

REVIEWS

Lullingstone Roman Villa. By Colonel G. W. Meates. 8½ × 5½. Pp. xvi + 168 with 47 plates and 13 line drawings. London: Heinemann, 1955. 21s.

It is seldom that archaeological research in this country evokes sufficient general interest to justify the publication of a work on this scale devoted entirely to the results of a single excavation. The Lullingstone Roman villa has, however, enjoyed well merited public attention during the six years in which Colonel Meates and his helpers have laid bare its treasures. This is due partly to the spectacular nature of the discoveries themselves and in a measure also to the proximity of the site to a country mansion much frequented by sight-seers on account of its widely advertised historical and sericultural associations.

From an archaeological standpoint Lullingstone is of considerable importance, and indeed the evidence afforded by these excavations is in some respects without parallel in this country. No work of art from a Romano-British villa can surpass the two marble portrait busts from Lullingstone. Nor is it easy to recall any archaeological material of greater significance for the period than the wall paintings preserving early Christian symbols and figures in the *orante* attitude of prayer. The far reaching implications of the occurrence in the villa of rooms decorated in this manner in the fourth century may be readily appreciated, and in this respect Lullingstone has added considerably to our scanty evidence relating to Christianity in Britain during the Roman Occupation.

Unlike much work done in times past on villas in south-east England, Lullingstone has been uncovered with patient skill and scientific discipline equal to the best modern professional standards. This is all the more creditable when it is considered that the directors of the undertaking, and for the most part those who have shared the toil, are self-taught amateurs. Professional and non-professional specialists in various fields have lent willing aid, and their learned opinions have rendered possible the accurate interpretation of much of the material recovered. Nevertheless, were it not for the enthusiasm of a small band of amateur field-workers who in the spring of 1949 began their search for the now famous mosaic pavement—forgotten since its

REVIEWS

chance discovery in the eighteenth century—Lullingstone Villa would still lie beneath the slope of the adjoining hillside, and Romano-British archæology would be so much the poorer.

The book is written in a pleasantly informal style. As explained in the Preface it is not intended to provide a scientific report on the villa but rather to give pleasure to the ordinary reader who is interested in Roman Britain. Photographs, plans and some admirable reconstructions help to form a clear impression of the building as it is and as it probably was.

In the later chapters much space is given to describing the three "Christian rooms," one of which is claimed to have been a chapel. Here it is felt that certain of the writer's conclusions are based on somewhat meagre evidence and his interpretations, although attractively presented, are not such as to command universal acceptance. For while there is no shadow of doubt that the paintings on the walls of these rooms are indicative of Christian associations, the use of the largest room as a place of worship is on present evidence no more than an interesting probability. One should bear in mind that by the middle of the fourth century, when these paintings were executed, Christian practice had developed greatly from Apostolic times when the faithful assembled for prayer in private houses.

By A.D. 350 worship was centred on the Eucharistic rite, and if the Lullingstone "chapel" was really such we may reasonably look for a reflection in its arrangements of the usual liturgical practices of that time. Colonel Meates hints at the possible former existence of an altar in the unexplored *eastern* end of the room, and he writes elsewhere of the painted figures on the west wall gazing *eastward* as though towards an altar "for the eucharistic offering." A serious flaw in all this is that in the fourth century the altar would most likely not have been at the east end but at the west, as it was then customary for the celebrant to face eastward across the altar while the congregation faced west towards him. This arrangement is clearly shown in the plans of early basilican churches, such as Silchester, where the apse is at the west end. The "chapel" theory would, in fact, be strengthened by any forthcoming evidence of a narthex and entrance at the east end, so that the "vestibule" and "antechamber" to the north-west could be interpreted as the *diaconicon* for storing the offerings of the congregation and the *prothesis* used by the clergy, these apartments being normally situated so as to be readily accessible from the altar.

Everyone reading this enjoyable and stimulating book will look forward with considerable interest to future discoveries at Lullingstone which may clear up some of these uncertainties.

P. J. TESTER.

REVIEWS

The Story of Canterbury. By *E. F. Lincoln.* 8×5½. Pp. 160, and pls. *Staples Press, 1955.* 12s. 6d.

Mr. Lincoln's book, *The Story of Canterbury*, one of a new popular series, was written (the author states) out of affection for the city and a desire to inform past and future visitors eager to learn its age-long history. He emphasizes, quite unwarrantably, that apart from Somner, Hasted and Thomas Brent, his book is a pioneer in treating Canterbury as a living organism. Actually there is little to suggest the intimate personal knowledge the author claims, and the book is in the main a compilation of what others have written about the city. Recent excavations have provided additional material for chapters on pre-historic Canterbury and on Durovernum, the Roman city. Much of the concluding chapter is devoted to the effects of two world wars and the bombing of June and October, 1942.

In the chapters on medieval times inaccuracies and omissions mar not infrequently the city's story. The author has surprisingly canonized the Venerable Bede and reverted inexcusably to "Thomas à Becket." The description of St. Martin's Church suggests that he is unaware of the recent discovery of an earlier apse proving a closer connection with Ethelbert and Bertha. The account of Queningate omits mention of "Druting Strete," the modern Ruttington Lane, along which Queen Bertha took her way to St. Martin's. Ethelbert and she were not buried in the north porch or chapel but on the south side of the Saxon church of St. Augustine. The date of the Castle, mentioned in Domesday, is known to be between 1087 and 1093 and it had no predecessor, according to Somner. The most ancient of Canterbury's inns, the Chequers of the Hope, was originally "The Chequers on the Hoop," and the present Falstaff Inn, of the fifteenth century, "The White Hart" from the insignia of Richard II. The stream of the Stour, crossing St. Peter's Street by Eastbridge Hospital, is not "the main stream"; that bounds the city beyond the West Gate. Marlowe's father was definitely a shoemaker and a member of their mystery. Maynard's Hospital is correctly "Mayner's Hospital" from the founder's name—not "John Maynard" but Mayner the Rich, three times Bailiff. Charles I and Henrietta Maria after their marriage lodged in the gatehouse of St. Augustine—not in the so-called palace. The Riding Gate's alternative name was the Reding Gate, probably because it abutted upon a swamp (Celtic Re or Rhe).

The illustrations, including "Canterbury Rebuilt,"—showing a post-war block of shops and flats in Burgate which replaced a blitzed area—are in the main attractive and well-chosen. Two of those, however, opposite p. 113, The Tudor House, Palace Street, and a shop-front in Burgate, unfortunately represent modern additions fronting ancient houses.

DOROTHY GARDINER.

REVIEWS

Historic Haven: The Story of Sandwich. By Dorothy Gardiner. 9×6.
Pp. viii+368. Illustrated and end map. *The Pilgrims Press Ltd., Derby, 1954.* 35s.

This history of one of the Cinque Ports has drawn upon published and unpublished material, Year Books, and other official records "with the intention as far as possible of shaping them into a volume of smaller compass for the ordinary reader." The book shows plenty of evidence of loving labour and research, but it is not easy to read or use. It falls between, not two, but several stools. It contains a wealth of carefully compiled detail, with copious footnote authorities, but the attempt to present the story in a popular style "for the ordinary reader" does not quite succeed; for example, in many of the narrations the trick of varying tenses will irritate many readers. The stated aim of the work does not appear to have been kept in mind; there has been a reluctance to leave out detail which may interest the student but not the ordinary reader, nor have the admittedly difficult problems of method and balance been solved. A chronological order has generally been followed, but the connections between, say, a building in the thirteenth century and its reappearance in the story in perhaps the fifteenth century, have not been sufficiently clarified. One consequence is the difficulty of using the volume in any sense as a guide book. There is an interesting old house in the town known as Whitefriars (by the way, try to find the reference to this house in the Index); no attempt is made to establish any link there may be between the existing house and the Whitefriars of the story. A plan of present Sandwich with, superimposed on it, the known or assumed sites of buildings which have disappeared would have made a useful alternative to one of the end paper maps of East Kent. Balance is always difficult to preserve in a history of this nature: approximately 19 pages are given to the story up to the beginning of the thirteenth century, 110 to the next 250 years, 40 to the next century, 80 to the period 1550 to 1650; the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have about 20 each; the present century has about seven pages—and these deal almost exclusively with incidents in the two World Wars. One is left with the impression that the records of Sandwich are rich in the middle period but as scanty in recent centuries as in the earliest. But lovers of Sandwich will be grateful to the author for a gallant attempt to deal with masses of material which can prove to be so intractable. The book is well printed and bound, and the illustrations are pleasing.

E. P. OAKES.

The Story of Milton Parish Church (British Publishing Co. Ltd., Gloucester), 1955. 1s.

This small booklet written in an easy and non-technical style has

REVIEWS

been compiled by members of our affiliated Society, The Gravesend Historical Society, for the benefit of visitors to the well known church of SS. Peter and Paul at Milton-next-Gravesend. Mr. Robert Hiscock and Mr. Arthur Allen, members of the Kent Archæological Society, have undertaken much of the writing and research with the co-operation of Mr. J. Benson. The booklet includes notes on the church, the parish, the manors of Milton and Parrock, the church of St. John's which was sold to Cardinal Wiseman in 1851, on the parish of Denton with its reconstructed chapel, and on Milton Chantry, now preserved as an ancient monument. There is also a list of Rectors and a brief account of the church plate. The visitor interested chiefly in the building will miss an architectural plan, and more might perhaps have been made of the story of the fabric itself. But all in all this is a very commendable publication, and we hope that other local Societies may be led to follow the example set at Gravesend. The notable series of church guides published by the Sussex Archæological Society in conjunction with the various Parochial Church Councils ought to be consulted in any venture of this sort.

R. F. JESSUP.

English History through Kent Eyes. By Felix Hull. 8 × 6½. Pp. 16.
20 illustrations. Kent County Council, 1955. 1s.

This pleasing booklet was produced to explain an exhibition of documents held first at the Kent Archives Office in the County Hall during July, 1955. The printing lay-out was supervised by the Maidstone College of Art and is a worthy production of that progressive institution.

English History is fundamentally a picture-book of some of the treasures housed in the Kent Archives Office. Dr. Hull calls his text "a note" and wisely restricts himself to but a few lines about each document illustrated—just enough to whet the appetite for more and so to enroll new friends for archives. The illustrations are good and, although reduction in size has been necessary, the reproductions of documents are clear enough to be read without eye-strain. By casual scrutiny there can be learnt such curious lore as that, in 1528, in the Chapel of Swingfield Preceptory one of the crosses was decorated with "stones of glasse" and that there were also three broken crowns "whiche shuld be opon the top of the canopy." The present reviewer was pleased too in finding an old friend, John Toke, the "I.T." of some noteworthy Kent hop tokens, who appears in the guise of an election agent.

It is to be hoped that Dr. Hull will soon pull other desirable documents from his capacious bag and cause them to be illustrated in this way.

L.R.A.G.

REVIEWS

A Vale in Kent—A Historical Guide to the Darent Valley. By Philip Rogers, B.A. 8½ × 5½. Pp. viii plus 150. Illustrated—1 fig., 13 plates. P. M. E. Erwood (Publications) Ltd., Welling, Kent, 1955. 7s. 6d.

This is a book full of interest, packed with information, robustly written. The author has served the Darent Valley well. Within these 150 pages he has marshalled its human story against a background of immemorial antiquity, in a setting of great natural beauty. Persons, places, anecdotes, quotations—all find niches in this fascinating account; and as in imagination we slowly glide down the river, past sites of antiquity, buildings ecclesiastical and secular, small cells of a continued civilization, the commentary the author gives us brings all to life. There is humour and pathos in the accounts he gives of the small rural events long past and the people who took part in them.

The book has a continuity. The tale unfolds as the river wends its way through the delectable valley down through history to our modern time. As a guide, it is not too detailed and yet is inclusive. The Index is full and useful to the traveller. But one thing is missing. An imaginatively drawn map of the Valley might have been included, a necessity for strangers, who, in this hurried age, need to find their way quickly to the places mentioned in the text. Otherwise, the illustrations are good and informative, a small but well thought out selection.

This book is an achievement, modest in price, attractively presented, pleasant and useful alike to the resident as to the visitor.

G.W.M.

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