

REVIEWS

Hall Place, Bexley. By P. E. Morris. 8½ in. × 5½ in. Pp. 14, pl. 2 and a plan. London Borough of Bexley Libraries and Museums Department, 1970, 7½p.

Parts of this well-known historic building have recently been opened to the public, and the interest which this has aroused locally is now well provided for by the publication of an informative booklet written by the Borough Librarian. Use has been made of material published in *Arch. Cant.* and elsewhere, courteously acknowledged, and Mr. Morris has drawn also on archives, retained in his own department, relating to the house and its past owners. The result is commendable, and we are glad to see a final laying of the ghost of the Black Prince and the exposure of the unhistorical nature of other fictions which in times past have been repeatedly retailed as fact.

Where the description of the architectural development varies in slight respects from the plan and notes in *Arch. Cant.*, lxxi (1957), 153–61, the differences are in some cases justified by new evidence brought to light in the 1968–9 restoration. For example, the partition dividing off part of the south end of the parlour has lately been shown to be of Tudor age, and an inscription on the lead roof over the seventeenth-century staircase fixes the construction of the red-brick southern block to c. 1653, and not later as was formerly suggested. Some other reinterpretations, such as the assignment of two chimneys on the east side to the first phase of the Tudor construction, seem to disregard evidence advanced in 1957, but no explanation for doing so is given. One may ask, moreover, why the first enlargement of the Tudor house is dated c. 1560 in the text (p. 5) and c. 1580 on the plan facing p. 14.

On the early history, one would have been pleased to see stronger evidence than the statement of Hasted for associating an earlier house on the site with the medieval At-Hall and Shelley families. From the sixteenth century onwards the succession of ownership is well documented and the writer is on firmer ground.

One of the illustrations is a photograph of the interior of the Tudor hall during the residence of Lady Limerick in the 1920s, and what it shows causes regret that the valuable collection of antique furniture and fittings with which she embellished the old house was dispersed at her death and not retained for the benefit of the public when the place passed into the ownership of Bexley Council.

REVIEWS

It may not be out of place to record here that the present carefully restored and well-maintained condition of Hall Place is in no small measure due to the interest and efforts of Mr. Morris himself, who in securing the use of the house for his own Libraries Department has helped to rescue it from the progressive dilapidation into which it was fast falling, and found a useful and not unsuitable role for it to play in the life of the modern community.

Unfortunately, some of the references are inaccurate. The notes and plan published in *Arch. Cant.* in 1957 appeared in volume lxxi and not '51' as stated in a footnote to the introduction. Footnote 7 on p. 1 indicates that mention is made of the early Iron Age settlement at Cold Blow in Mr. H. M. Colvin's article on Joyden's Wood published in *Arch. Cant.*, lxi (1948), but readers will search for it there in vain. In fact the description of this site by Mr. J. E. L. Caiger is given in volume lxxii (1958), 186-89.

P. J. TESTER

South-East England. By Ronald Jessup. 8 in. × 5½ in., pp. 273, figs. 57 (+ 2 maps and 1 chart), pls. 75. Thames and Hudson, London, 1970, £2.10.

South-East England is the sixty-ninth volume in the well-known series *Ancient Peoples and Places* and has been written by our Vice-President, Mr. R. F. Jessup, F.S.A.; it should be said from the outset that it maintains the standard set by the previous volumes.

In just under 200 pages, the author attempts the Herculean task of reducing to manageable proportions the welter of archaeological information on Kent, Surrey and Sussex, and presents it in eight chapters, ranging from the topographical background and the evidence for prehistoric settlement to the Bronze and Iron Ages and concluding with the end of the Romano-British period at the beginning of the fifth century A.D.; this is a task sufficiently daunting for lesser spirits, and the measure of Mr. Jessup's success lies in the coherent picture that remained with this reader at the end of each chapter. In any work of such enormous condensation, it is not surprising that readers may well find personal favourites omitted (a reference and, perhaps, a plate of the enigmatic Wilmington Man was looked for in vain by this reviewer), but in his defence the author would be quite justified in pleading that there is enough material to write a book of this scope for each county separately, and that all he aimed at was 'a wide outline survey and the provision of a fairly detailed bibliography' (p. 140)—in this, Mr. Jessup succeeds admirably.

There are a few points of detail with which not everybody will agree. For instance, is it still worth mentioning (p. 169), cautiously though it is

REVIEWS

done, the vexed question of a centuriation north of Rochester? The dating of the Rochester Roman city wall to 'between AD 150 and 160' (p. 181) is much too early, some of the Springhead dates (pp. 193-4) need urgent reappraisal, the question of a Rochester *pagus* on the basis of the villa distribution in the Darent and Medway valleys (pp. 184 and 188) is a debatable possibility lacking, at present, a thorough-going study. Generally, it comes rather as a surprise that room has been found in a volume of such meticulous research for one or two published works to which little credence is now attached.

The book is attractively produced and is practically lacking in printer's errors (cf. pp. 16, 63 and 114, overlooking Samian [*sic*]); it is profusely illustrated with line drawings and photogravure plates assembled together at the end of the volume which are a joy to behold. It also contains not only an adequate index and copious bibliographies for each chapter, but also lists of sites that can be visited and museums, which should be of great advantage to many enthusiastic travellers into the past. This is a book to be warmly recommended to those who like to know something of the period and background of sites to be visited and to others who will find in it many starting points for fruitful enquiries.

A. P. DETSICAS

Arden of Faversham. By Anita Holt. 10 in. × 8 in., pp. 40, pl. 2, duplicated. The Faversham Society, 1970, n.p.

This is a very worthy addition to the Faversham Papers, of which it is no. 7. The background to the play, both historical and topographical, is accurately given and upon one point, the identification of the 'Flower de Luce', corrects the usual account. The author's notes on the characters are perceptive and her eulogy of the style of the play reflects her appreciation of its merit. Perhaps it is no longer really necessary to argue against the attribution of the play to Shakespeare as this theory is now generally discredited—if one had to find a known author for *Arden*, Marlowe might be a more tenable proposition.

In general, the author's evident sincerity, enthusiasm and capacity for taking pains make this a most valuable contribution to our knowledge both of local history and of an interesting work of literature.

A. C. HARRISON

Two Anglo-Saxon Cemeteries at Winnall. By Audrey L. Meaney and Sonia Chadwick Hawkes. 9½ in. × 7½ in. Pp. 65, pl. 6, figs. 15. The Society for Medieval Archæology, Monograph Series: No. 4. London, 1970, £1.75.

Winnall lies within the modern boundary of the city of Winchester, in Hampshire, and some explanation must therefore be offered for

reviewing this excavation report in *Arch. Cant.* Firstly, any publication relating to early Anglo-Saxon discoveries is valuable in view of the rich and important representation of that period in Kentish archaeology. Moreover, the Winnall excavations produced a number of objects resembling, to a greater or lesser degree, things found with Kentish burials. Lastly, this report might well serve as an exemplary model to those nearer home who have the task of preparing for publication evidence from excavated sites of the same age and type.

The first cemetery at Winnall was found in the late nineteenth century during railway construction, and the only surviving relics are three shield bosses, one of which is sixth century, while the others may extend into the seventh. About 400 yards to the north-east, a second cemetery was excavated by Mrs. Meaney in 1957-8, and yielded 45 seventh-century inhumations, 19 of which were unfurnished. Owing to the excavator's present residence in Australia, publication has been assisted by Mrs. Sonia Hawkes, whose excavations at Finglesham and publication of other Kentish Anglo-Saxon material have made her well known in our county.

There is too much in the report to be summarized adequately in a review, and reference will be mainly restricted here to the interesting Kentish parallels afforded by the Winnall grave-goods. A bronze-gilt disc-brooch, with a central star of inset garnets, displays a pattern first developed in Kent from the seventh century onwards, appearing elsewhere in a somewhat modified form. Faversham has produced brooches comparable in some of their features, though the writers discuss the significant differences both in design and technique of manufacture. From Grave 8 came bronze penannular brooches likened to a pair from Finglesham, near Deal. Pins, single or in linked pairs, are closely matched by Kentish finds at Sibertswold and Chartham Down, while others occurred at Breach Down, Faversham and Lympne. An unusual cloisonné bronze pendant, set with garnets, has some features in common with brooches from Sarre, Kingston and Sittingbourne.

Much information of interest is contained in a general description of the characteristics of late 'pagan' seventh-century Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, which show remarkable uniformity throughout the country. Kent references are again prominent here on account of the richness of the grave-goods and the highly important dating evidence afforded by associated coins which are rare elsewhere. Kent, in fact, provides the time-scale on which the age of finds from further afield is at present assessed. Then, there is the problem of the continued use of pagan cemeteries into Christian times, and the evident survival of heathen customs, such as casting heavy stones on the body or mutilation to prevent the ghost walking, and the wearing of amulets. How far, we are bound to ask, was the conversion of parts of southern England in the

REVIEWS

seventh century more than skin-deep, and when were the pagan cemeteries eventually abandoned in favour of churchyard burial? Such questions are particularly relevant to late East Kentish cemeteries such as Barfreston, Breach Down, Chartham Down, Kingston, Siberts-wold and Wye Down, and also to Holborough and Polhill west of the Medway.

From this brief review it will be readily apparent that the Winnall report should certainly be studied by Kentish archaeologists who wish to understand the significance of the seventh-century material from their own area in its wider geographical setting.

P. J. TESTER

The Dutch in the Medway. By P. G. Rogers. 8½ in. × 5½ in., pp. xiii + 192, pls. 12, 2 maps. Oxford University Press, 1970, £2.25.

The Dutch attack on the Medway in June, 1667, was one of the most shameful episodes in the history of the English navy. From Sheerness to Gillingham there are nine miles of twisting river; yet the raiders managed to penetrate every hazard, captured the *Royal Charles*, and destroyed most of the other ships in the river, all with very little loss to themselves. Generations of neglect and cheese-paring had reduced our main naval dockyard to a state of utter helplessness. Sheerness was defenceless and effectively undefended; arms and munitions were just not available and, in the circumstances, few of the defenders were ready to stand and make a fight of it. The Dutch deliberately designed their attack to be as insulting and humiliating as possible; and the reputation of the English navy had never sunk so low.

The outline of the story is in every history of the time, but there is much more material available. In the Rijksarchief in The Hague, for instance, are the letters of Cornelis de Witt, one of the Dutch commanders; there is the Pepys correspondence in the Bodleian and at Greenwich. Unpublished material of this kind is the main basis of Mr. Rogers' account, though he also makes good use of more familiar sources such as Pepys' *Diary*; and his story of the disaster is lucid and effective.

The raid, however, was much more than an isolated episode in naval history. The Dutch and the English had been at loggerheads throughout the century, and the whole point of the attack was to force the English to be more reasonable in the peace negotiations which were then taking place at The Hague. As Johan de Witt, Cornelis's brother put it, the Dutch fleet was at this point 'the best plenipotentiaries for peace'.

There is bound to be a problem when one tries to bring out the significance of such an episode; how far does one go in 'setting

REVIEWS

the scene' and tracing the consequences? Mr. Rogers decides to sketch the whole course of Anglo-Dutch relations during the century. He does this well, but even on a second reading the present reviewer felt that the background was too prominent. Inevitably it can only be a sketch of a vast subject: it is the account of the raid itself that is the most valuable part of the book, and it occupies only 46 pages out of a text of 175.

That, however, is only a minor criticism. We have long needed a detailed account of the Medway raid; and Mr. Rogers has now provided it.

BRUCE WEBSTER

A Third Kentish Patchwork. By R. H. Goodsall. $8\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ in., pp. 159, pls. 76 + text figs. Stedehill Publications, Harrietsham, 1970. £2.

Our member, Mr. R. H. Goodsall, is well known for his several books of Kentish miscellany and his present volume completes his hat-trick of *Kentish Patchwork* books. As stated on the attractive dust-jacket, this volume 'covers a variety of unrelated subjects concerned with country topography and history'. These include sections on strange streams, the slipware potteries of Wrotham and High Halden, the Hatch bellfoundry at Broomfield and Ulcombe, kitchen crafts, a series of baptismal fonts, industry and trade in Maidstone, some Kentish customs and wartime reminiscences of the Army in the author's house.

The book is splendidly illustrated by many photographs, both fairly early ones and others taken recently by the author himself, and embellished by many drawings used both as text figures and at the beginning and end of each section; it has been written with Mr. Goodsall's flair for exciting his readers' curiosity and contains information on such diverse topics that it is bound to attract and entertain his readers over many a long winter's evening.

A. P. DETSICAS

Framed Buildings of the Weald. By R. T. Mason. $8\frac{3}{8}$ in. \times $5\frac{1}{2}$ in., pp. 107 (+ Index), figs. 18, pls. 32. Second edition. Coach Publishing House Ltd., Horsham, 1969, £1.75.

This is a 'revised and enlarged second edition' of this work which was reviewed in *Arch. Cant.*, lxxxi (1966), 252-4, and will be of interest to all members.

Faversham Magazine. Published by the Faversham Society and obtainable from the Hon. Secretary, 42 Newton Road, Faversham, 20p., post free.

The first number of volume 2 contains eighteen articles which will be of interest to many members outside the Faversham area.