REVIEWS

The Sea and the Marsh. The Medieval Cinque Port of New Romney revealed through archaeological excavations and historical research. By Gillian Draper and Frank Meddens. 143 pp., 64 figs, tables and an appendix. Pre-construct Archaeology Monograph No. 10, 2009. Paperback, £16.95. ISBN 13: 978 0 9542938 9 5; ISBN 10: 0 9542938 9 4.

This interesting book arises from typically rather restricted archaeological interventions in advance of new development, in this case at Southlands School, New Romney, in May 2002 and draws upon what were then the most recent developer-funded projects nearby. Those who are not *au fait* with the developer-funded system of archaeology will find the transparent introductory chapter concerning the background to the project and its methodology informative. It should come as no surprise that developer-funded operations are usually as much of a 'keyhole surgery' nature as possible; saving money for the developer and reducing the impact of ground works on the archaeological resource often means that the view we get of the archaeology is very limited. It is also worth remembering that various archaeological contractors must compete for each project on the basis of proposed budgets. In such circumstances, the production of any volume like this is always an achievement worth recognising.

The trick here has been to make this a book about the medieval history of New Romney itself, and to thereby show how particular excavations contribute to our understanding of that history, rather than producing a more standard 'site report' with a precursory historical background. Much of the volume in fact (chapters 2-7) is provided by historian Gillian Draper, who knows a lot about the development of New Romney and shows it in a comprehensive and readable history. The archaeology of the Southlands School site (Meddens, chapter 8) could run the risk of being somewhat swamped by its historical background, therefore. Yet the writers have developed themes initiated by the ancient coastal nature of the site admirably in the specialist reports that follow on ceramic and metal finds and maritime archaeology and diet, contributions by Chris Jarrett, Geoff Egan and Damian Goodburn, Phillip Armitage and Ian Riddler respectively. These sections provide balance for, and nicely complement, the historical component. The regional and international

scope provided by the ceramics report is particularly impressive, with clearly presented maps and illustrations.

It should be noted, however, that the quality of illustration is not the same throughout the volume, and while maps generated by the project itself (location maps etc.) are clear and very nicely presented, some of the historical maps in particular are quite dull and blurred, as are some of the photographs of buildings and other features, and reproductions of earlier illustrations. This seems a shame in an otherwise good-looking book, especially one which boasts some very good reconstruction art (by Jake Lunt-Davies). The latter work is also imaginatively positioned within the book, ornamenting and helping to realise the archaeological site narrative.

In their concluding discussion the writers continue to draw together the historical and published and unpublished archaeological evidence (often from small-scale developer-funded work that will never be 'published' in its own right) in a chronological narrative. They also use this forum to argue convincingly that the view of New Romney as 'planned and planted simultaneously on a grid plan' [p. 114] suggested by Beresford in 1967 is erroneous. Documentary evidence in particular rather suggests a lengthier and more 'piecemeal' development even in the medieval period.

It is laudable to embed archaeology driven by development in a more complete historical context and, in light of recent contributions to the South East Research Framework on the medieval period, it is a pleasure to see a book that is already contributing to a regional perspective and treating, with developer-funded archaeology, in an interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary way. It will also be noted however that, while the overall history of New Romney presented by this volume will continue to be more or less complete, the archaeological picture it presents has already been extensively added to by further works: the development of New Romney continues.

JAKE WEEKES

Rye Rebuilt: Regeneration and Decline within a Sussex Cinque Port Town, 1350-1660. By David and Barbara Martin, with Jane Clebb and Gillian Draper. 306 pp., 382 b/w & colour plates and illustrations. Domtom Publishing, 2009. Paperback, £30.00. ISBN 978 1 906070 11 3.

Rye: A History of a Sussex Cinque Port to 1660. By Gillian Draper, with contributions by David Martin, Barbara Martin and Alan Tyler. 270 pp., 42 b/w plates and illustrations, 5 colour plates. Phillimore, 2009. Hardback, £25.00. ISBN 978 1 86077 607 6.

In the last decade or so historians of the English medieval town have extended their area of enquiry into new fields. To the older fields of study,

which included late medieval urban decline, structure of urban elites and government, and the character of urban hinterlands, further subjects of enquiry have been added. There has been a growing concern with the materiality of town life – the look and feel of urban landscape, and the character and contents of houses. This has brought about a convergence of interests between historians who have brought new perspectives to this field on the one hand, and archaeologists and architectural historians who have had a long-term interest in these subjects on the other. This emerging concern has raised questions about whether there was a distinctive urban culture, an experience of life and behaviour particular to town-dwellers produced by their greater access to specialist goods, higher incomes and particular forms of buildings for living and work. Such enquiries have to be founded upon the particular examples and detailed local studies have a vital role to play in establishing the character of the medieval town. The towns of the South-East have already become central to this debate. Work on Sandwich (by Sarah Pearson and Catherine Richardson), Greenwich and Gravesend (by Elizabeth Salter) and on New Winchelsea (by David and Barbara Martin), together with studies of New Romney and Sandwich which are nearing publication, and the two new studies of Rye discussed here, will make this one of the most intensively examined regions in England.

The two Rye books are the outcome of a research project initiated by the Romney Marsh Research Trust. However, the history of Rye cannot claim to have been neglected in the past with a substantial entry in the *Victoria County History,* a competent town history published in 1934, a more recent study of Tudor period by Graham Mayhew and a doctoral thesis by Stephen Hipkin followed by a series of papers. Yet it requires no special pleading to justify a new study of the standing historic buildings in a town which is notable for the number that survive. *Rye Rebuilt* is more than just an examination of the buildings, but considers the whole built-environment, including the town plan, infrastructure, defences and religious buildings. The book sets these within the framework of the history of Rye and population trends, and so provides considerable evidence for a study of the materiality of the town.

It should be said straight away that *Rye Rebuilt* establishes the model of how a study of the buildings of a single town should be done. There was no exemplar which the Martins could draw upon. Neither the work of the Norwich survey in the 1980s, nor the study of King's Lynn by Vanessa Parker, nor the work in Lincoln by Stanley Jones had succeeded in integrating the detail of individual buildings into both the history of the town and also into a general picture of urban houses. Indeed, the only comparable study was the Martins' own of Winchelsea, but the decay of that town had been more complete and the survival of buildings consequently much poorer. The challenge was to provide both enough

detail to justify the conclusions to buildings historians and enough synthesis to make the book useful to others. This is done by relegating the detail of individual buildings to Part 2 and providing an introduction to local houses as a whole and those of Rye in particular in Part 1. It succeeds brilliantly and the non-specialist who wants to abstract evidence for the appearance and character of late medieval and post-medieval Rye should be able to do so.

A lucid and convincing story emerges from the study of the urban fabric. Rye, which stands on an island-like site, was unable to expand significantly in any direction. The area of the town was quite sufficient for the population until the late fifteenth century. Indeed, the Martins show that there were a number of empty plots and it was possible for owners to use the available space to construct their houses lengthwise along the street. During the sixteenth century the town's population grew rapidly, probably the result of the collapse of the neighbouring port of Winchelsea. Initially, the expansion could be accommodated by infilling, but further growth led to the sub-division of houses. Had this pressure on space persisted, it is likely that many of the medieval buildings would have been replaced by taller houses. In fact the fortunes of Rye were reversed and from 1590 the population began to fall. The result was that there was little further building in the seventeenth century and a remarkable number of late medieval houses have survived.

It is not very useful to compare the second book, a history of Rye, to the Martins' study. It was evidently aimed at a popular market and gives a more superficial account of the town. For example, the careful and well-considered analysis by the Martins of the level of population and of the dynamics of growth in the early sixteenth century cannot be placed against the very brief comments on the subject by Draper. However, much seems to have been lost in the need to simplify and condense. The lines of argument are sometimes obscure or appear to be without foundation. One example will suffice. Can we really assume that the firewood brought into Rye in the summer was for local industry as the author suggests, rather than domestic purposes [p. 69]? It may not have been required for heating homes at that time of year, but unless the people of Rye lived on salads, it would certainly have been needed for cooking.

These studies of Rye, and particularly the first, contribute to the on-going debates about the character of urban life. *Rye Rebuilt* does more than just provide source material for current historical preoccupations. It establishes a standard to which all future studies of urban fabric must aspire. This work has shown how the study of buildings can be used to contribute to, and indeed to form a central plank in our understanding of town life in the past.

MARK GARDINER

St Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury, Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues 13. Edited by B.C. Barker-Benfield. 3 vols. The British Library in association with The British Academy, 2008. ciii + 2,356 pp., 8 b/w plates + 16 tables. Hardback, £175. ISBN 978 0 7123 4987 1 (full set); 978 0 7123 0926 4 (vol. 1) 978 0 7123 0930 1 (vol. 2); 978 0 7123 0931 8 (vol. 3).

In 1980 Barker-Benfield started work on the first annotated edition of the transcribed medieval catalogue of St Augustine's Abbey library. The opening lines of his Acknowledgements highlight the scholarship of an editor who in 1978 recalled a reference to a fifteenth-century monk called Clement Canterbury on p. lviii of M.R. James, *The Ancient Libraries of Canterbury and Dover* (1903). Barker-Benfield has certainly proved his skills as a researcher over the next thirty years, with this comprehensively annotated and, most importantly, accessible catalogue. Many of the works listed are still extant, more than of most other comparable libraries. The work provides evidence of painstaking research so that the whole does not just include careful textual and visual analysis of the original manuscript and transcribed catalogues but also detailed research into the history of the library catalogue and the people working on it, which has dated its origins a century earlier than previously thought, to the late fourteenth century with additions made throughout the fifteenth century, including a commonplace book by Clement Canterbury.

The introductory essay to the three volumes gives a brief history of St Augustine's Abbey in which Barker-Benfield concludes that throughout its history until the Reformation, St Augustine's never really outgrew its original purpose as a burial church and keeper of holy relics (including books). But within this somewhat limited role grew a magnificent monastic library and a complementary contribution to medieval intellectual history, with Abbot Thomas Findon (1283-1310) expanding the library and building on the early work of Abbot Hadrian and Archbishop Theodore in the late seventh and early eighth centuries. The history of the process of acquisition dates from the earliest books brought from Italy by Augustine himself, to the workings of the scriptorium, the internal arrangements of the library – although many of the books were in fact scattered about the abbey – and the strays and losses. Throughout Barker-Benfield relates his survey to the monks involved in the acquisition and cataloguing of the library to explain how the final catalogue has been arrived at.

Following this general introduction is a more detailed one to the Catalogue, 'BAI, Catalogue of the Library, first compiled between 1375 and 1420, transcribed between 1479 and 1494', the original of which is now in Trinity College Dublin Library (MS 360). The major scribes involved in the copying are listed as HANDS A, B, D and E, with a minor scribe C, and they help to identify the chronology of the work. The

history of the manuscript and its survival from the Dissolution through various, but remarkably few, ownerships including the lay St Augustine's schoolmaster John Twyne in the 1520s and 1530s to one John Dee in the later sixteenth century and then in the mid-seventeenth century to the Archbishop of Armagh, James Usher, after whose death it was acquired by the State and housed in Dublin Castle until it was moved to Trinity College *c.*1670. This clear provenance demonstrates the perceived importance of such a collection in those troubled times.

Before the original index, which is carefully annotated and simply listed IDX 1 to IDX 1632, after which the current BAI listing is given, there is a commentary on the locations register showing where the books were located throughout the Abbey and who borrowed them in the final sixty years or so of the Abbey's existence. The Catalogue itself starts halfway through volume 1 and continues throughout volume 2 and is clearly divided into the following sections, covering the full range of medieval and humanist thought:

> *Biblica, Compendia, Patristica, Theologica* [the largest section], *Homiletica, Sacramenta, Devotionalia, Moralia et Naturalia, Historica, Epistolaria, Scriptores, Aristotelica, Artes, Astronomica, Medica, Logica, Grammatica, Poetae, Miscellanea, Gallica, Hagiographica, Alchemica, Amen, Collectiones, Additiones, Jus Canonicum*

Each section is further subdivided with a commentary, and each entry is given its full transcription with a detailed editorial commentary including format, provenance and history, location of survivals and cross-references.

In addition to appendices and indexes, Volume 3 covers books noted in other sources, such as the *Martyrology of St Augustine's Abbey*, the *Chronicles of Thomas Sprot and William Thorne*, Thomas Elmham's *Speculum Augustinianum* and works by John Leland, together with a monk's borrowing list of the later fourteenth century. As with the catalogue itself each source is dealt with by the same thoroughness underpinning this whole work. Among the appendices is a list of extant manuscripts not in BAI, but originally belonging to St Augustine's, as well as those previously attributed to the Abbey's scriptorium or library, but whose provenance is now disproved, thus extending the overall value of these volumes. The seven indexes making up half of volume 3 and concluding with a general index are all clearly cross-referenced to the catalogue listings and allow the researchers to initiate searches according to their individual preferences.

This major work, completed to a very high standard, will be an extremely useful resource for researchers and bibliophiles alike.

ELIZABETH EDWARDS

Norman Churches in the Canterbury Diocese. By Mary Berg and Howard Jones. 208 pp., b/w plates, plans and illustrations throughout + 33 colour plates. The History Press, 2009. Paperback, £20.00. ISBN 978 0 7524 4776 6.

Kent, despite possessing over 300 medieval parish churches, has been poorly served with literature covering them: Sir Stephen Glynne's one volume published in 1877 from notes taken largely between 1829 and 1857, useful for pre-restoration descriptions; Francis Grayling's two, but very small, volumes of 1913, necessarily brief; H.R. Pratt-Boorman and V.J. Torr's volume, *Kent Churches*, published in 1954 and reprinted 1972 with a wealth of photographs; and John Vigar's useful but slim volume of 1995 (2nd edition 2001), together with individual articles on churches over more than a century in *Archaeologia Cantiana*, and last but not least, John Newman's entries on *every* Kentish church in his two volumes in *The Buildings of Kent* series (*West Kent* 2nd edition, 1976; and *East Kent* 3rd edition, 1983). So Mary Berg's and Howard Jones' offering is a very welcome addition and, although only a volume of some 200 pages, is quite detailed as it is only dealing with the Canterbury diocese and only with 'Norman' churches, that is those of approximately 1060-1200 date.

The core of the book is a gazetteer of no fewer than 96 churches, the most important (19) dealt with in some detail and the remainder (77) in briefer note form. There are very useful chapters on plan forms, towers, portals, arches and fonts and it is perhaps a pity the plans and illustrations from these chapters are not cross-referenced with the gazetteer entries. Equally useful are chapters on 'Architectural language' development over time and building techniques. This book is particularly strong on building materials especially the many types of stone used, very useful for dating purposes, and is also very good on the background history and patronage – an area Mary Berg is particularly interested in (see her excellent article on Patrixbourne Church in *Archaeologia Cantiana*, CXXII, 2002) – who *were* the people who financed all these new churches?

The reviewer found the many ground plans very helpful; it always amazes him how many locally produced church guides fail to provide a proper scale plan of their church with the different periods of construction clearly indicated. The reconstructions of the twelfth-century appearance of some of the buildings (Brabourne, Brook, Chislet, Northbourne, Patrixbourne, St Margaret at Cliffe and Sandwich) together with the plans are very instructive and will be invaluable to many users of this book who may not be particularly skilled in elucidating the original form of a church which may subsequently have had many alterations/additions made to it. One criticism is that the church plans are not done to a fixed scale – in fact it appears slightly different for all the blocks of plans in illustrations 2-9 in Chapter 2. Is this a printing problem? A printing error has presumably also caused the date keys to be wrong on the plans for Brabourne, Chislet,

Northbourne and St Margaret at Cliffe – confusing for the uninitiated! But also useful are the many scale drawings of doorways, chancel arches etc.; here the majority are to the same scale except Eastry (west door), Norton (north door) and Wychling (north door) which seem to be at a 50 per cent larger scale.

Elsewhere in this book the authors have looked at possible stylistic links between east Kent's Norman parish churches and the two major churches in the area (Christ Church and St Augustine's) which might have influenced building style, and their conclusion is similar to that of previous authors – there do not seem to be many or even any! However, they have presented a good case for stylistic links with Normandy and this is, of course, reinforced by the documentary evidence of many native Norman lords holding lands in both Kent and Normandy.

It would have created a sense of 'completeness' if the authors had covered the whole of Kent. 'The Norman Churches of Kent' has a certain ring to it, but this would have involved a lot more work – 400-odd more churches, though few as important as east Kent's best, and the Rochester diocese has been quite well covered by Malcolm Thurlby's article in *Archaeologia Cantiana*, CXXIV, 2004.

Although there are some typographical errors, most of which are of no import, entries such as Hedala for Hedda [p. 166] or Hancock for Hadcock [p. 177] need correcting as do some compass points, for example Brook's original Norman north nave window is at the west end of the nave not the east, and Betteshanger's south door should read north door (although, confusingly, it was originally the south door!). Also confusing is the very fine Normal portal at Hythe described as a 'north west' door – west face of the north Transept would be clearer.

Basically this volume should have been more thoroughly proof-read and maybe many of the errors, including those in the Glossary and Bibliography, would have been avoided. Is this in part due to the current pressure and responsibility publishers and printers put on authors?

In conclusion it is a pity these errors have occurred because they mar what is otherwise a splendid book – a volume I wish I had written – and congratulations go to Mary Berg and Howard Jones for all their hard work and scholarship in producing it. This is a very welcome addition to the literature on Kent, and one highly recommended to other readers.

DAVID EAVES

The Dying and the Doctors: the Medical revolution in Seventeenth-century England. By Ian Mortimer. The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, 2009. 232pp., 1 colour plate, 13 figures, 72 tables. Hardback, £50. ISBN 978 0 86193 302 0.

In *The Dying and the Doctors*, which is the most recent volume in the Royal Historical Society 'Studies in History' series, Ian Mortimer examines the changes in medical and nursing practices for the period 1570-1720 based on research from probate accounts. The title is misleading as only in five counties have sufficient numbers of these accounts survived to be of value. Fortunately for those interested in the social history of Kent, the largest number of documents are from the county and from east Kent in particular. Consequently much of Mortimer's research is based on this locality. In addition, with coastline on three sides, East Kent provides a distinct geographical region for study. The book contains a wealth of figures and tables which enhance and complement the text. All of the figures contain data on Kent alone, as do 48 of the tables, while many of the remainder compare Kent with Lincolnshire, Berkshire, Sussex and Wiltshire.

Probate accounts frequently contain information on the type of medical and nursing care provided to the dying, by whom it was provided, the length of time it was required and the costs involved. Mortimer's detailed interpretation reveals the increase over the century in services not just to the rich but to the poorer classes. In order to determine their status he divides the deceased into four categories of social class based on the value of the estate and occupation of the individual. Interestingly this increase in medical provision did not result in a corresponding increase in numbers of medical practitioners who instead were more evenly distributed across the region rather than being concentrated in the major towns of Kent. Changes occurred 20-30 years earlier here than in the other counties studied.

Examination of the types of medical assistance given to the dying shows the interchangeable descriptions of the medical practitioners attending. The same man could be listed as physician or surgeon depending on the treatment provided on a specific occasion. Comparison of holders of diocesan licences to practise with the named individual practitioners in probate accounts showed that many of the latter were unlicensed. Several examples of female practitioners were discovered with the evidence suggesting that they mainly treated skin and throat disorders, children's problems and sore and injured limbs. Terms used for nursing care changed over the 17th century: from the earlier 'attending' and 'watching' by poorer women, there was an increasingly more formal approach and by 1700 nursing was beginning to be recognized as an occupation. Some examples of male nursing attendants are given and the possibility of men

being more suited to tending cases of mental illness, violence or contagion is discussed. A comparison of the treatment of plague and smallpox shows a divergence in the way they were treated by the end of the century.

One of Mortimer's strengths is his explanation of his methodology and his objective analysis of his sources. Throughout the book he is careful to differentiate between clear-cut conclusions and less well defined areas, as well as explaining limitations of the probate accounts. There is a good bibliography and excellent referencing of sources. Case studies and extracts from original documents add to the appeal of the book and many details are given of individuals such as the appropriately named surgeon, Comfort Starr. Descriptions of payment in kind (such as clothing or in one instance, a cow), or details of the sealing up of plague houses illuminate the conditions and tragedies of the time.

The Dying and the Doctors is a study set in a century which saw not only major advances in scientific theories but also the consequent development and improvement in medical treatment, and Mortimer has shown how this impacted culturally and socially on all levels of society. Although there was a decline in the belief in prayer alone to cure illness, a cultural shift led to a symbiotic relationship of religion with medical intervention. Ian Mortimer is an independent historian and an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Exeter and consequently his book is at the academic end of the spectrum. However *The Dying and the Doctors* will not fail to intrigue anyone with a serious interest not just in the social history of medicine but also of Kent.

JENNY PRICE

[See also the article by Ian Mortimer on medical personnel practising in Kent, 1560-1730, in *Archaeologia Cantiana*, CXXVI, 2006. Ed.]

The Medway Valley: a Kent Landscape Transformed. By Andrew Hann, with contributions from John Newman, John Vigar and Sandra Dunster. 182 pp., 102 figures, 6 illustrated panels. Victoria County History, Phillimore, 2009. Paperback, £14.99. ISBN 978 1 86077 600 7.

This important, wide-ranging and well written book is one of a new Victoria County History series covering the whole country, financed largely by the Heritage Lottery Fund as an educational project entitled England's Past for Everyone. While it includes a Foreword by Dr Joan Thirsk, a member of the Management Committee, Dr Jane Longmore, who organised the project and chaired the Committee, then Head of Humanities at Greenwich University, is not mentioned. The writing of the book benefited from the advice of the VCH staff at the Institute of Historical Research and the accommodation of Greenwich University.

It concerns industrialisation in eight parishes in the Lower Medway Valley, from Frindsbury and Strood southwards to Aylesford between about 1750 and 1900, and is to be followed by a book on the Medway Towns, 1550-1900. It is notable as a collaboration involving both professional historians and over forty volunteers. The latter surveyed buildings, took photographs and collected a mass of data from printed and manuscript sources such as the censuses, local newspapers, wills and estate records. Some of the source material is being made available on the EPE website.

In 1750 the area was farmland with some river trade, and most of it remained agricultural despite the growth of manufacturing alongside or near the Medway in all the parishes. Much lay in large estates, and farms became bigger and employed more workers as was usual in the period. Wheat was more important than barley and oats, and hops than fruit and market gardening. Industrialisation was the product of locally available chalk for limeburning and later cement, clay for bricks, pure water for paper making and sheltered anchorages on the Medway for barge and shipbuilding. London was the great market, cheaply supplied by barges using the Medway and Thames. New techniques increased output and encouraged the consolidation of businesses, most strikingly in cement manufacture. Workers were drawn by higher wages than on farms. Contiguity, and engineering firms making machinery, linked the various industries.

The large landowning families remained while other landowners were sometimes replaced by men who had made fortunes in manufacturing locally or in business elsewhere. They often led social life and administered, acting as patrons or presidents of local associations, founding schools, almshouses and reading rooms, being JPs, MPs and even Sheriffs. The housing, earnings, poor relief and entertainments of working people are rightly given much attention.

Thirty-five per cent of the population of the eight parishes, of which about two-thirds were Anglican, attended church and chapel when the religious census was taken in 1851. Though the proportion of church attendants had fallen by 1900, the population had grown and the number of non-conformists swollen particularly. Medieval Anglican churches were improved and new ones built, helped especially by landowners and manufacturers. The Methodists, Congregationalists, Baptists and other Free Churches sometimes built two or even three churches in succession for their growing congregations.

A thorough chapter considers the built environment of three villages, Aylesford, Eccles, where the Burham Lime and Cement Co. of Thomas Cubitt needed workers' housing from the 1850s, and Snodland, where the larger employers were the papermaker C.T. Hook (1854-77) and the cement manufacturer William Lee and his son-in-law. There are detailed

architectural descriptions of the dwellings, the names of landowners, developers and builders are stated, but there is almost no material on prices.

The eight parishes were closely linked by family connections, land-ownership, large farm holdings and short distance mobility for work as servants, apprenticeship or employment in brickmaking, limeburning and cement manufacture. The last created a large migrant population in the later nineteenth century, causing a housing shortage in the 1860s which mostly disappeared by the 1880s. While for quality goods and services inhabitants of the southern parishes were drawn to Maidstone, and those in the north were served by Rochester and Chatham, cheaper products were bought locally. There were almost no professional men apart from clergy, and there were just the basic retailers and craftsmen. As well as absorbing most of the bricks, cement and paper, London supplied much of the investment in the great late nineteenth-century firms. By the 1880s and 1890s many thousands of hop and fruit pickers came from London in August by rail.

The last chapter, parts of which have an almost lyrical nature, discusses the effect of twentieth-century industrialisation on the landscape. Although the brick and cement works have gone, one sees most of the mainly working-class terraced housing now occupied by commuters. Manufacturing has left striking physical scars, in the form of chalk quarries and claypits.

It is not an exhaustive study of the social and economic history of the parishes; more research is needed on financial matters. However, this is characteristic of VCH topographical volumes for other counties, on account of the relatively limited time available to Editors. It is most attractive. As well as the numerous illustrations a special feature are six panels with a large picture and a short description.

CHRISTOPHER CHALKLIN

The Lost Powder Mills of Leigh. By Chris Rowley. Privately published, 2nd edition 2009. 240 pp. ISBN 978 0 9539340 1 0, 3rd edition now available, price £23.95 post paid to UK destinations, direct from the author at Oak Cottage, The Green, Leigh, near Tonbridge, Kent, TN11 8QL.

In appearance traditional gunpowder factories were like no others, and Leigh was no exception. Mills, but no dark Satanic ones. They were invariably places of great intrinsic beauty. In disuse, they remain so today. There was no development control system when they were built, so proto-planners could not claim any of the credit. As in the case of many historic buildings, like barns, their beauty reflected their functional needs.

Before the days of steam engines, a reliable water supply was needed to power their machinery. Several processes were involved, so buildings were laid out in succession alongside the watercourses that provided their power. Only small buildings were needed for each process. To reduce the risk of blast damage in the event of a 'blow' (explosion) they needed to be well spaced out. Further to reduce the risk, trees were planted between them – usually forest trees, but sometimes – in Kent at least – fruit trees, so that a factory could serve both as an industrial plant and a commercial orchard. Ironically perhaps, serenity reigned supreme. Hence on a visit to one Kent factory in 1899, a London journalist mistook it from the distance for a game reserve.

In England powder was first made – by 1515 – at the Tower of London. Commercial manufacture began at Rotherhithe by 1535. In its early days it was concentrated mainly in the South-East, at places like Chilworth (Surrey), Dartford, Faversham and Waltham Abbey (Essex). Later it developed in areas like Cornwall and the Lake District where the product was needed for rock blasting purposes. For some of us powder conjures up visions only of warfare, but without its ability to blast routes for canals and railways the Industrial Revolution could never have taken place.

The Leigh factory opened in 1813 as a response to the Napoleonic Wars. Like others of its kind, its nucleus was the site of a former corn mill, the Ramsbury mill, which had been at work since at least 1579. From the Medway it enjoyed a good water-supply; and from the Medway Navigation a convenient link to the open sea. It closed in 1934, as did the three Faversham factories, when ICI, the then owners, saw war-clouds gathering and decided to concentrate production at Ardeer, their site near Saltcoats in Ayrshire. Production there ceased in 1976, and no powder is now made in the UK, though demand remains.

When an explosives factory closes, it needs to be decontaminated. Machinery is scrapped, masonry is demolished to its footings, and timber buildings are burnt out. What remained of Leigh was something of a jungle, and it attracted little attention until Dr David Hansell, a chemist and manager of the chemical company on the site, began taking an interest in it over 20 years ago. Nationwide interest in the history and archaeology of the industry had begun in the late 1960s when the Faversham Society rescued from the jaws of the bulldozer, and restored and opened to the public, the 18th-century Chart Gunpowder Mill, which proved to be the oldest of its kind in the world.

A talk given by David Hansell to the Leigh Historical Society encouraged it to undertake further research into the local powder mills, and this book is the triumphant outcome. It is exemplary in every respect, and should be read not only by those interested in the particular topic but by anyone contemplating a similar venture. Chris Rowley, the author, is a Mancunian Cambridge graduate who made his career in television. He

writes with disarming modesty but has clearly taken good care to master his subject.

He would be the first to acknowledge that the Society project was a group one, involving many members and outsiders who willingly, and generously, gave time to it. Money was needed, though not a vast amount, and the 'investments' made by the Heritage Lottery Fund's Local Heritage Initiative and the Nationwide Building Society have paid handsome dividends.

The book is well planned, and to ensure that it tells as complete a story as possible no stone has been left unturned. A straightforward historical account is followed by twelve useful appendices, including one on the original corn mill and another on the site's botanical interest. There is a comprehensive index. Design, by Amanda Hawkes, and printing, by Headley Brothers in Ashford, are of the highest standard. Illustrations, some in colour, are generous and of outstanding quality. The fact that within the space of a year a third edition has been called for speaks volumes.

Complementing the published book is another which is not on sale but will be distributed to libraries and local history societies – *The Lost Powder Mills of Leigh – Part 2 – Site Gazetteer* – ISBN 978 0 9539340 2 7, in a larger A4 format, with 146 pages. Lavishly illustrated in colour and black and white, this is a detailed record mainly of the archaeology of the site, to which Paul Bennett, Director of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust, has made a substantial contribution. Again, this is a model of its kind.

Complementing the two books in turn is a 40-minute video documentary produced for the project by an old friend of Chris Rowley, Peter Williams, who lives in Boughton-under-Blean.

ARTHUR PERCIVAL

William Cuffay Medway's Black Chartist. By Bruce Aubry. The Pocock Press, Rochester, 2008. 22 pp., illustrated. Paperback, np. ISBN 09545785 4 6.

Walter Tull, 1888-1918: Officer, Footballer. All the guns in France couldn't wake me. By Phil Vasili. 256 pp. 25 b/w illustrations. The Raw Press, Mitcham, Surrey, 2010. Paperback, £20. ISBN 978 0 9563954 0 5.

Here are two publications about two Black Men of Kent, one born in Chatham in 1788, the other one hundred years later in Folkestone. As a maritime county, Black people of African origin or descent were to be found living throughout Kent, particularly in the towns close to the metropole, along the Thames, and in the lower Medway valley. Their

number increased from the late seventeenth-century onwards as Britain's maritime trade increased with Africa and the Americas. Many Black people who came to Britain were sailors, servants, and artisans, but there were also well-educated men and women. Four books by Black writers were published in London between 1773 and 1789.

William Cuffay has renown as a Chartist leader. The son of a former slave from St Kitts, he was small in stature and physically deformed, but great in spirit. He trained as a tailor and moved to London where he embraced radical working-class causes. During the 1830s and 1840s Cuffay actively promoted most of the democratic issues of the time and emerged as a leading figure of Physical Force Chartism, being one of the delegates to the Convention of 1848. The authorities feared a rising, and Cuffay was certainly revolutionary. He was arrested, tried and sentenced to transportation for life. In Tasmania, Cuffay, a ticket of leave man, later joined by his wife, continued to be a radical voice in the freer political environment of a distant colony. Aubry's pamphlet is helpful in providing a documented background to Cuffay's father and also to the career of William, 'A Journeyman/A taylor black and free', as Thackeray described him in a poem. This brief useful pamphlet needs to be more widely known, although it is a shame that it lacks adequate references and the pages are unnumbered.

Walter Tull's father was from Barbados and settled in Folkestone where he married a local woman. Several children were born and the family worshipped in the local Wesleyan chapel. Tragedy struck the children of the family in the mid 1890s. First their mother died, then, following his remarriage, also their father, leaving his new wife with six children under the age of 14. The family depended on parish relief and it was decided that Walter Tull and his elder brother Edward (who subsequently became a dentist) should go into a Methodist children's home in Bethnal Green. Vasili's well-researched book deals sensitively with this fraught period of young Walter Tull's life. By 1907 he emerged from the rather impersonal but caring home, and within two years he had begun to make his name as a professional footballer. Tull played for Spurs and Northampton Town, on occasions touring overseas with the teams, while also enduring the regular racist taunts of certain spectators. On this period of Tull's life Vasili is particularly knowledgeable having previously written two excellent books on Black footballers and sportspeople; two chapters in his Tull biography complement this.

In 1914 Tull enlisted in the Middlesex Regiment. He served on the Western Front, including experiencing the terrible carnage of the Somme campaign, then on the Piave Front in Italy, where he was recommended for the Military Cross. Tull returned to the war in France where he was killed in action in 1918. A particular distinction is that Tull became an

officer, receiving a temporary commission in 1917. This was exceptional in that King's Regulations, as outlined in the *Manual of Military Law*, stated that officers had to be 'of pure European descent', while a further condition was that no 'negro or person of colour ... [could] exercise any actual command or power'. In a few instances in the First World War these racist restrictions were ignored due to the exigencies of war and the acute shortage of officers.

Vasili's research on Tull is impressive and extensive. He has hunted down material held by the family, burrowed away in local newspapers and sports magazines, interrogated institutional and private accounts, and made intelligent use of official documents both local and national. In rescuing Tull's life from obscurity he offers a portrait of a brave and resolute man who overcame childhood misfortune, shrugged off the frequent abuse directed at him because of his colour, and fought gallantly for his country. Perhaps Folkestone should take action to honour this son of the town.

DAVID KILLINGRAY

Faversham A New History. Historical Gleanings relative to the Town of Faversham and Parishes adjoining. By Edward Crow. Edited and transcribed by Peter Tann. Illustrations throughout. CD-ROM. £15 available from the author peter.tann@btinternet.com, or The Faversham Society, 10-13 Preston Street; Faversham ME13 8NS, Tel. 01795 534 542. ISBN 978 0 09524563 2 2.

The plaque on the house in Market Place/Middle Row notes 'Edward Crow Historian of Faversham and Mayor in 1837 lived and worked here', as had his father, a clocksmith before him. He compiled his manuscript historical gleanings up to the end of his life but never had them published. Tann in his excellent introductory essay to his very diligent transcription of Crow's work argues that Crow probably found the pursuit and accumulation of knowledge and facts more satisfying than producing a final piece of work. There is certainly a great deal of the nineteenth-century antiquarian archaeologist and historian about the very lengthy work, but as Tann demonstrates he also possessed strong elements of the diarist, the historian of church architecture and a thoughtful and curious topographer. Unlike his father he was not a geologist, but was more interested in the dynamics of the (built) landscape and property ownership. Nevertheless, alongside his substantial compilation of material, Crow was also a commentator who was not afraid to put forward his, largely conservative, views on the influences of change.

In addition to the history from the first Faversham Charter to 1833, ending with the debates over Parliamentary reform, what Crow's work does is give the reader an insight into the preoccupations of local interests

in the early nineteenth century. Even in his narratives of the late medieval period his nineteenth-century ideologies become clear, for example in his discussion of the Abbey from its foundations by Stephen to the demise under Henry VIII, when he sees the king's 'greedy passions' as only marginally worse than the 'subtelty and ... avarice of his father', Henry VII [p.85]. Indeed Crow's prose is a mixture of generally accepted historical chronology and some fairly flowery narrative comment. On the rule of Hengist he says:

> Under his peaceful reign the forest scene became in part enlivened by a Saxon population who were not deficient in the useful arts, brought from the bleak but enlightened shores of Scandinavia; the Rutupine coast was gradually peopled, and its embowering trees shaded the vassals home [p. 59].

While Crow deals in great detail with the history of the Abbey, its role in the town and all the related litigation, his study of the Parish Church is essentially a very careful buildings history, but filled with lamentations about the 'ruthless ignorance of the past', both Henrician and Cromwellian, but with even greater condemnation accorded to the changes of 1754 which 'swept away the [900 years] of Saxon remains of this venerable fabric' [p. 118]. Both the sections on the Abbey and the Parish Church are followed by comprehensive lists of office holders, registers, properties, benefactors, tenants etc., which in the case of the Abbey confirm the extent of its interests and responsibilities. And then on p. 103 we get another touch of the personal observations in a description of the ancient walnut tree 'contiguous to the church and abbey which judging from its great proportions, in age it must soon have sent out vigorous arms to cover and shade the desolate ruins beneath its gay green foliage'.

Crow's history stops just before the introduction of the New Poor Law in 1834, but he does justice to the old Elizabethan Poor Law regulations and the gradual changes in the eighteenth century to the Union Workhouse originally established in 'Mr Napleton's house in West Street' in 1729 on a lease of £10 per annum. The Creek, the fisheries, customs and excise, the gunpowder works, benefactors, the grammar school and all aspects of Faversham's developments are covered with the same diligence and enthusiasm, and the more contemporary issues of Nonconformist Chapels and the Banks also get full attention, including the collapse of 'Tappenden's Faversham Bank in 1814 after 25 years service' [p. 189].

But Crow does not restrict his study to the town of Faversham. He also includes the surrounding parishes which gives the reader a rare opportunity to compare the urban and rural through the eyes of one observer. It was a pleasure to read the useful discussion of Hegdale chalkpit between 'Queen Court, Ospringe and the Whitehill Road', which was a great fascination in the reviewer's childhood, and to learn that this had formerly been one

of the Kentish deneholes, which Crow thought were difficult to interpret, believing their origin predated the use of chalk as a soil improver. [For a full up-to-date discussion on deneholes see Dan Tuson, *The Kent Downs*, pp. 97-101, reviewed below.]

It is impossible here to summarise everything that Crow covered, but his antiquarian tendencies have provided a wealth of information for the researcher. Tann's transcription work and the CD format will be very useful for those who are now happier using computers than managing time in archives, and the introduction gives a clear and contextualised summary of the strengths and limitations of Crow's work. The whole CD is enhanced by a very welcome bibliographical essay by Arthur Percival from Thomas Southouse in the sixteenth century right up to recent archaeological, historical and buildings investigations, concluding that the modern comprehensive history of Faversham is still to be written. At this stage it would be good to look forward to a hard copy of Tann's work, which although very clearly displayed, is not very easy to navigate, with no link from the contents list to the relevant sections, and operating only a simple word and page search – and there are 487 pages.

ELIZABETH EDWARDS

Chatham Dockyard, 1815-1865. The Industrial Transformation. Edited by Philip MacDougall. xvii + 402 pp. Ashgate, Farnham, Surrey, for the Navy Records Society, 2009. Hardback, £65. ISBN 978 0 7546 6597 7.

One of the great industries of Kent involved the construction, maintenance, refitting and repair of medium sized warships for the Royal Navy, work undertaken principally at the Royal Dockyard in Chatham. This required a labour force both skilled and unskilled which contracted and expanded particularly in response to the demands of war, and also other labour, including convicts, used in the expansion of the dockyard itself. Chatham provided a sheltered site on the Medway which was also near to supplies of local timber. Constant work was required to prevent shoaling of the river, partly solved by building the new Rochester bridge.

If naval ships at sea were floating secretariats then the business of planning, assembling and preparing materials to build the vessels was also the subject of detailed correspondence and note. In this volume Philip MacDougall draws on the rich range of official sources primarily in the National Archives and at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, on local newspaper reports, extracts from *Hansard*, and memoirs to describe in great detail the expansion of the Chatham dockyard in the fifty years after 1815 and the move from wooden sailing ships to steam-driven ironclads such as the frigate *Achilles*. This was indeed, as Carlyle called it, 'the mechanical age', with steam-driven saws, lathes, and hammers.

By the 1860s Chatham dockyard had spearheaded new technology and a revolution had taken place in shipbuilding, and ultimately in naval warfare. The first steam vessel was launched in September 1832, the transition to screw and paddle taking place 12 years later, and then to screw-driven vessels from 1846 onwards. It is an exciting story and one that MacDougall handles with deep knowledge and considerable skill, selecting and presenting in seven chapters over 400 documents describing the changes that took place with increasing rapidity to transform both ship-building and dockyard management.

Each chapter has a brief introduction. The first chapter looks at shipbuilding and repair, the second at 'Improving the facilities' which partly focuses on the extension of the dockyard to cover many more acres of neighbouring land. The third chapter deals with manufacturing and the move to steam power, while chapters four to seven look at questions of storage, security and materials; economics and the workforce; and local, and central management. The period was one of great transition in shipbuilding as indicated by the launch of the *Howe*, a 1st rate wooden ship with 120 guns, in September 1815, and nearly 50 years later that of the *Achilles*, armour clad, screw-driven, with a displacement of nearly 10,000 tonnes.

A volume of documents, selected and introduced by a professional hand, provide essential tools for historians and, in the case of this particular book, for local historians who work on the lower Medway valley. Of course, such volumes are no substitute for going to the original sources; indeed, they should excite further questions and spur archival research. In this case it would be interesting to know more about the sources of hardwood timber for shipbuilding, and on the supply of stone for the expanding dockyard: how and where were these essential materials bought, what did they cost, how were they transported, and so on? And a further observation: local historians in Chatham will have no difficulty navigating their way around the geography of the area. For those less familiar with the lower Medway valley a few maps, plans and diagrams would have added greatly to this very useful book.

DAVID KILLINGRAY

The Kent Downs. By Dan Tuson. 191 pp., 35 colour plates and b/w illustrations throughout. Tempus Publishing, 2007. Paperback, £15.99. ISBN 978 0 7524 4405 5.

This celebratory study of the history and development of the landscape of the Kent Downs, since 1968 protected by its status as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), is a delightful and informative book which should give pleasure to those with a wide range of interests

in the evolution of our natural environment. Although the reader can 'dip' into the book, the whole is presented within a tight and effective, mainly chronological structure, with each chapter bringing a new facet of the Downs to the fore.

The early chapters deal with the landscape and geology followed by the first impact of man on the Downs. The title of the introductory chapter, 'The Chalk Country' brings the essence of the Downs straight to the reader, and it is the chalk, and its associated soils, flora and fauna, which have determined the nature of man's occupation of these hills and valleys. Tuson highlights the particular characteristics of the different Downland landscapes: the Downs themselves, the chalk escarpment at the channel coastal edge and the dry valleys, and throughout the volume draws on those who, before him, have also celebrated the landscape in literature: Richard Church, H.E. Bates and Jocelyn Brook to name but a few.

Within his general overviews of themes and periods, Tuson has included detailed studies of topics of particular interest, so in the chapter on the geology 'Chalk and Flints' we are given, *inter alia*, a clear definition and history of the evolution of flints and their use for tools, gun flints and building materials, and in another text box the outcome of the nineteenth-century controversy on the early Wealden geology. Following this, 'Long Barrows and Lynchets' brings early man to the Downs introducing the reader to the eoliths dating to some 2.4m years ago, the long barrows, including a short account of the early Victorian excavations at Holborough Knob near Snodland, early Iron Age occupation and the creation of lynchets which now seem so much a natural part of the roll and fold of the landscape. In chapter 3, 'Steads and Stoles' Tuson deals comprehensively with settlement and evolution throughout the recorded history of the Downs to the twentieth century, bringing attention to the impact of very local circumstances so that in Cobham in the thirteenth century the land was disgavelled when holdings were reduced 'below subsistence level' [p. 57].

Having dealt with the immediate visual and recorded impact of settlement, including place and field names Tuson goes on to evaluate the importance, struggles and successes of farming in the downs in 'Fields, Folds and Furrows' dwelling particularly on the pressures nineteenth-century innovation and twentieth century economic demands have put on the traditional 'sheep and corn enterprise'. Detailed studies of dewponds, chalkpits and limekilns, and deneholes, together with the flowers of the cornfield, show how the farmers worked with the difficult landscape.

The next three chapters bring the Downs to life through an examination of the treatment of the landscape and its people in art and literature; the customs and legends which developed while the hills and valleys were in reality as remote as they can still seem to be today, when actually only a short car ride away from towns and motorways [see review of

Percy Maylam's The Kent Hooden Horse, below]; and finally an expert discussion on the wide range of flora and fauna, in a chapter entitled with delightful alliteration, 'Skylarks, Skippers and Scabious'. The final chapter is a reflection on the fragility of the landscape and Tuson believes that, while a balance with the modern world needs to be borne in mind, there is 'an ever constant reminder of the need to safeguard this endearing landscape for ours and future generations' [p. 168].

Tuson's skill as a photographer has provided illustrations which are true to his own interpretation of the Downs and demonstrate how the real lover of a particular landscape will look at the small detail with as much joy as the broader scenery, together with the impact and integration of the man-made into the natural. This is a book which can usefully be consulted before a visit to the Downs, taken to accompany a visit or can clarify the landscape after a visit. And for those living in this special landscape it provides a deeper understanding and knowledge.

ELIZABETH EDWARDS

Percy Maylam's The Kent Hooden Horse. Edited by Richard Maylam, Mick Lynn and Geoff Doel. The History Press, 2009. 128 pp., 29 b/w plates. Paperback, £14.99. ISBN 978 0 7524 4997 5.

Percy Maylam (1865-1939) was a solicitor practising in Canterbury and closely associated with the English Folklore Society. This new edition is a superb embellishment of his orginal 1909 book, *The Hooden Horse, an East Kent Christmas Custom* (now priced at over £350). The decline of the isolation of agricultural communities and the relative ease of nineteenth-century travel and photography provided the opportunity to record this fascinating custom which was already in decline. The origins of the Hooden Horse are complex and may have come from pagan fertility rites associated with the Green Man, Morris dancing and recognition of the value of the horse in farming. Although there is evidence of connections with traditions in the Far East and, closer to home, in Cheshire, South Wales, Salisbury and Minehead, there are also associations with German customs, and 'hooden' may have association with the Nordic god Woden. The influence of the early Scandinavian incursions of Hengist and Horsa (AD 449) may provide an explanation of the prevalence of the custom in east Kent, and its absence from Ashford and the Romney Marsh, although there is a public house now named *The Hooden Horse* in Great Chart. As early as 690 the archbishop was condemning the practice, and the pagan overtones were still attracting mild criticism from the Victorian clergy.

The second section of the book deals with the uniquely Kentish law of gavelkind, where Maylam gives a very lucid interpretation of the inheritance law. Maylam was strongly opposed to the abolition of

gavelkind, and it was not until the Land Registration Act 1925 that it was finally brought to an end.

Percy Maylam would surely be very proud of the new edition of which his nephew, Richard, is a co-editor. The quality of the format is excellent and the additional commentaries, carefully distinguishing between speculation and verified historical fact, are an enhancement to an already thorough investigation conducted over a century ago.

PETER DRAPER

Speldhurst Church: its Story and its Windows. By Guy Hitchings. 48pp., b/w plans and illustrations. Paperback £3.50, inc. postage, from the author, Spring Bank, Speldhurst, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 0PD. Tel 01892 862293. Proceeds to St Mary's Church.

St Peter's, Whitstable: a history of the Church, Parish and People. By David Wright. 32 pp., b/w illustrations. Paperback, £3.50, inc. postage, from the author, davideastkent@aol.com, Tel. 01227 275931, cheques payable to St Peter's Church and D.C.C.

These two polished pamphlet studies of two very different parish churches reflect the love and enthusiasm of both the authors for their chosen churches. Although there may have been a late Anglo-Saxon church at Speldhurst, the present building dates to the eleventh century, but as with quite a number of churches its current representation is largely nineteenth century, not only because of the widespread work on churches, but mainly because of a devastating fire following a lightning strike in 1791. The core of Hitchings' study is the collection of impressive stained glass windows of which ten of the fifteen are the result of collaboration between William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones. Hitchings also gives careful accounts of the extant memorials and the woodwork '(and other matters)', concluding with the exterior and churchyard with a tantalising hint of further work to come.

Wright's study of St Peter's by contrast is as much a social study of a developing late nineteenth-century community as of the church building. The original 'mission church' was set up in the Waverley Temperance Hotel to serve the needs of the growing population in the Victorian terraces which had sprung up just behind the harbour area and emerged as distinct from the older parishes of St Alphege's, Seasalter whose new church is in what is now the centre of Whitstable High Street, and All Saints on the higher ground inland behind modern Tankerton. A map of the whole of Whitstable and detail of the parish of St Peter's would have been a useful addition. The author has been able to draw on a wealth of sources to give a lively picture of the building of the church and the

activities of the parishioners, including personal reminiscences. Both booklets are very well presented but a larger font size in the St Peter's study would have been welcome.

History in a City Street: St Margaret's, Canterbury. By Geoffrey Pike and Michael Crux. 2008. 56p pp., b/w illustrations throughout. Paperback, £8.00. ISBN 1 899 177 18 3.

This very attractively produced study of St Margaret's Street, Canterbury, is a record of the work undertaken by a research group nearly twenty-five years ago, and it is unclear whether recent studies undertaken during changes in occupation of the buildings have been taken into account. The study is as the publicity says, a 'stroll along the street, regarding each building in turn for its architectural and historical features', and the helpful maps and street plans, old and new, and inclusion of modern and older street numberings make it clear which buildings are being described. The work, as to be expected of a research group with very sound credentials, is fully referenced and the reader going out to explore the buildings described would need several days to get even near appreciating the depth of the history in the buildings of this short street. The Fish Market, the Music Hall and the Assembly Rooms (now Lloyds Bank) are all there, together with *The Fountain Hotel* which was destroyed by bombing in 1942. The authors have not stopped at the façades but have examined the occupiers and there is a fascinating entry on Picknot Alley/Staines Place running behind St Margaret's Street from the church to the High Street.

Snodland and District through Time. By Andrew Ashbee. Amberley Publishing, 2009. 96 pp., 180 illustrations, mainly colour. Paperback, £12.99. ISBN 978 1 84868 658 8.

In essence a collection of photographs of Snodland 'then and now', in practice the result is very much more. The choice of pictures and the captions help to create a good understanding of the changes in society and the local economy as well as in the styles of architecture. Obviously a book for locals, but a map would help those with a less detailed knowledge of Snodland. Having had the privilege of walking around some of the illustrated areas under the guidance of the author, it is possible to appreciate fully the skill and care that has gone into putting this collection together. The contrasts shown on pp. 42-3 demonstrate the balance achieved by Ashbee with the bomb damaged Malling Road surgery now restored to its former glory, but the impressive foursquare house, *Woodbank*, at the upper end of the Malling Road replaced by eleven late twentieth-century houses with the charming frontage completely lost. The quality of reproduction

of the older photographs and the choice of modern photographed views makes for an excellently presented book by which to be guided through the changes in Snodland over the past 150 years.

A Man of Many Parts. Professor or Bishop? The Life of Edward Nares 1762-1841. By M.J. Barber. 2009. 8 + 47 pp., 9 colour plates. £5.00 from the author, 29 Dale Close, Oxford OX1 1TU, Tel. 01865 250623, proceeds to Biddenden Local History Society. ISBN978 0 9563233 0 9.

This short pamphlet biography of Edward Nares highlights the life and career of an ambitious churchman, who was only able to achieve promotion within academia, as Regius Professor of History and Modern Languages in Oxford, despite early failures at school and as an Oxford undergraduate. His academic responsibilities throughout his later life vied with his long tenure as Rector of Biddenden from 1798 until his death in 1841. A college friendship with Lord Henry Spencer brought him occasionally within the social network of Blenheim, particularly their theatricals, at the same time as he was appointed to a Fellowship at Merton College. A relationship with Lady Charlotte Spencer Churchill resulted in a marriage against the wishes of her family, but they agreed to pay her a quarterly allowance. These events might have given Nares notoriety, but it is his publications, most of which were written in Biddenden, which led to his academic success and contrasted so much with the retirement of the rectory. In addition to the memoirs of Cecil, Lord Burghley, he wrote for the children, including the Spencer Churchills, but achieved the greatest success with a 'serio-ludicro, tragico-comico tale', *Thinks-I-to-myself.* But for all his success Barber concludes that he would rather have been raised to a bishopric, preferring clerical to academic cloisters. This is a well produced booklet, the result of work on Nares's personal papers and memoirs in Merton College.