-Soviet summit meeting. In the same way that there would be no need for denunciations could the two parties be brought together, so there was then no need for the excommunications of the English bishops if only Henry and Thomas could have been brought and kept together. This was not to be. Thomas was a major pawn on the shifting sands of European politics, a constantly changing pattern as first one grouping and then another lost or gained advantage. He was ever at the mercy of those pursuing their own interests and indeed of those pursuing his for their own reasons. A great advantage was lost after the meeting at Fréteval that was never to recur. Henry and Thomas came together once, but somehow were again prevented. This was the real turning point, the point of no return when Thomas had to determine what his future actions should be.

In his early years Thomas comes out of this book in a bad light; his own worst enemy; a shallow, vain man; intemperate; lacking maturity and wisdom; not a man of great intelligence. After Fréteval he appears to mature considerably as he realises his desperate position and seeks to make what he can of his situation. In the circumstances, Thomas could hardly have won: to influence people, to really move them, then one has to put one's life on a line. And so Thomas must have realised. The end was inevitable and yet even Thomas triumphed finally, even over the monks of Canterbury who had so far done nothing to help him. They could not do enough to further his cause once he was dead.

Although the style is a little dry, and the end-paper maps are slightly incorrect in the light of more recent archaeological finds, this is a fascinating book and one which will influence much of our future thinking on the man that is Thomas Becket.

ANNE M. OAKLEY

REVIEWS

Rediscovering Dartford. 29.5 × 21 cm. Pp. 50, 13 figs. and 64 pls.
Dartford District Archaeological Group, 1986 (No price, limp).

The Dartford District Archaeological Group has recently produced this attractive booklet as a summary record and illustration of its work since the Group was formed in 1972. Not only excavation and field work, but also post-excavation work, conservation and other activities are recorded in twenty sections accompanied by many line drawings and photographs, many of which are devoted to the places in which the Group has worked over the years and to the people who have carried out this work.

Some of the sites recorded in this publication, e.g. the Wilmington Roman building and the Darenth Park Hospital Anglo-Saxon site, are already well known; others are not widely known, but this booklet gives a very good impression of the Group's teeming activity in the Dartford area. It is to be hoped that full publication of the evidence recorded by the enthusiastic and painstaking work of the Group's members will soon follow.

Neolithic and Early Bronze Age Pottery. By Alex Gibson. 21 × 18 cm. Pp. 66, 22 figs, and 4 pls. Shire Archaeology, 1986 (£2.50, paperback).

This is the latest title and a very useful addition to the informative series of introductory booklets published over the years by Shire Archaeology. Apart from introducing the beginner in this field to its subject, this little volume contains a comprehensive chronological table of the periods involved in England, Wales and Scotland, an outline of the pottery in various sections, a glossary and suggestions for further reading and sites and museums to be visited where such pottery can be seen. The great advantage of this booklet, for beginners and others alike, is the assembly together into one publication of much information on pottery wares and types, which are well illustrated, normally to be found scattered in a large number of specialist publications and reports. It should find many readers and stimulate them to further enquiry.

A.P. DETSICAS

Defending London's River. By Victor T.C. Smith. 30 × 21 cm. Pp. 48 with numerous illustrations. Published by North Kent Books, 1985. (£3.)

The strategic importance of the Thames Estuary and the lower

REVIEWS

reaches of the river has been recognised as of vital significance from Roman times to the present day. Through successive centuries efforts have been made to prevent hostile invasion by this route, and these have left archaeological evidence in a variety of forms. Our Member, Mr Victor Smith, has spent fifteen years tracing and recording the past defences of London's river and the results are now made available in this attractive publication. The book is admirably produced with informative text, well drawn plans and clear photographs. The whole forms a notable contribution not only to the history and archaeology of part of our County, but also provides a record of important features of our national heritage.

Among the subjects described in detail are the forts at Gravesend, Tilbury, Coalhouse and Cliffe, with other defences covering the period from 1540 to 1945. There is also an outline description of the advances in military technology, the introduction of the Brennan torpedo, mine-fields and anti-aircraft defences, concluding with notes on the off-shore forts of World War II. The author has been particularly involved in the restoration of the New Tavern Fort, built in 1780 at Gravesend, and now accessible to the public.

Copies of the book can be obtained post-free from the publishers at 162, Borstal Road, Rochester, or from retail bookshops.

Trinity Church, Sissinghurst. By A.L. Congreve. 21 × 15 cm. Pp. 10 with 3 illustrations.

The building of the existing church at Sissinghurst in 1838 was due to the generosity of three local benefactors: the Hon. James William King, his sister Lady Louisa Eleanora and her daughter Caroline Charlotte Wilhelmina. These facts, with the addition of considerable genealogical detail, are recorded in this modest but informative booklet. The church itself is of little architectural interest and before 1893, when the chancel and sanctuary were added, 'must have been severe almost to the point of bleakness'. James Reed, a builder from Hawkhurst, bankrupted himself by attempting to build it for £1,280 and had to be rescued from a debtors' prison by the patrons.

There are a number of memorials, including windows, to people once connected with the locality, and indeed the main interest of this booklet is in the record of such personal associations.

There was an earlier place of worship at Sissinghurst, built in 1401, but it was closed in 1548 and is now remembered only by the surviving names of Chapel Lane and 'The Burying Ground'. The building was only 25 ft. long and formed a chapel of ease to Cranbrook church, having the title of the Chapel of the Holy Trinity,

REVIEWS

Milkhouse Street. An octagonal stone bowl, now retained in the church, is thought to be a possible survival from the earlier chapel, but judging from the illustration it may have served as a large domestic mortar rather than, as suggested, a holy water stoup.

Copies of the booklet may be obtained from the Cranbrook Information Bureau, price 30p.

P.J. TESTER