REVIEWS

Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology at Rochester. Edited by T. Ayers and T. Tatton-Brown. 321pp. 4 colour plates, numerous plans, diagrams and b/w photographs. BAA Conference Transactions xxviii, Leeds, 2006. (Paperback, n.p.)

Rochester has long been seen as the poorer sister to Kent's rather more famous cathedral city of Canterbury. However, behind the bustling nineteenth- and twentieth-century façade of modern Rochester lies a wealth of fascinating medieval material. The closely juxtaposed cathedral and castle which are such prominent landmarks from both road and rail approaches have long deserved proper recognition and study, and so this, the latest of the British Archaeological Association's well-known series of Conference Transactions, is surely long overdue and will be warmly welcomed.

The volume contains a series of well-written and wide-ranging articles about the history, architecture and archaeology of Rochester. While naturally focusing on the medieval period, topics such as its Roman origins and a study of the ubiquitous nineteenth-century archaeologist, William St John Hope, who wrote a seminal study of Rochester in 1900, add to the volume's scope and appeal. There is also a valuable survey of the later medieval parish church of All Saints, Maidstone, towards the end. The list of contributors reads like a 'Who's Who' of medieval cultural studies, with well-known contributors such as Nicholas Brooks and Tim Tatton-Brown, the medieval decorative ironwork specialist Jane Geddes, and Peter Draper (author of the newly-published *The Formation of English Gothic: Architecture and Identity*) to name but a few. It is particularly welcome to see both sacred and secular subjects addressed within the same cover, and there are surveys describing the building stones, medieval topography and the Great Tower at Rochester Castle by Bernard Worssam, Jeremy Ashbee and John Goodall respectively. Likewise, the discussion of the episcopal and civic seals of Rochester by John Cherry with its set of large, clear illustrations will be a welcome addition to the literature on this often-neglected subject.

The cathedral naturally takes the limelight, and its many eccentricities and puzzling aspects are explored in depth. Anyone who has struggled to

understand the layout of the east claustral range and the much-weathered Latin inscription above the day-stair tympanum (confusingly, mis-labelled as the Night Stair at the site) will find John McNeill's survey particularly helpful. The twelfth-century nave and west doorway are worthy of study in their own right, and the studies of the early Gothic east end and west transept by Peter Draper and Jennifer Alexander are certain to fuel discussion for many years to come. Overall, questions of date, style and patronage naturally remain uppermost, although the contributors have taken care to place their findings within a wider cultural context. Each of the sections, arranged in a loose chronological sequence, is lucidly written, generously illustrated and fully referenced, making the volume suitable for the armchair reader, student and expert alike. The volume, a handy size for study, is presented in an attractive softback cover in blue with a neat eighteenth-century prospect.

Overall, there is little one could criticise. The reviewer would have preferred the ground-plans to have been printed in colour, to make them easier to follow (as indeed St John Hope did in 1900); however, one is left with the clear impression that many of the photographs and diagrams have been specially commissioned to sit alongside the cutting-edge research which they accompany. This very readable book is recommended wholeheartedly, particularly to students: it will surely be essential reading for those interested in local history, and it deserves a place on the shelf of anyone interested in medieval art and architecture.

TOBY HUITSON

Townwall Street, Dover, Excavations 1996. By Keith Parfitt, Barry Corke and John Cotter. 460 pp. 240 figs. The Archaeology of Canterbury, New Series, vol. III, 2006. Hardback. £25. From Heritage Marketing and Publications Limited, Hill Farm, Unit F, Castle Acre Road, Great Dunham, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE32 2LP. www.heritagemp.com.
ISBN 978-1-870-54505-1. (*A full review will appear in the next volume.*)

In 1996 Canterbury Archaeological Trust excavated a large site off Townwall Street at Dover, funded by BP Oils UK Ltd. The site lay outside the main centre of the historic town, below Dover Castle, about 150m inland from the present seashore. A complex sequence of medieval and post-medieval buildings was recorded. Detailed study of the site has provided much important new information, which greatly enhances our understanding of the medieval town. The report outlines the history of medieval Dover and then describes the evolution of the site from initial colonisation, up to the twentieth century. It focuses on the main period of activity, *c.*AD 1175-1300, when simple timber buildings were crowded on to an open beach ridge adjacent to the seashore.

Large quantities of domestic rubbish including pottery, small finds, animal bone and fish bone were recovered. These important assemblages have been analysed in some detail and a study of the extensive pottery collection is presented. The large amounts of fish bone found, together with many fishhooks and other items of fishing equipment, underline the importance of fishing to the humble medieval folk who lived in this area. Amongst them must have been some of the mariners of Dover who provided annual ship-service to the King, under the arrangements of the medieval Cinque Ports Federation.

Homo Britannicus. The Incredible Story of Human Life in Britain. By Chris Stringer. Allen Lane. 319 pp., 185 illustrations, maps and tables. Penguin Books, 2006. Hardback, £25.00. ISBN-13: 978-0-713-99795-8; ISBN-10: 0-713-99795-8.

Professor Stringer has been at the British Museum (Natural History) since 1973 and his research is concerned with human evolution over the past million years. He leads the Ancient Human Occupation of Britain project (AHOB) which is a standing multi-disciplinary combined operation. The *dramatis personae* is an appendix to this attractive book. Chris Stringer is the author of numerous papers and books, notably upon the *African Exodus* and the *Neanderthals*. His predecessor at the BM was Kenneth P. Oakley, well known in Kent for his assessment of the ostensible Palaeolithic human remains from Galley Hill and Halling and his detailed denouement of the fraudulent Piltdown assemblage.

Homo Britannicus is a striking book with a wealth of illustrations, for the most part coloured and of quality. The end-papers depict the Natural History Museum's faunal remains from the London area, the seven chapters are divided by double-page plates, and the b/w illustrations are confined to those of historical significance. The book's structure is clear and concise; there is a Prologue, followed by seven chapters, details of the AHOB team, acknowledgements and illustrations, sources and further reading, all of which is concluded by a surprisingly brief, functional, index. The employment of the word 'mystery' in the Prologue's title could be a culture-shock, but the dictionary demonstrates that it is not an incorrect usage and in accord with Stringer's lucid prose.

His historical chapter extends from the seventeenth century to Piltdown and the endeavours of the recent past. Thereafter there is consideration of Pleistocene people, their tools and life-modes. Two chapters are devoted to Ice Ages and another to the notion of deserted Britain. This is followed by an incisive consideration of our closely related, but long extinct, Neanderthals, an especial interest of the author who has ranged the length and breadth of Europe in the pursuit of their remains. Despite its double-

edged title the Cheddar chapter brings together much concerning its caves that has hitherto evaded us. Climate change is the concluding chapter and it is stressed that our planet is not static. The AHOB team's biographical appendix brings to the fore the axiom that there was a past in itself and a past that our research seeks to reconstruct.

One should see *Homo Britannicus* in the perspective of the works which have moulded our appreciation of the aeons of time that were our Pleistocene Period and Palaeolithic Age. The modern era of research begins with Frederick Zeuner's *The Pleistocene Period, its Climate, chronological and faunal successions* (1945; 1959; 1964). Thereafter came Kenneth Oakley's *Frameworks for dating fossil man* (1964) and the volume edited by Paul Mellars, *The Emergence of Modern Humans* (1990). There are others which include Myra Shackley's *Neanderthal Man* (1980) which concluded with a chapter upon their survival or extinction. *Homo Britannicus* (2006), however, illustrates the progress of research in these areas and, moreover, the advantages of a combined operation, with a like-minded group, working as a team.

Before all else Chris Stringer's historical introduction illustrates the need for a systematic study of our endeavours with Pleistocene prehistory from the first quests to the present day. This chapter breaks new ground in that it is a précis of Palaeolithic material from the Gray's Inn handaxe and mammoth remains found at the end of the seventeenth century to the perplexities of Piltdown. Perhaps more could have been made of John Frere's handaxes from beneath undisturbed deposits twelve feet in depth, at Hoxne (Suffolk). In this historical context Kentish readers should observe the comments upon Charles Darwin, who had settled at Downe. His *Origin of Species* (1859) had profound implications for human origins while the principles of evolution were applied to material culture, which led to the premises of prehistoric archaeology. Sir John Lubbock, later Lord Avebury, working from his house, *High Elms*, close by Downe, defined an Old Stone Age from geological contexts, which he termed the Palaeolithic, the handaxes such as those found by John Frere. Joseph Prestwich, who had accompanied Sir John Evans to Abbeville in 1859 to see the sites, and the implements therefrom, assembled by Boucher de Perthes from the Somme gravels, ended his years at Darent-Hulme, near Swanley. Benjamin Harrison and his eoliths have mention as his ideas influenced many. There is also notice of John Wymer and his parents who located, in 1955, another piece of the Swanscombe skull, to complement those found during the 1930s. John moved into East Anglia and was a valued friend and colleague.

Pleistocene people, the first Britons, the tibia from Boxgrove and the Swanscombe skull pieces, are positive evidence for humans being latecomers into what was a western extremity of the Euro-Asian landmass. Indirect evidence can be the cut-marks on the remains of what would

have been food animals. Closer examination of the considerable faunal remains from out Kentish river gravels is undoubtedly called for. There is also the question of clays and silts containing environmental evidence, even beetles, rafts of which have been encountered in deep deposits. Besides the handaxes there is also accumulative evidence that mankind, during the distant Pleistocene days, developed a considerable répertoire of not unsophisticated flake-tools. Many major rivers have changed their courses, notably our familiar Thames, for human development was accompanied by ice ages, Stringer's third chapter. It was the Anglian ice-front which moved the Thames southwards and its gravels, from which came the Swanscombe skull fragments, are a product of the following warm Hoxnian interglacial. The Boxgrove site, which yielded the human shin-bone, may precede the Anglian glaciation. It could have had a considerable catchment area, evidence for which is the many handaxes from the back-slopes of the South Downs. The numerous handaxes from eastern Kent's chalklands could point to a site, comparable with Boxgrove, somewhere at its periphery. The Hoxnian inter-glacial was the Great Interglacial and the person from whom came the Swanscombe skull pieces had her being during this great time-period. A double-page illustration (pp. 110-11) depicts, in fine detail, the three pieces. It has emerged that they are likely to have been from a female and that they have incipient Neanderthal affinities. The Ebbsfleet, Swanscombe, straight-tusked elephant, the skeleton of which was found with about a hundred Clactonian flint tools, when the Channel Tunnel was constructed, could be an extension of the Swanscombe sequence. There are thousands of handaxes from Swanscombe, and other Kentish gravels, and their possible uses are discussed but are largely unresolved. The onset of the Wolstonian glaciation is illustrated by the cold fauna encountered at Crayford where it was accompanied by fine flake tools struck from prepared cores. It is thought that at about this time bones were used as fuel. Their fatty content allows this, but much kindling is needed to ignite them. Thereafter it emerges that the land, that was to become our islands, was abandoned for more than 100,000 years.

Chris Stringer is at home with the Neanderthals, who have been the subject of much of his wider research. Indeed, he sees them as '...close relatives who were as human as we are, but in their own unique way'. Their skulls contained a large brain and their faces had huge noses, receding cheekbones and large eye sockets which were surmounted by massive, double-arched, brow ridges. Their distinctive physiognomy would have been comparable with someone of the present day afflicted by acromegaly and thus it is not impossible that their pituitary systems functioned in a manner different to *Homo sapiens*. The Swanscombe skull pieces display a small pit, the *supranic fossa*, common to all Neanderthals, and it is considered as from an early such being. Many Kentish readers

will remember the fine handaxes of Mousterian form from Oldbury, near Ightham. Were the rock-shelter remains at Oldbury a base, Neanderthal hunters could have ranged widely, even to what is now the Thames! Stringer makes mention of Neanderthal cannibalism for which there is accumulating evidence, as recently from the Spanish El Sidrón cave, but retains a telling discussion for his chapter concerning Cheddar Gorge.

'What they gorged at Cheddar' is the wry title of his sixth chapter. Despite early encounters with human and animal remains, besides artefacts, cave explorers and commercial enterprise, much has been brought together from disparate sources. There were at an early juncture Neanderthals pursuing mammoths, perhaps upon lower level terrains, as at Lynford in East Anglia. There are also cave drawings, as at Creswall Crags. Cheddar man, however, emerges as early Mesolithic and, as the western extremity of Europe was empty during the last Devensian glaciation, our *Homo sapiens* forebears are likely to have moved westward across what is now Kent.

The Palaeolithic saga's stage had, it should be remembered, a backdrop of climatic change, the successive glacials and interglacials, and it emerges that humans came to our lands, 700,000 years ago, earlier than has for long been thought. Their presence was, however, intermittent, because of the successive glaciations. Chris Stringer stresses climatic change and one should remember the fluctuations of even the second millennium AD. *Homo Britannicus* is a great book, stimulating as it is exciting to read, and, unlike many current archaeological books, difficult to put down. Our Palaeolithic past has at last been given humanity and dimension. Much of the action took place across and upon the lands that are now Kent.

PAUL ASHBEE

The Survey of the Whole of England: Studies of the documentation resulting from the survey conducted in 1086. By Colin Flight. 148 pp., tables and figures. BAR British Series 405. Archaeopress, 2006. Paperback. £30.00. ISBN-13: 978-1-84171-909-2; ISBN-10: 1-84171-909-9.

Colin Flight is well known to Kent historians and archaeologists as the author of *The Bishops and Monks of Rochester 1076-1214* (KAS 1997) and a number of important articles, also mostly concerned with Rochester. This book is a contribution to – indeed an attempt to resolve definitively – the long-running debate about how the survey of England in 1086 launched by William the Conqueror resulted in the surviving text (or texts) of Domesday Book. As its title suggests, Flight rejects the very name of 'Domesday', arguing that it is documented only from the 1170s and should be applied specifically to the preservation and use of

survey records after that date. Those records, to use their familiar modern names, are Great Domesday (30 county entries) and Little Domesday (the remainder: Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk, in greater detail and a rather different format). There is no attempt here to address directly broader issues of what Domesday might tell us about the England of 1086, or how it had changed since 1066, though the discussion of the texts raises many issues of how early Norman England was governed, the king's relations with his leading men, and so on. There is also no special prominence given to Kent, except when Kent sources contribute information specially relevant to the conduct of the national survey. But in an autobiographical Preface, the author tells us that his original intention was to study the various Kent Domesday records prior to 'mapping the evidence on to the actual landscape'. The present book has grown from what was first conceived merely as 'a few pages' of preliminary explanation to set the wider national context. It has done so largely because of Flight's low opinion of previous historians' efforts in this field, as is made clear on almost every page. Readers of this journal will be pleased to hear, though, that the Kent project is still in hand.

RICHARD EALES

The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Finglesham, Kent. By Sonia Chadwick-Hawkes and Guy Grainger. 436pp. Many b/w illustrations and 26 b/w plates. Oxford University School of Archaeology: Monograph No. 64. 2006. Hardback. £28. 95 from Oxbow Books including p+p.
ISBN 0-9549627-1-0.

At last we have the official publication of the report on the excavation of 216 sixth-and seventh-century graves carried out at the important Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Finglesham by Sonia Chadwick-Hawkes between 1959-1967. This included the re- excavation of some of the 38 graves previously discovered by William Stebbing and William Whiting in 1928-9. A detailed inventory of the graves excavated in the late twenties was published in 1958 but it has taken another forty years to publish fully the findings of the later excavation.

The Finglesham report has been published with only minimal updating and editing and has been left substantially as 'a product of its time'. The Introductory chapter written by Birte Brugmann and Keith Parfitt is the only text produced after the death of Sonia Chadwick Hawkes in 1999 for the report, in part financed from her own foundation and in part by English Heritage, and was largely ready for publication at this time. There seems to have been an unconscionable delay. The reviewer had been told a decade ago that this was because DNA testing was being carried out on some of the Finglesham remains, in Oxford, but the report

contains no such evidence. The reviewer had understood that Sonia Chadwick-Hawkes' definitive comprehensive discussion of the site was to be included, but apparently this could not be found when her papers were handed over to her literary executors after her death. And there are other gaps in the Archive which suggest that it is not a complete record of the work produced in Oxford during these years.

The publication says that four analytical chapters prepared by Hawkes' research assistant Guy Grainger had been prepared for the volume but not included. The publication says (p. 15) that these can be consulted in the Oxford Institute of Archaeology so the reviewer visited the Institute. She was shown, not completed chapters, but something that amounted to research notes which is, apparently, all there is.

This is a sad story. It is particularly sad for the handful of people still living in the Finglesham area who worked in the field with Sonia, thought very highly of her and have been waiting for forty years for this volume. The reviewer can only direct them to the excellent part of the Introductory chapter written by Keith Parfitt which includes a moving letter written by Hawkes in 1957 to the then editor of *Medieval Archaeology* in an attempt to get her work on the Finglesham cemetery published. Parfitt usefully includes a list of all Hawkes' published work on the cemetery (p. 22). In Finglesham we already had copies of all Hawkes' published work; we were hoping for something more.

CHRISTINE GRAINGE

Medieval Life on Romney Marsh: archaeological discoveries from around Lydd. By Luke Barber. 45 pp. 150 x 210mm. University College London Field Archaeology Unit and English Heritage, 2006 (paperback, £4.95). ISBN 1 86077 241 2.

This small volume presents the findings of serial archaeological investigations carried out in advance of gravel extractions since 1991 near Lydd on Romney (Walland) Marsh. It is aimed at a non-specialist readership and is very attractively produced. The text is clear and there are many photographs of the site and finds, location maps, site plans and illustrations of artefacts. There are also aerial views, artists' reconstructions of the landscape and buildings, and a reproduction of an historic map.

Some finds indicated exploitation of the resources of the marshland near Lydd in the early Bronze Age and Roman periods. This volume notes the apparent absence of reclamation and year-round settlement near Lydd until the twelfth century. It then presents the results of what was perhaps the most interesting period in the human history of this rural location. There was a peak in activity in the thirteenth century evidenced in the establishment of fields, one or more buildings and enclosures.

Subsequently there was a move to pastoralism. Fishing was an important pursuit. Coin and pottery finds reflect local and more distant trade and the fact that some inhabitants did not live entirely by farming. The author points to the potential for comparative work on the surrounding towns. This small book reflects the interdisciplinary approach which characterises much research on Romney Marsh. The author discusses, for example, the consistencies and tensions between the historical and archaeological evidence for this area. Some of these result from a lack of historical sources for the thirteenth century as compared with later periods.

Relatively large areas were exposed by topsoil stripping in advance of quarrying. This allowed very full investigation of a significant area of marshland reclamation and dispersed settlement. Study of the landscape over centuries also makes the Lydd work an important contribution to studies of human occupation elsewhere in England.

Since this is a popular production it contains selected further reading rather than notes. This reading includes past monographs of the Romney Marsh Research Trust where the early Lydd work was published, and a forthcoming book by L. Barber and G. Priestley-Bell in which recent work will be reported in detail.

G. M. DRAPER

A Bronze Age Settlement at Kemsley near Sittingbourne, Kent. By M. Diak, with contributions from B. McNee, B. Scott and R. Bendrey. 70pp. Canterbury Archaeological Trust Occasional Paper 3, 2006, Heritage Marketing and Publications Ltd, 2006. Paperback, £13.95.
ISBN 978-1-87054-509-9.

The report on excavations and watching briefs undertaken at Kemsley to the north-west of Sittingbourne describes evidence for an emergent agricultural landscape defined by ditches (and presumably also banks, hedges and fences) representing a formal field system of a type becoming increasingly recognised in the 2nd millennium BC. Habitation is indicated by two putative round houses. An extensive assemblage of mostly Middle and some Later Bronze Age ceramics associated with the features is described which provides a useful comparative corpus within the region. Regrettably there was no programme of environmental sampling to contextualise the features within their contemporary landscape and agricultural practices. The few identifiable bones of domesticates and a possible threshing floor contribute little to an understanding of the agricultural regime. Critically there is no radiocarbon dating framework which limits understanding of sequence and development of the formally laid out landscape and reduces the value of the ceramic assemblage. Lithics and some pottery indicate prior activity from the Mesolithic to the Early

Bronze Age with ceramic evidence for a subsequent Roman and Post-Medieval presence. The author is to be congratulated on making best use of what he candidly admits to be the problematic archive he inherited.

ANTHONY WARD

The Historical Development of the Port of Faversham 1580-1780. By Paul Wilkinson. B/w illustrations and tables throughout. BAR 413, 2006. Paperback, £37.00. ISBN 1-84171-946-3.

Copiously illustrated with over 100 figures in b/w the book contains the following parts – (1) The historical and topographical context of Faversham; (2) Ships and Seamen of the town; (3) Administration of the Port; (4) The cargoes that were carried. Each of these subject areas is broken down into chapters, of which there are 39 in all. There are also 84 tables scattered throughout the book.

Having had access to Wilkinson's doctoral thesis written in 1999, when writing *Faversham Oyster Fishery through eleven centuries* (2002), the present production in two columns with integrated illustrations is a much more splendid work. It is perhaps unfortunate that in the intervening years no effort appears to have been made to update some of the information. For instance in relation to chapter 27 the inclusion of Allen, Cotterill and Pike, 'The Kentish Copperas Industry' *Archaeologia Cantiana* CXXII (2002), pp. 319-334, would have been very useful.

The reviewer was particularly interested to read on the illustrations on page 119 that over 4,000 posts were surveyed in 1995 and that initial mapping suggests some thirty five separate fish weirs. Fish weirs dated probably from prehistoric and certainly from Saxon times. Our own researches suggested that such fish weirs were mentioned in a Seasalter document as early as 786 and were probably in existence many years before. In the 1330s they were badly damaged by storms and later accounts show that payment was often remitted on account of their decay.

Nonetheless there is certainly much here to assist the researcher looking into the history of the town and the port. The bibliography of both manuscript and printed sources will provide further information for those that wish to investigate further.

DUNCAN HARRINGTON

England's Landscape: The South East. By Brian Short. 256 pp. 121 colour and b/w illustrations and maps. Harper Collins for English Heritage, London, 2006. Hardback. £35.00. ISBN 0 00 715570 0.

English Heritage has produced eight well illustrated volumes on the

country's landscape in an attractively presented and well illustrated series edited by Neil Cossons. The division of England into eight regions, each containing numerous *pays*, presents a real challenge and one that may not be welcomed by all readers. The South-East volume, here reviewed, covers a large region that includes the valley of the lower Thames, thus including the Gateway, and stretches from east Kent to the Chilterns to embrace the chalk downs of Wiltshire and the eastern reaches of Dorset. But it is in the safe hands of Brian Short, of Sussex University, who has a strong and well-established reputation for clear and careful broad-brush studies of a more conventionally determined 'south east' as well as detailed studies of areas of the Weald, along with books on agricultural change in the twentieth century. He has produced a well-written and scholarly book marked by a geographer's keen sense of change in landscape. Predictably, he is better informed on Sussex than other counties although the errors noted by this reviewer are few and of little significance.

In the first chapter Short persuasively and provocatively argues that 'many of the region's landscapes ... represent power and control over people, resources and space' whether it be feudal lords and royal forests, church estates, close villages, castle builders of the past or the modern military appropriation of training grounds in Wiltshire. Reading the landscape, he implies, nevertheless can be a democratic process as it 'is a document full of signs to be deciphered, allowing deeper comprehension of the societies that produced the palimpsest we now see around us today'. Thus those with detailed local historical knowledge, reinforced by regular walking over and feeling their area, are well equipped to interpret that landscape. With this book to hand, with its many stimulating ideas and pertinent illustrations, they will be greatly helped in that process. Landscape has often been described in broad sweeps, but relatively few local history societies have thought to produce specific and detailed studies of the changing landscape of their own area. This is surely a task well worth undertaking.

Following the introductory chapter, the book is divided into three parts. The first, on 'land and people', details the environmental history, culture and topography of an ancient landscape and the process of peopling and settling the region. The second looks at 'ways of life', changes in the countryside and in urban living, with a chapter devoted specifically to London. The capital is so large, and has been so dominant for so many centuries, that a separate chapter on the metropolis and its influence on the south east's landscape was essential. The third part is on the 'south-east landscape as representation and inspiration'. The overall structure and approach that is adopted is one that seems to this reviewer to be a logical and sensible way of dealing with the subject, made more difficult given that it is such a large and rather unwieldy area of southern England. Topography helped determine early settlement (it still does although

planners build on flood plains), and rural and urban life and activities over two millennia have not only shaped the landscape but steadily changed it so that there is nowhere in the South-East where the human hand has not laid its imprint.

Landscape as representation and inspiration also has an important place in such a study. Painters, novelists and poets have represented landscape and thus helped to shape and channel our perceptions of our surroundings. All of us, consciously and unconsciously, view our immediate surroundings with eyes and minds conditioned by a variety of influences, and perhaps more so now in an age of pervasive manufactured visual stimulus. However, given that Short dwells mainly on what can be called 'high art' and the realm of the reading classes, perhaps he excludes from consideration a substantial part of the population. Certainly film, post cards, advertisements, and popular representation of the countryside (remember those paintings of the south-east on the walls of carriages in SER trains) are briefly mentioned, but these quotidian popular visual images also invite further analysis to determine their influence. Perhaps emotion should also be combined with the visual? For example, Elgar's cello concerto, composed at Fittleworth, has an inimitable Englishness about it.

Short's book, like all good books, challenges the reader, poses questions, provokes further inquiry, and suggests but does not formally impose answers. His text and illustrations also excite the imagination and invite readers to draw on their own particular local geographical knowledge to add further ideas to the examples that he provides. The result is a stimulating and very attractive book to read and to think over.

DAVID KILLINGRAY

Hadlow: Life, Land and People in a Wealden Parish 1460-1600. Edited by Joan Thirsk, with Bridgett Jones, Alison Williams, Anne Hughes and Caroline Wetton. Numerous colour photographs and b/w illustrations throughout; 27 diagrams and maps. Kent Archaeological Society 2006. Available on-line at www.kentarchaeology.ac >eBooks.
ISBN 0 906746 70 1.

This innovative e-book, published by the Society, is the result of the intensive and scholarly collaboration of 'five women' who describe their respective talents as 'a historian of agriculture and rural society', a 'medieval scholar', two 'history graduates', and an 'artist and designer'. Their complementary skills have brought to fruition a challenging and highly readable study of Hadlow at the end of the medieval period. The origins of their project was one of those felicitous chances which all historians dream of. The Hadlow Survey, dated by the project to *c.*1460, was auctioned at Mere in Wiltshire in 2002, having been in the collection

of a Devon bookseller for many years. The document was a late sixteenth-century copy in Latin and can be downloaded, together with the English translation, in a separate file.

The Survey is of Hadlow manor, the largest of eight manors in the parish of Hadlow. Following the original surveyor's work, the authors take the reader on 'A Walk round Hadlow Manor in 1460' identifying the tenements mentioned and marrying the evidence skilfully with the modern landscape. Some fascinating social commentary emerges from their close study, including the value of women's landholding rights, responsibilities to the widowed lady of the Manor, Anne, Dowager Duchess of Buckingham, and the concentration of shops around the church. To the surprise of the researchers the survey revealed that there was no named road from Tonbridge via Hadlow to Maidstone in 1460, but that the main market and destination to the north was at West Malling. An e-book is a useful tool for comparing two chapters which makes the rather odd placing of 'Topographical Problems' towards the end of the book, rather than with the 'Walk' less of a problem. So the aerial map of the Hadlow Stair on page 10 can quite easily be considered with the detailed discussion of the route of the Medway on page 97, and the map showing roadside crosses on page 6 with the discussion on pages 98-99.

Having completed their interpretation of the location of the tenements and the landscape in 1460, the authors turn their attention to careful wider contextualisation of the Survey. Although they did not have the benefit of Mavis Mate's study of *Trade and Economic Developments, 1450-1550. The Experience of Kent, Surrey and Sussex* (2006) (see review below), they have come to similar conclusions over the complexity and lack of uniformity in leasings and tenants' rights, as 'lords drastically tightened up their affairs administratively and financially in the course of the sixteenth century'. Particularly useful is the study of the extant Hadlow/Lomewood manor court rolls (October 1478-1482/3 and October 1512-July 1513), in which many names of those identified in the Survey appear, thereby further fleshing out the nature of that part of the Hadlow community that was relatively wealthy. The major limitation of the study as defined by the Survey and acknowledged by the authors in their conclusion, is the invisibility of the lower social classes. The chapter concludes with a comparison with other manors across England identifying both the similarities and diversity of practices, such as the lack of consistency of jury size, ranging from ten to eighteen in Walsham le Willows, Suffolk, but only between eleven and thirteen in Hadlow.

Chapters 7 to 13 cover traditional local studies looking at topography, economy, the church and detailed study of selected families, which links wills with the Survey. It looks across the spectrum of property holders from the important landowning Fanes, the leading gentry family of Rivers, the rising Fromonds through lesser families who still had considerable

landholdings like the Bishops or smaller holdings like the Bealds, to the Stoperfield/Stubberfields holding only one tenement.

The final chapter on 'Hadlow in a Wealden Context' acts as a comprehensive conclusion with the admirable objective of alerting 'those who study other Wealden parishes to identify more evidence, which may strengthen some of the observations made ... about Hadlow'. The authors also take the opportunity of commenting briefly on the changes between the date of the original Survey in 1460 and the 1581-3 copy.

The publication of e-books does raise many questions for historians – both readers and authors – and some potential problems, but the accessibility of such a valuable and well-produced work, which uses the tools of the technology so effectively and will be regularly updated, can only be welcomed. And there is the promise of a printed book for those who cannot access the web pages.

ELIZABETH EDWARDS

Trade and Economic Developments, 1450-1550. The Experience of Kent, Surrey and Sussex. By Mavis E. Mate. 261 pp. 9 tables, 2 maps. Boydell Press, 2006. Hardback £50. ISBN 1 184383 1899.

There is such a wealth of detail in this very traditional economic and social history that the reader is almost overwhelmed. As the culmination of Professor Mate's work on late medieval South-east England, it is a tour de force which provides comprehensive evidence of the economic activities of a region which comprises so many different sub-regions. The period covered, 1450-1550, has been carefully chosen to deal with transitional change and expansion. By going beyond the early Reformation period, Mate has been able to show the impact of the changes in landholding alongside, and together with, the ongoing economic change and developments. The hundred years chosen consolidates the recovery from the Black Death and the final stages of the feudal system and sees the introduction of new products and the import of new skills. Mate dwells much on the importance of the transition from ale to beer-brewing, setting the foundations for the later large scale industry. The conclusions at the end of each chapter are very brief summaries and don't do full justice to the preceding nuanced sections. They thus leave much work for the reader to do, which makes this an excellent textbook for the diligent student!

The early chapters provide useful basic background and two very clear maps on the towns and markets in the South-east, including those that are identified as 'straddlers', small markets like Warehorne in Kent, which persisted into the sixteenth century without developing any 'occupational diversity'. Right from the start Mate acknowledges that the landholding

patterns in Kent set it aside from Surrey and Sussex where the need for markets for basic necessities was far less than for those with the divided inheritance from gavelkind. So, although once she has evaluated the draw and impact of London as the defining market in the South-east, Mate approaches her researches in a broad thematic structure looking at the whole region and providing comparative findings throughout, towards the end she is compelled to look at the 'Hinterland' region by region. Again the difference between the dependence on the market infrastructure in the more successful stock-breeding areas of north and east Kent by the end of the period is highlighted as opposed to the decline in pastoral agriculture at the end of the fifteenth century in the south until the expanding Wealden cloth industry provided a much needed outlet for wool, as well as demand for grain and meat for the population.

The central chapters starting with 'The Rise of Beer-Brewing' also cover the involvement of south-east ports in overseas trade, the nature of urban society, including the involvement of wealthy widows in the urban economy, and conclude with a rich essay on 'Wage-Earners', drawing on both detailed comparative statistics and the accumulated work of many eminent late twentieth century economic and social historians. These chapters provide the evidence which brings alive the people of the late medieval south-east. The recovery from the Black Death, changing expectations of the labouring and servant work force, and the effects of the Statute of Labourers in 1495 are examined in close detail with evidence for rural workers more accessible than for their urban counterparts. Rather disappointingly, although the study proposes to cover the period to 1550, in the evaluation of wage rates there is little or no evidence for any changes after 1524-5 and therefore the effects of the Dissolution are not discussed, while much of the evidence for wage rates is drawn from the records of monastic houses like Christ Church and Battle Abbey. Nevertheless our knowledge of the economics and leisure activities (much influenced by the spread of ale-houses) of late medieval family life of the labouring classes is greatly enhanced by the careful study of individual cases.

The final chapter deals with the changing nature of the 'Land Market', again dealing with the different sub-regions separately. In this chapter Mate does take us right up to 1550 highlighting the gradual changes in landholdings so that by the end of the period, 'merchants, yeomen, and even gentry' were acquiring 'manorial holdings', and the term 'peasant' had largely become obsolescent. In Kent the patterns of land purchase and concern for retaining the family name associated with particular parcels of land began to erode the practice of gavelkind as larger properties were consolidated by, among others, wealthy London merchants. Mate concludes this chapter with an acknowledgement that much is still unclear about the very complex landholdings and leasings in this period.

On the whole there is a lot that is thoroughly satisfying in this compre-

hensive study, but it does occasionally fall between two stools. Economic histories tend to provide macro conclusions from micro details and the local historian of a particular location may find the choice or omission of detail distorts their familiar perceptions. Nevertheless, this book will provide much for both those who are interested in the broader economic and social analysis and those who prefer to search through the index for more local evidence.

ELIZABETH EDWARDS

Farningham and its Mill. A History of a Village in Kent. By Hilary Harding. 352 pp. Numerous b/w illustrations and photographs. Wadard Books, Farningham, 2005. £25. ISBN 0 9550858 0 2.

Images of Horton Kirby Paper Mill. 64 illustrations, line drawings and two maps. 62 pp., Horton Kirby and South Darenth Local History Society, Horton Kirby, 2006.

The River Darent in its 30 mile (50km) course from near Westerham to the tidal Dartford Creek steadily falls from 350ft (100m) to sea level as it enters the Thames. For many centuries the river, with its small tributaries, was a source of power for numerous water mills employed in grinding corn and cattle feed, fulling and metal working, sawing timber, the production of paper, silk, and gunpowder. Even in the late decades of the nineteenth century water power continued to be extensively used as an industrial source although often supplemented by steam engines when water levels were unsuitable. By 1900 many water mills had ceased production or drastically adjusted their product and market, and the process of decline accelerated as increasing imports of raw materials from overseas were processed at new industrial locations for mass markets.

Hilary Harding's account of Farningham and its mill has been a labour of devotion to the village in which she has lived for nearly half a century. The book is well-written and attractively illustrated. Farningham may have been the site of a Roman water mill so when the present mill building, rebuilt in 1790, ceased grinding corn in 1900 it brought to an end a local industrial process that had probably continued with few interruptions for nearly two millennia. The mill is the central focus of this village history which in 16 chapters covers earliest times to the present day, although the last 60 years, perhaps the time of greatest social and economic change, are hurriedly rushed over in a mere three pages. There is an attempt to place the village in the context of national history but this is not always successfully done, especially in the second part of the book, where much of the emphasis is on the actions of local people and particularly the Colyer family who have owned the mill since 1722. The book undoubtedly will

be read with great pleasure and profit by those who live in Farningham or know it well. They are fortunate to have such a splendidly produced and sturdy village history. However, it is less likely to appeal to those to whom the village is unknown. Although the poor are recorded and there is much (other) incidental material on village life a substantial part of this history is about the lives of elite families. The author does not deal well with religious faith, politics, and rural discontent, while historical debate is barely considered. For example, Mary Ann Hearn (Marianne Farningham) is partly misrepresented, and there is a reliance on old ideas and texts. The local publisher has produced a book that is attractive to handle and look at but sadly it is marred by poor proof-reading and inadequate footnotes (some have gone awry in chs 12 and 13).

The next parish, a short distance north down the Darent, is Horton Kirby which was also the site of an old corn mill. By the 1820s John Hall of Dartford had built a mill for making paper by machine but relying on steam power. The result was the creation of an industrial village dominated by a mill which at its peak in the late nineteenth century employed 600 people. Paper production at Horton Kirby, as with neighbouring mills at Eynsford, Shoreham, and Sundridge, was based initially on rag brought from the metropolis, but this changed to imported esparto grass. By keeping abreast of technical change, and despite several bankruptcies and changes of owner, paper production continued at Horton Kirby until 2003. Houses are now being built on the old mill site.

The Horton Kirby and South Darenth Local History Society, seemingly with help from the local council (it is not clear), have produced a well-illustrated book on the history of the paper mill. This contains a large font sized text generously spaced with a large number of photographs recording the fortunes of the mill and the development of South Darenth as terraced housing for mill-workers in the 1860s-80s. The mill was rebuilt in the 1870s and thereafter the valley was dominated by two large chimneys, one Italianate. This brief book describes the business of paper making (not forgetting the problems of polluting the river), the development of South Darenth, mill workers, the fire brigade, accidents, and sports and social activities. The text concludes with a useful and informative section 'An apprentice's memoirs' which focuses on the second half of the twentieth century. Altogether this book offers a mix of the very local and personal ('Bert Taylor helping on the scoreboard and my wife ... with the teas') with brief views of life in an industrial village community in north Kent. There are questions that might have been pursued. Where and how did the fuel come from? What might an analysis of the census enumerators' returns tell us about the labour force? How were trade unions (SOGAT is briefly mentioned) formed? And was this a radically or religiously inclined mill labour force?

Members of local history societies collectively know a great deal about their locality and they often put great effort into writing, designing and publishing books and pamphlets. And yet all too often they ignore the basic conventions of book production and thus sell themselves short, as has the Horton Kirby Society with their book on the paper mill. The book cannot be identified by an author or editor, the title of the book is not printed on the spine, and no ISBN number is given (these are easily obtained) and thus the book is unlikely to appear on booksellers websites and thus be more widely sold (also it is unlikely to be listed in the British Library catalogue). References to sources are loosely handled, there is no price on the book, and despite the local authority's logo on the front cover the role of that body is unclear. All of this could have been avoided with more care. But let me end on a more helpful note. The *Times* Digital Index (the newspaper of record) for the period 1785-1985 is available in many public libraries and should be used by local historians. Entering Farningham resulted in 2,239 mentions – news, articles, photographs, obituaries, properties for sale, etc., and Horton Kirby 708. Other key words for the locality might have been entered to provide more data. Use it now, for tomorrow many local newspapers will be similarly indexed and available locally.

DAVID KILLINGRAY

Shoreham at War: The People of Shoreham, Kent, 1939-1945. Edited by Edward James. 216 pages, 44 b/w photographs and 6 b/w illustrations. Shoreham and District Historical Society, 2006. Hardback, £9.99 (+ £2.50pp) from Jill Webster, Rising Sun Cottage, Church Street, Shoreham, Kent, TN14 7SD (cheques to be made payable to Shoreham and District Historical Society). ISBN 0-9539543-2-3

Shoreham, Kent, is a village of some 1,000 inhabitants. Situated in the Darent valley, where it cuts between the chalk hills of the North Downs, it lies 6 miles to the north of Sevenoaks. At the outbreak of the Second World War Shoreham was an estate village belonging to Lord Mildmay, which preserved it, unlike some of the neighbouring villages, as a farming community.

The front dust jacket bears the inscription 'We decided to create a monument not in stone but in the spoken words of those who lived through the conflict'. The Shoreham and District Historical Society have managed to do just that. By diligent research the authors have managed to track down many of those who lived in Shoreham during the war years, including original residents, service men and women stationed in the military camps, Land Girls, prisoners of war and evacuees. Paradoxically, many evacuees who were sent to Shoreham found themselves in the middle of what was known as 'jettison alley', where German bombers returning from raids on London ditched any remaining bombs. In addition to the

jettisoned bombs, on one night in February 1944, there was a concentrated raid on the Shoreham area. The village was to gain the reputation as the most bombed rural parish in Britain.

Using oral testimony the Society has set out to cover every aspect of the war years. Many of those interviewed were children at the time and the whole book relies heavily on their oral evidence. It is hard to imagine today that a village like Shoreham, so close to London, was chosen as a place to evacuate school children. They give a poignant insight into what for them was a completely different life from that of the London suburbs. Even for those who had lived their whole lives in the village it was a never to be forgotten experience.

Shoreham's chief industry was farming and as such it was vital to the war effort. Everything possible was done to increase productivity. More efficient farming methods were introduced, such as mechanisation, which meant the end of labour intensive farming. It was to continue once the war was over and for the people of the village it was to herald a drastic change, as many would no longer be able to find work in agriculture. The young people of Shoreham who had left the village to join the armed forces found a completely different world on demobilisation. Some of them were interviewed too. Their experiences are recounted and these give a cross section of the varied jobs carried out during the war. Some never returned, nevertheless they were not forgotten. There is a brief résumé of their lives and war records. Both British and American forces stationed in Shoreham and surrounds replenished the population of the village. The Americans especially were remembered for the plentiful supply of sweets for the children.

The book ends with a chapter on the aftermath of the war, starting with the VE Day celebrations. Prisoners of war were brought to the village to work on the farms. Some never returned to their own homes but stayed on to open businesses in the area and to marry local girls. The last word belongs to one of the children growing up in the village during the war and still a resident. He feels that although the village has changed little, the people have. Instead of the old order of 'them and us', with the important families dominating the life of the inhabitants, the village now has a population that regularly commutes to London but who still want to live in the country. Farming, although still present, is declining.

This is a nostalgic and enjoyable read for people who lived through the Second World War as well as an insight for those too young to remember how people coped during six years of hostility. It gives a snapshot of life in a typical farming community at a point in history where the way of living was to change forever. It is to be commended that the taped interviews have been deposited at the Imperial War Museum. They are a valuable resource for future generations, who will be able to access them.

ANN KNEIF

Historic Sandwich and its Region 1500-1900. By T.L. Richardson. Published by the Sandwich Local History Society, 2006. Paperback. £.6.50 (+ p&p), from The Hon Sec., Dr F.W.G. Andrews, 14 Stone Cross Lees, Sandwich, CT13 0BZ; mailto:frankwgandrews@FreeNet.co.uk. ISBN 0-9542424-3-2.

This book is an overview of the economic and social history of Sandwich from 1500 to 1900 and is the sequel to *Medieval Sandwich and its World.* In this second book Dr Richardson charts the town's transition from the late Middle Ages to the modern world and examines how various factors led to alternating periods of socio-economic decline and prosperity. The medieval prosperity of Sandwich was based on its international trade, but from 1500 onwards, the town's economy and outlook remained essentially regional, as a result of changing trade patterns, the silting up of the harbour and the loss of deep anchorage for large ships, although it remained open to smaller ships plying the coast.

Sandwich is portrayed as a depressed town during the first half of the sixteenth century. The author sees the exit of tradesmen and craftsmen as the cause of demographic collapse by 1560, but he might also have considered the effect of recurrent epidemic disease experienced generally during the first half of the sixteenth century, especially the influenza epidemic of 1558-9. Chapter 1 is concerned with the economic recovery of the town with the arrival of refugee immigrants from the Low Countries, the subsequent rapid rise in the population, the New Draperies cloth industry and market gardening introduced by the immigrants (Bays, however, was not, as he says, a mixed wool and linen cloth, but was made entirely from wool, with a combed worsted warp and a carded woollen weft). The 1590s saw a return of problems: the collapse of the cloth industry through trade dislocation and high mortality due to poor harvests and plague. In Chapter 2, Dr Richardson argues that despite a short-term recovery in the cloth industry, difficulties continued into the seventeenth century with severe plague epidemics, declining population and a recession in the cloth trade. He examines how the decline in the cloth trade was compensated for by the growing coastal trade in grain, malt and garden produce from the town's rich hinterland, stimulated by the growth of the London market. The reader is given a useful account of local agriculture and the products passing through the port of Sandwich. The importance of Sandwich as a coal port is highlighted: coal, shipped in mainly from the north-east, was vital for household heating and brewing in an area where wood was scarce.

Sandwich remained an unhealthy place to live in and death rates were high. Dr Richardson draws on recent research to show how malaria rising from the surrounding marshes led to poor health, susceptibility to infectious disease and a static population. Nevertheless, during the

eighteenth century the town became more prosperous as seaborne trade grew, and the town's streets, buildings and communications by road were improved. The final chapter deals with the economic boom stimulated by the Anglo-French wars, followed by the disastrous effects on town and hinterland of the post-war slump. Analysis of the 1851 census gives the reader a picture of demographic patterns, migration and occupations in mid-Victorian Sandwich. It is depicted as a dreary town, limited in its industry and remaining unhealthy for most of the nineteenth century until public health measures were introduced. Dr Richardson ends this review of the nineteenth century on a more optimistic note as the economy of Sandwich expanded into the leisure and tourism industries, while its local markets flourished and its population increased.

This is an attractively presented book, beautifully illustrated with photographs, maps and tables, which elucidate the text. Quotations from contemporary writers are tellingly used. It is not a comprehensive history of Sandwich from 1500 to 1900 and readers will find little about people, families and social relationships. Nevertheless, it is a useful synthesis of secondary sources including some less well-known research and it is a valuable account of the town's socio-economic history that illuminates the influences on both continuity and change in the town's fortunes.

JANE ANDREWES

Broad Oak, A Kentish Village Reconsidered. Edited by Heather Stennett and K.H. McIntosh. 68 pp. B/w illustrations throughout, maps. 2006. Paperback £9.95 + 75 p+p (cheques payable to the Society of Sturry Villages) from Miss K.H. McIntosh, 1 Sturry Hill, Sturry, Canterbury CT2 0NG. ISBN 978-0-95-44789-3-3.

Elvington. All Snap Tins and Sunshine. The Story of a Kent Mining Village from 1900 to 1986. By the Elvington Oral History Group. Edited by Bettina Crane. 66pp. Paperback. B/w illustrations. ISBN 978-0-9532818-4-8.

These two small studies present a remarkable contrast in approach to the history of two very different Kent villages, but both include the 'voices' and memories of local people. Stennett and McIntosh have drawn contributions from a wide range of prominent local experts to flesh out the villagescape and inhabitants of the long-established village of Broad Oak. The carefully edited transcriptions of interviews are interspersed with a miscellany of thoroughly researched articles, and selected extracts from poetry, parish magazines and official documents, which make this an easy book to dip into. The most frustrating thing about this study though is the lack of any form of preface or introduction. The first entry is an uncontextualised extract from the thirteenth-century rentals followed by an

extract from Wallenberg's *Place Names of Kent* and a contribution by Monica Headley on the Sturry Footpath Group's exploration of the history of the area from their walks. Not until page 6 do we get a small boxed paragraph on 'Broad Oak in Context', which goes some way towards explaining how the study fits in with earlier publications, with 'Acknowledgements' only appearing on page 11. No doubt all the contributors knew the purpose of the volume, but the reader is for some time perplexed about it. Nevertheless the content more than compensates for this apparent lack of focus, with the emphasis on the buildings, people and events of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The article by Graham Kenmir on the progress and setbacks of the proposal to flood the Broad Oak Valley from 1946 to the present day is a timely reminder of how universal issues impact on individual lives. And it is one of these individual voices which makes a surprising link to the Elvington study. In 'Village Voices – 4' (p. 67) Norma Munday, whose father was a miner at Chislet, explains how her family ended up in Broad Oak during the war-time evacuation.

The purpose of the little book on Elvington is made clear from the outset. A University of Kent extra-mural course on oral history led to the formation of the Elvington Oral History Group. The members of the group form both the researchers and some of the primary sources themselves. The introductory preface by Keith Parfitt and the guiding editorship of the course tutor, Dr Bettina Crane, are the only external contributions to this very readable and fascinating study of the establishment, heyday and closure of the Tilmanstone colliery and the changing life of the inhabitants of the purpose-built village established in an area with evidence of very ancient settlement. In 1929 the colliery founder and owner, Richard Tilden-Smith, sent two of his more radical miners to Russia to see for themselves the realities of communism, no doubt to temper their own politics in the face of wage cuts and perceived maladministration. The book naturally ends with the aftermath of the bitter miners' strike of 1984 and the closure of the pits, with the inevitable changes thrust upon the community. The sense of loss some of the, still young, contributors feel is balanced by an optimism for the future. This is not a nostalgic, backward-looking study of collected memories from the very old, but the researches, perceptions and experiences of people whose lives are very much part of the modern community of Elvington.

ELIZABETH EDWARDS